

Milwaukee County Supervisor Burgelis: Seeks to increase monkeypox awareness and vaccine distribution

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MILWAUKEE – On Wednesday, August 3, 2022 County Supervisor Peter Burgelis issued the following statement in the wake of 22 known monkeypox infections in Wisconsin, 3 of which are in the City of Milwaukee and 4 others in Milwaukee County.

“With the arrival of the monkeypox virus in Milwaukee County, the time for action, and equitable access to vaccines is now” said Supervisor Burgelis. “This is a public health hazard, and we need to help coordinate public awareness and response.”

No Monkey Pox Vaccine Available in Milwaukee County

This week the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) sent 200 JYNNEOS vaccine doses to the City of Milwaukee and another 200 to the City of Cudahy Health Department- those appointments filled up quickly and there is a need for many more vaccine units. The Wisconsin DHS has not indicated when or if more vaccine will be made available to Milwaukee County residents.

Dr. Benjamin Weston, Milwaukee County’s Chief Medical Officer reports that with the recent rise in monkeypox cases, “there has been coordination from a state, county, and city/municipality level on information and resource sharing.”

City of Milwaukee Health Commissioner Kirsten Johnson reports that “appointments for the vaccine in Milwaukee filled up very quickly and we need more vaccine from

DHS.” She added “As soon as we have access to vaccine we will provide them to the community.”

Monkeypox is spread by close human contact and has predominantly affected members of the LGBTQ community. Supervisor Peter Burgelis, who is the first out LGBTQ member of the Milwaukee County Board added-

“Given what local municipalities learned during the COVID pandemic, I’m encouraged to see continued collaboration for the outbreak, and I urge the Wisconsin Department of Health Services to prioritize Milwaukee County residents for expanded vaccine availability. The LGBTQ and Milwaukee County community need every available resource to be healthy and protected from this outbreak.”

Dr. Weston added: “Milwaukee County will continue to follow the science in understanding this disease and this specific outbreak to best ensure we can protect and ultimately strengthen the health of those within and outside of our county. “

The City of Milwaukee Health Department has been advocating for vaccines to be distributed more broadly and indicated their need of thousands of additional doses. They have asked for Governor Evers’ help to get federal allocations of vaccines.

The UN’s health agency said that the monkeypox outbreak was an extraordinary situation that requires its highest level of concern.

According to the World Health Organization, 99% of cases outside of Africa are men, and 98% of cases have been found in men who have sex with other men.

Since May, the monkeypox virus has infected more than 25,000 people across more than 70 countries, and over 6,300 in the US.

More information on the local outbreak can be found [here](#).