

DHSS Announces Three More Deaths Involving Residents or Patients at Its 24/7 Facilities

NEW CASTLE (May 2, 2020) – The Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) is announcing three more deaths from coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) involving residents or patients at its 24/7 facilities.

Two residents of Delaware Hospital for the Chronically Ill (DHCI) in Smyrna and a patient at Delaware Psychiatric Center (DPC) have died from COVID-19. Their deaths bring the total of residents or patients from DHSS' 24/7 facilities who have died to seven.

The additional deaths from DHCI involved a 53-year-old female resident who died April 24 and a 49-year-old female resident who died April 29. Both died at a Kent County hospital. The additional death at DPC involved a 64-year-old male patient who died April 23 at a New Castle County hospital.

The previous deaths involved two female residents of Delaware Hospital for the Chronically Ill, a female patient at Delaware Psychiatric Center and a male resident of Governor Bacon Health Center in Delaware City.

“Our hearts break for the families of the residents from Delaware Hospital for the Chronically Ill and the patient from Delaware Psychiatric Center who have passed away,” said DHSS Secretary Dr. Kara Odom Walker, a practicing family physician. “These losses have had a tremendous impact on the staffs of our facilities, too, and I want to honor their selfless dedication and commitment in serving the individuals in our care. Across our state, our thoughts and prayers also go out

to all of the families who have lost loved ones to COVID-19, including those in long-term care facilities.”

DHSS’ Division of Health Care Quality (DHCQ) is working with DHSS’ 24/7 facilities and private long-term care and other licensed facilities in the state to verify that there are strong screening, infection control and isolation measure in place at each facility, and if, not, to assist them in implementing stronger protocols. In addition, DHSS staff from the State Health Operations Center in Smyrna are working daily with the long-term facilities to make sure their staffing, personal protective equipment (PPE) and testing needs are met.