



DATE: May 26, 2016

TO: Southern Nevada District Board of Health Members

FROM: Joseph Iser, MD, DrPH, MSc, Chief Health Officer

SUBJECT: Chief Health Officer Report

FDA Tobacco Product Update

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a final rule that extends its authority to regulate all tobacco products that were previously excluded from the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act. Now included under the act are e-cigarettes and vape pens, all cigars, hookah, tobacco, pipe tobacco, and nicotine gel, as well as other tobacco products.

This critical milestone rejected a proposal by the tobacco industry to exempt “premium cigars” and includes health warnings, a national prohibition on sales to minors, and rules to prohibit manufacturers from making unproven health claims. The FDA also plans to extend the current ban to candy- and fruit-flavored cigarettes and cigars. Unfortunately, the agency did not commit to a timetable for this action.

The new rule also lacks measures to protect children from e-cigarettes and the irresponsible marketing tactics employed by the tobacco and vaping industries. At this time, the industries can continue to produce and market sweet e-cigarette flavors such as cotton candy, chocolate, and strawberry. This is a disappointing omission as the FDA’s own research shows that e-cigarette use by middle and high school students tripled from 2013 to 2014.

While tremendous progress has been made to curb tobacco use among youth and adults, more than 480,000 people still die each year as a result of smoking, and more than 90 percent of all smokers report first trying cigarettes as a teen.

We predict that the tobacco and vaping industries will now try to forestall any efforts at the state or local effort to continue to regulate e-cigarettes. While the FDA rule is a step in the right direction and additional rules will likely be enacted, this is only a very early, very preliminary step towards protecting the health of those who use e-cigarettes and those exposed to e-cigarettes.

The rule becomes effective August 8, 2016.

Zika Update

The Southern Nevada Health District has reported five cases of Zika virus in Clark County residents as of May 10, 2016. All patients reported by the Health District are travel associated cases and updates are being posted to the [website](#) as they are confirmed. The Health District advises anyone who is concerned about a possible exposure to Zika virus and who has traveled to an area where the virus is circulating to consult with a health care provider. A Zika virus diagnosis is based on travel history, clinical signs and symptoms, and laboratory blood tests. Additional information about Zika virus disease is available on the [CDC website](#).

Accreditation Update

The Community Health Assessment has been distributed and posted on the Health District website for public comment. The assessment identifies the community's health-related needs and strengths, as well as the resources available to address and improve health outcomes. The Community Health Assessment is an important component of the accreditation process and is a collaborative effort that includes a number of community partners and individuals.

The finalized assessment will serve as a guidance document for strategic planning for the Health District and community partners.

Community Meetings

- Met with Air Quality staff to discuss joint issues
- Met with Dr. Thomas Schwenk, Dean, UNSOM, VP for Health Sciences, to discuss future collaborative efforts
- Provided media interviews, including interviews regarding Zika and Goodsprings lead incident
- Met with CCSD staff to discuss joint issues
- Met with John Auerbach, CDC, to discuss PHEP grant and collaborations
- Completed rotation with UNSOM Drs. Sarah Rustamova and Ian Frani
- Started rotation with Dr. Paul Chen
- Met with Zika Planning Team
- Met with City of Mesquite Councilman regarding the Nevada Clean Indoor Air Act
- Participated in Nevada Public Health Foundation board meeting teleconference
- Met with Well Health Quality Care to discuss current agreement
- Participated in Nevada Health Authority conference call
- Met with Culinary Health Fund to discuss current agreement
- Participated in Big Cities Health Coalition teleconference