

For Immediate Release
February 3, 2021

UK Variant identified in Kansas

TOPEKA – A CDC Emerging Variant, which has been found in 33 U.S. states, was identified in Kansas this afternoon. A Kansas resident in Ellis County was found to have the United Kingdom, or UK, variant known as B.1.1.7. A case investigation is being conducted to determine how the person became infected with this particular variant of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, as well as if others may have been exposed. No further details are being released concerning the patient, including demographics.

The variant was determined through the whole genome sequencing (WGS) conducted through the laboratories at the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE).

“This finding does not change our public health recommendations. We continue to encourage people to take the appropriate precautions: follow isolation and quarantine recommendations, practice physical distancing, wearing masks, good hygiene, staying home if ill and getting the vaccine if you are able to, once the supply is sufficient,” Dr. Norman, KDHE Secretary, said.

This variant was first reported in the U.S. at the end of December 2020. Evidence from the UK indicates that this variant spreads much more quickly through the population and, given that fact, may rapidly increase the number of hospitalizations and deaths. More studies are needed to confirm this finding.

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