FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COVID-19: Grateful
By Dr. Michele Dikkers, Chair of Clayton County Board of Health

Grateful.

That is how I feel. Having watched with bated breath for the new virus to arrive in our community, watching with great interest in what is happening in Italy, New York, California and now in the south, I am grateful for time. The time we have had to develop a game plan. Many game plans in fact.

Plans for how to staff the hospital…

Plans on how to care for patients with a new disease without a clear treatment…

Plans on how to keep “well patients” from coming into contact with “ill patients”…

Plans for obtaining the needed supplies to care for the patients…

Plans to put together a county team, allowing the medical groups in the county to work together throughout the pandemic…

Grateful…for those I work with. For the doctors, providers, nurses, the ambulance crew, the cleaning staff, the kitchen staff, the office staff, the administration. All making changes in preparation to care for COVID-19 patients and to protect each other from it.

Grateful… for guidance via the World Health Organization, the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, and the Iowa Department of Public Health. They continue to look for an answer on how to treat Covid, to learn how it works and how to prevent it, including coming up with a vaccine.

It is becoming evident that we will be learning to live with this virus. There is no destroying it.

For now, we know that there are three things we can do to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and protect ourselves…

- physical distancing- wearing a mask- staying at home unless needing to go out for an essential function
Grateful… that we live in a rural area where it is easier to physically distance. Let’s face it, in New York City, the population of Guttenberg could live one high rise apartment building. We know that physical distancing is one of the most important ways to avoid exposure to COVID-19.

Grateful…to live in a community where people are willing to help each other, where they care about each other. When someone is in need, your neighbors show up to help. There are multiple organization that provide support, there are our faith organizations, the Family Resource Center, the food pantries, the public health department and others.

And finally, I am grateful for living in a community where we respect each other. We have been told over and over again that wearing a mask is important. While it may not protect us from COVID-19 on its own, it will protect others. So, when you wear a mask, you are letting others know that you care and respect them enough to do what you can to protect them from this virus. A virus that can be spread without knowing it, by someone without symptoms, and that someone could be you.

Grateful…for all of you. Grateful…that we are in this together.