Media Information:

For immediate release:
March 21, 2022

Three more resident deaths in Yellowstone County

Billings, MT – The county's pandemic death toll now stands at 548 people, including three deaths reported today. All three of those Yellowstone County residents had underlying medical conditions that put them at higher risk for severe COVID-19 illness.

A wide variety of conditions have been shown to increase the risk of COVID-19 causing hospitalization and death, including, but not limited to: current and previous smoking, substance use disorders, current and recent pregnancy, overweight, sedentary lifestyle, weakened immune system, cancer, diabetes, chronic heart, liver, lung or kidney disease; dementia and mental illnesses.

The latest Yellowstone County pandemic victims are:
- A man in his 80s who died on March 14 at a Billings hospital. He was fully vaccinated.
- A woman in her 80s who died on March 9 at her home. She was not vaccinated.
- A woman in her 50s who died on March 4 at her home. She was not vaccinated.

The deaths on March 9 and March 4 were identified through death certificates filed with the Yellowstone County Clerk and Recorder.

For the week ending on Saturday, March 19, the two Billings hospitals together had an average of nine COVID-19 inpatients daily, compared to an average of 19 patients for the previous week. The most recent weekly average included five patients a day who were not vaccinated, two who were fully vaccinated and two who were up to date. On average, of three patients a day were in intensive care and two were on ventilators.

"Fully vaccinated" means a person has received the primary series of COVID-19 vaccines: one dose of Johnson & Johnson vaccine or two doses of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine. "Up to date" means a person has received all recommended COVID-19 vaccines, including booster dose(s) when eligible.

Yellowstone County is seeing a low level of COVID-19 spread now. The virus is still present in our community and previous lulls in this pandemic have been followed by surges in cases and

hospitalization. Vaccination remains the safest, most effective tool available to reduce risk of getting seriously ill with COVID-19,

For a vaccination appointment at RiverStone Health, call the Immunization Clinic at 406.247.3382 or the primary care Clinic at 406.247.3350. The next free, community walk-in COVID-19 vaccination clinic will be from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on March 31 at the Shrine Auditorium, 1125 Broadwater Ave.

If your business or organization is in need of a quantity of free at-home COVID-19 test kits, call RiverStone Health at 406.651.6410 with your request.

Free at-home COVID-19 tests are available from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays in the lobby of the Lil Anderson Center, the four-story building on the RiverStone Health Campus, 123 S. 27th St. Free at-home COVID-19 tests also may be picked up at any RiverStone Health Clinic in Billings, Bridger, Joliet or Worden.

###