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## **North Country Region Collaborating for Reopening Strategies**

**May 14, 2020**-The Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence counties are working together on many fronts in order to develop a safe COVID-19 reopening of the North Country region. One of those collaborative efforts is from the local health departments (LHDs) throughout the region.

The LHDs are working together to address potential areas that illustrate the inter-connectedness of our region. Bringing together the strengths of each county to scale-up innovative interventions will allow for counties to continue to mitigate COVID-19. While each county has specific groups and issues to target, the region as a whole has similar needs that can be addressed through this group work of the LHDs.

The COVID-19 'reopening' strategy is based on Empire State Development regions which are different than the Department of Health regions typically used. The LHDs immediately saw the need to work together across the counties. If one county has an outbreak, all of our counties will be affected.

Research shows that messaging via a unified approach is an effective public health strategy to reinforce behavior change. This collaborative approach makes more effective use of limited staff resources during this pandemic. For outreach each local health department will use the developed overall message of continuing social distancing and identifying priorities for specific action based on individual county needs. Messages developed by this group will be identifiable by the hashtag: #NorthCountryStrong.

For more information about your local health department visit your county's website.



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