



**Commonwealth of Kentucky
Cabinet for Health and Family Services**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Public Health, Barbourville ARH Issue Statement Related
to Infectious Disease Investigation**

FRANKFORT, KY (Jan. 14, 2020) – The Kentucky Department for Public Health (DPH) and the Barbourville Appalachian Regional Healthcare (ARH) hospital are working closely with the local health department and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to investigate a potential case of an infectious disease. Close contacts of the individual have been identified and are being monitored.

“We want to assure Kentuckians we are aware of a potential infectious disease and are working collaboratively with the local hospital as well as local, regional, and federal public health authorities to determine not only a possible cause of illness, but any steps that need to be taken to protect the health and wellbeing of our Commonwealth,” said DPH Commissioner Dr. Angela Dearing. “We do not believe the wider community to be at-risk and appropriate protocols were followed at the hospital to prevent exposure to other patients.”

Any threat to the general public is being assessed, but is believed to be extremely low. Additional information will be shared as details are confirmed. At this time, a diagnosis

has not been made as health officials work to complete necessary medical and laboratory testing outlined by infectious disease protocols.

Barbourville ARH remains open, including the emergency department.

Anyone experiencing signs or symptoms of a viral illness, including fever, nausea, body aches, or lethargy, is encouraged to seek health care immediately.

DPH is following up to inform any hospital worker or close contact of the patient about symptoms to look for in case this illness turns out to be a risk to others.

Additional updates or information related to the investigation will be shared with the public as they become available, if needed.

Additional information is available at <http://chfs.ky.gov/>.

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The Cabinet for Health and Family Services is home to most of the state's human services and healthcare programs, including the Department for Medicaid Services, the Department for Community Based Services the Department for Public Health, the Department for Aging and Independent Living and the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities. CHFS is one of the largest agencies in state government, with nearly 8,000 full- and part-time employees located across the Commonwealth focused on improving the lives and health of Kentuckians.