



**JOINT PRESS RELEASE**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**31 July 2020**

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**Yancey and Mitchell County Physicians and SEARCH  
(Sustaining Essential and Rural Community Healthcare)  
Issue Open Letter Encouraging Responsible Social Distancing  
Measures to Continue to Combat COVID-19 in Yancey County**

Joining the Yancey County Office of Emergency Management, PATH (Partners Aligned Toward Health), the Town of Burnsville and the Yancey County Economic Development Commission in partnering in a local campaign to promote mask wearing and responsible social distancing measures, Yancey and Mitchell County physicians, along with local health advocacy non-profit SEARCH (Sustaining Essential and Rural Community Healthcare) have issued an open letter to all Yancey County citizens urging them to continue to adopt responsible social distancing measures to continue to fight to curb the spread of the COVID-19 health crisis in Yancey County. The letter in its entirety is as follows:

July 29, 2020  
Mitchell – Yancey Medical Society  
116 Seven Mile Ridge Rd.  
Burnsville, NC 28714

As members of the health care community of Mitchell and Yancey Counties, we wish to encourage **everyone** to practice the 3 W's:

**W**ash your hands (often, after touching things others have touched)  
**W**ait. Keep your distance (stay 6 ft apart=two adult arms lengths)  
**W**ear a mask (properly fitting, whenever near others)

One of the wonderful things about this area is that people truly care about each other. We also all care about our freedom and about the health of our families, our neighbors and our businesses. Practicing the 3 W's will allow us ALL to be safe and regain our freedom faster. It will slow the surge of COVID cases, allowing us to do our jobs, go to school, frequent local businesses, travel more freely, worship the way we wish, and be with the ones we love sooner.

As medical providers, we particularly want to support the rights of the more vulnerable, our older citizens and those with health problems, to be able to do necessary things safely. If all establishments and events asked all to wear masks, everyone will feel more secure and be at a lower risk of infection.

By doing what we need to do, we can get through this difficult time, TOGETHER.

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To continue to support the efforts of our citizens to responsibly socially distance during this time, through this partnership of local government, business organizations and local healthcare nonprofits, masks continue to be distributed to the Yancey County Health Department, Blue Ridge Medical Center, Yancey County Courthouse, Burnsville Town Hall, local fire departments, and through food distribution efforts. Those interested in obtaining masks for their personal use, for their businesses, or pastors seeking to obtain masks for their congregations and places of worship can contact [yanceycountyem@gmail.com](mailto:yanceycountyem@gmail.com) or may call the Burnsville Police Department at (828) 682-2420 and provide organization name, point of contact and the number of masks needed.

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