



Office of Ellis County Judge Todd Little
For Immediate Release

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“Local Health Authority Urges Continued COVID Precautions Amidst Delta”

Ellis County, TX – Dr. Leigh Nordstrom, Ellis County’s Local Health Authority, is urging residents to continue heightened health practices amidst the surge of the Delta Variant, including social distancing, wearing face coverings around others, and most of all, getting vaccinated. Dr. Nordstrom’s guidance follows Ellis County’s available ICU beds reaching 100% capacity for COVID patients mid-August and the FDA giving full approval to the Pfizer vaccine for individuals aged 16+ on August 23rd.

“We are at a critical point in our community,” said Nordstrom. “I want to serve you as your local health authority. Please help me in this. I do not ask this for political, religious, or other reasons. I will tell you what I know.”

“COVID-19 is at a sharp incline in our community. Our hospitals and clinics are providing excellent care, but they are reporting much higher numbers over the past few weeks. The Delta Variant is very easily spread and very serious to those infected – particularly the unvaccinated. COVID-19 is often a mild illness, but other times it can be deadly. I care for patients who have had COVID, and many of them are still having side effects after the infection is gone. I also talk to other healthcare providers in the area, and they tell me they see the same thing.”

“Right now, we have higher numbers of patients in the hospital with COVID-19. We have a 7-day average of 19,598 new cases per day in Texas. To put that in perspective, in June we had less than 150 new cases per day in the state. Over 25% of the E.R. visits in our regional area are COVID-related, and 91% of those hospitalized for COVID at Baylor Scott & White are unvaccinated. 91% of BS&W’s ICU patients are unvaccinated, and 93% of patients on ventilators are unvaccinated. That doesn’t mean that you can’t get COVID if you are vaccinated, but it does mean you are much less likely to have a severe infection.”

“Here’s what I am asking from you: the best way we can eliminate serious infection is by getting vaccinated. That means everyone – even those who have had the virus, as getting the vaccine will strengthen or prolong your immunity. Again and again, I hear of studies that look at the risks of infection vs. the risks of the vaccine, and the side effects of the vaccine are much safer. If you have concerns about the vaccine, please talk to your doctor.”

“I don’t like wearing a mask, but I also look forward to a healthier future. For now, that does mean wearing a mask and practicing social distancing. I do this not only to protect myself, but also those around me. There are studies that show decreased transmission by doing these steps, however annoying and cumbersome they may be. If you doubt the effectiveness of masking and social distancing, are you so confident in that decision that you would risk your family’s health? Isn’t wearing a mask and social distancing a small favor to others that you may save?”

“Love one another, and love your community. This is not about judgement. Let us be gentle and serve one another! I am so thankful to be a part of this community, and thank you all for your continued efforts as well.” ###