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Kaua'i District Health Office survey finds majority remain concerned about COVID-19

LIHUE – The Department of Health's (DOH) Kaua'i District Health Office released the preliminary report of its July Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response (CASPER) survey to assess the community's perception of Kaua'i's COVID-19 response efforts and current emergency preparedness level.

"The results of this survey show us that Kaua'i residents continue to feel the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in their day-to-day lives and are taking steps to protect themselves with vaccinations and masking," says Dr. Janet Berreman, Kaua'i District Health Officer, "It is gratifying that residents have the tools they need to protect themselves and that they have a positive perception of the local response."

Sixty-nine percent of Kaua'i households remain very or somewhat concerned about their household members getting sick with COVID-19. This is unchanged from the level of concern reported in the 2020 CASPER survey. The percentage of households in which someone has experienced emotional distress related to the pandemic rose slightly from 32% in 2020 to 36% in 2022. Only 16% of those experiencing emotional distress sought behavioral health assistance.

The percentage of households who are very or somewhat concerned about their ability to pay the next month's rent or mortgage decreased from 34% in 2020 to 17% in 2022, and 72% report that their income is stable or slightly higher than it was before the pandemic.

Consistent with ongoing concerns about COVID-19 infection, 83% of Kaua'i households report that they think it is very or somewhat important to wear a mask indoors in places other than their home. Eighty-five percent of households reported that at least some or all household members are vaccinated.

With a goal of completing 210 household interviews, 176 interviews were completed for a completion rate of 83.8%.

Residents were asked to assess Kaua'i's local response to the pandemic, using a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 representing "very poor" and five representing "very good." The lowest rating (3.85) was for case investigation and contact tracing. This measure also had the highest proportion of

“don’t know” answers, from those who did not have direct experience with these functions. Testing availability, public information, and vaccine rollout and availability were all highly rated at 4.45, 4.44, and 4.42 respectively.

The final report on the CASPER survey will analyze emergency preparedness trends among Kaua’i residents over the five CASPER surveys completed from 2017 to 2022.

“We greatly appreciate the participation of Kaua’i residents in this island-wide survey effort that enables the Kaua’i District Health Office to better meet our community’s needs,” said Lauren Guest, Deputy District Health Officer, Kaua’i District Health Office.

The CASPER survey methodology was developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to rapidly assess the health and other resource needs of a community after a disaster. Survey teams went door-to-door on Kaua’i July 26-30, to selected households in 30 census tracts. Survey teams were comprised of DOH staff with support from the Kaua’i Medical Reserve Corps, and the American Red Cross.

This was the Department of Health’s fifth CASPER survey conducted on Kaua’i. View the preliminary 2022 report and prior CASPER survey reports, at: <https://health.hawaii.gov/kauai/>

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