



# MADISON COUNTY DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

*Eric Faisst, Director of Public Health*

*Dr. John B. Endres, President of Board of Health*

## **FOR IMMEDIATE Release:**

May 6, 2020

Samantha Field, Public Information Officer

[Samantha.field@madisoncounty.ny.gov](mailto:Samantha.field@madisoncounty.ny.gov)

315-366-2822

## **Madison County Health Department Recognizes Staff This National Nurses Week**

**Wampsville, NY** - This year's recognition for National Nurses Week looks a lot different than in year's past. Normally, Madison County Health Department's (MCDOH) nurses are vaccinating residents at Flu and Immunization Clinics, educating parents of children with elevated blood lead levels, or providing breastfeeding support to new moms. However, those services and all the other Health Department programs have been put on hold due to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

The MCDOH's nurses this year have been busy going into homes of Madison County residents who have tested positive for COVID-19, to monitor them and educate them on the virus. Every day the nurses put themselves at risk of being exposed to COVID-19 and have been working 6 days a week in order to manage the caseload. The more positive cases there are, the more their workload increases, which means the later they get home to their families.

For many patients, receiving a positive test result can be the scariest and most upsetting news. Learning that they need to go into isolation to avoid giving COVID-19 to anyone else, including their family is not easy. Our nurses help to relieve their anxieties by explaining the disease, how to monitor their symptoms, and how to properly clean and isolate. Most patients are very thankful for the work they are doing. One household made a sign that said, "Madison County Health Department nurses, you are our heroes," which they held in the window as they waved.

Molly Limbert is a Public Health Nurse who has been with the Health Department for 11 years. The patients Limbert usually sees are prenatal or post-partum women and babies who are referred to the Health Department's Maternal Child Health Program. Since the beginning of the County's response to COVID-19, she has put that all on hold to be there for those impacted by this virus. "Please stay home. Don't go out in public. The more people stay home, the more we can starve this virus, and the less people will be sick. Then I can go back to my babies," says Limbert, referring to her Maternal Child Health Program patients.

Rebecca LaPorte is a Public Health Nurse and has a background in communicable diseases which has been helpful during the COVID-19 pandemic. Rebecca normally works primarily in the Immunization and Lead Poisoning Prevention Program. LaPorte comments, "We have helped a number of people through their journey with COVID. Whether they are positive cases, contacts to positive cases, or individuals who are sick and being tested, many are very appreciative of our efforts and are kind. Our community is clearly close knit and their kindness through this has been so appreciated."



Jody Armitage is a RN and new to the Health Department this year. Her desire to help is what drives her. “The hardest part of working during the COVID-19 public emergency is all the uncertainty. As a nurse, people look to you for answers and education. With such a new virus, we nurses at Madison County try to keep the community updated with the most accurate information to the best of our abilities,” says Armitage. “What keeps me going is seeing all the acts of kindness our community has displayed. Neighbors helping neighbors.”

When COVID-19 hit Madison County, the MCDOH was lucky to have two retired nurses come out of retirement and lend a hand. We have even had a few nurses from the Central New York Medical Reserve Corps who have also volunteered their time. We would be lost without their help. They have been making phone calls to patients and people in quarantine. These nurses are a dedicated group of professionals, who provide compassionate care and needed education for those affected by COVID-19.

“This National Nurses Week, Madison County wishes to recognize our hardworking and committed nursing staff. The work we are doing could not be done without them,” said Public Health Director Eric Faisst. “Day in and day out they go above and beyond to be there for our residents who have become victims of this virus. Please know how grateful we are for all that you do.”

Again, if you must go out, be sure to stay at least 6 feet away from others at all times and wear a cloth face mask. Please remember to wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use hand sanitizer before you touch your face.

For more information please visit <https://www.madisoncounty.ny.gov/2479/Coronavirus-COVID-19> or call the Madison County non-medical COVID-19 Hotline at 315-366-2770.



Photo Left to Right: Carolyn Grady, Barb Kinsella, Molly Limbert, Rebecca LaPorte