

Dept. of Health Services: Releases new COVID-19 variant trackers

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Today, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services released a new data table on our [variant webpage](#) that shows SARS-CoV-2 variant proportions by [Health Care Emergency Readiness Coalition \(HERC\) region](#). The variants page now also includes information on two additional variant strains of SARS-CoV-2 – variants B.1.427 and B.1.429. DHS first identified these variants in Wisconsin in December 2020, and is now tracking them and displaying them publicly following the [CDC's recent classification update on March 17, 2021](#). These strains were recently upgraded from variants of interest to variants of concern. SARS-CoV-2 variants are common as viruses change constantly through mutation. The [CDC has established criteria](#) for identifying variants that may be more worrisome than others. DHS, using CDC's criteria, publicly reports on [variants of concern](#).

“With new variants spreading in Wisconsin, we are updating our variant data page to include more detail about where these variants are being detected,” said Deputy Secretary Julie Willems Van Dijk. “Because these new variants of concern spread more easily than the original strain of SARS-CoV-2, it is important to get vaccinated when you are able. Vaccines, along with our other public health practices, give the virus less of an opportunity to spread and mutate.”

[View the entire news release.](#)