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MEDIA RELEASE

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FOUR HOSPITALIZATIONS ON COVID UNIT AT MEMORIAL REGIONAL HOSPITAL AND INCREASE FROM 7 TO 24 ACTIVE CASES

Moffat County, Colorado – This week, Moffat County Public Health was notified by the Colorado Department of Health and Environment (CDPHE) that a variant strain of COVID-19 has been identified in two positive COVID cases. The strain identified is the B.1.617.2 variant, also known as the Indian strain. Both positive cases with the variant strain were identified within a single household. Mesa County has also identified 5 cases of this variant.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), this variant spreads more easily and quickly than other variants. Dr. Allan Reishus, Public Health Medical Director said, "The vaccine is our vehicle out of this pandemic. Get your vaccine."

Public Health Director Kari Ladrow said, "Hospital capacity is the concern. There have been several large events in the past few weeks and transmission risk was high at those events. If you are feeling unwell, please stay home."

Olivia Scheele, Public Health Nurse, "Simply put, the more people who get vaccinated the less likely the virus will spread. Increased transmission leads to higher occurrences of new variants as the virus learns to adapt or mutate to new circumstances. The new Indian Variant has mutated enough to be potentially 50% less susceptible to current EUA approved COVID vaccines as well as monoclonal antibody therapy. More vaccines equals less transmission equals less variants. If not for yourself, help protect those most vulnerable in our community. A good analogy would be the Polio vaccine. The United States has been Polio free since 1979 thanks to vaccines."