



**DATE:** August 24, 2023

**TO:** Southern Nevada District Board of Health Members

**FROM:** Fermin Leguen, MD, MPH, District Health Officer *FL*

**SUBJECT:** District Health Officer Report

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### Back-to-School/National Immunization Awareness Month

The Southern Nevada Health District began reminding parents and guardians early that all students enrolled in Nevada public, private or charter schools must be up to date on mandatory vaccines before classes begin. Health District immunization clinics offered expanded dates and times to accommodate the back-to-school rush.

The following vaccinations are required for students enrolling in the Clark County School District (CCSD): chickenpox (varicella), hepatitis A, hepatitis B, polio, tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis (DTaP and Tdap), quadrivalent meningitis, and measles-mumps-rubella (MMR). Parents who recently moved to Nevada were made aware that hepatitis A vaccination is required in the state, and immunizations that were up to date in other states that do not require hepatitis A vaccination might not be current in Nevada.

Students enrolled in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade in Nevada schools must receive the meningococcal vaccine (MenACWY) before the start of the 2023-2024 school year. MenACWY is also required for students entering 7<sup>th</sup> grade and for students entering grades 8-12 who are new to Nevada schools, including private or charter schools. In addition, 7<sup>th</sup>-graders must receive their tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis (Tdap) vaccine. For additional information on required vaccinations, visit Immunize Nevada's [School Vaccinations](#) page.

The Health District is highlighting the importance of routine vaccinations for people of all ages during National Immunization Awareness Month. Vaccines have saved lives for more than a century, but serious disease remains a threat. The World Health Organization estimates that vaccines save an estimated 2-3 million lives globally each year. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), "There are more than 25 safe and effective vaccines to prevent diseases, protect health throughout the lifespan, and help to prevent and mitigate outbreaks."

The success of vaccines such as MMR, Tdap and HPV is well-documented. However, even today, people still become seriously ill or die from diseases that vaccines can help prevent. This is why it's important to stay up to date on recommended vaccines. Since some protections stemming from vaccines can fade over time, boosters may be needed to maintain protection.

Some vaccine-preventable diseases can have serious complications. These diseases include seasonal influenza, hepatitis B and HPV. In such cases, vaccination can provide protection not only against the disease itself but also against the dangerous consequences it can bring.

### **National Health Center Week**

The Southern Nevada Community Health Center celebrated National Health Center Week August 6-12, by raising awareness of the services it offers, showing appreciation for patients with giveaways and raffle prizes, and celebrating its dedicated employees at its Community Health Center locations.

National Health Center Week is a time to recognize how community health centers touch many aspects of community life and are a critical component of the public health priorities of increasing access to care and improving health outcomes for the most vulnerable populations. On a national level:

- One in 11 Americans are health center patients. Of those:
  - 20% are uninsured
  - 59% are publicly insured
  - 90% are low-income
  - 65% are members of racial and/or ethnic minority groups

At the local level, the Health District's Federally Qualified Health Center (Community Health Center) began operations in 2019 at its main location at 280 S. Decatur, Blvd., Las Vegas, NV 89107. Services provided by the Community Health Center include primary care, family planning, Ryan White, behavioral health, sexual health, pharmacy and telehealth services. A second location opened in August 2022, at the Fremont Public Health Center at 2380 E. Fremont St., Las Vegas, NV 89104, and a satellite location at All Saints Sexual Health Clinic, 4201 W. Washington Ave., Las Vegas, NV 89107, provides sexual health services.

In 2022, the Community Health Center served 6,242 patients for a total of 16,642 patient encounters, of which 9,117 (55%) were delivered to uninsured patients. The Community Health Center offers services on a sliding fee scale, which allows patients to pay according to their income and federal poverty levels, and no one is turned away due to an inability to pay. In 2022, sliding fee adjustments saved patients a total of \$2.5 million for health care services provided at the Health District's Community Health Center.

Community Health Centers look beyond their patients' medical charts to address the root cause of their symptoms such as social and mental health needs, or access to resources. They collaborate with community partners to improve the long-term outcomes for patients who represent some of the most medically vulnerable and underserved populations in Southern Nevada.

During National Health Center Week, the Health District reaffirmed its committed to supporting the Community Health Center and to ensuring the patients who need it most have access to health care that is affordable and provided in a culturally respectful environment.

For more information about the Southern Nevada Community Health Center, its locations and services, go to [www.snchc.org](http://www.snchc.org). For information about National Health Center Week, visit <https://healthcenterweek.org/about-nhcw/>.

## **Extreme Heat**

The Health District continues to urge people to take precautions during extreme heat conditions. Triple-digit temperatures can persist until early fall in Southern Nevada. Older adults, the very young, and those with mental illness or chronic medical conditions have the highest risk of heat-related illness. However, anyone can be affected if participating in strenuous physical exercise in hotter weather. Everyone should take precautions to reduce their risk. Recommended precautions include:

- Plan activities earlier in the morning or later in the evening.
- Dress in light, loose-fitting clothes.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat to protect the face and use sunscreen.
- If unaccustomed to working or exercising in a hot environment, start slowly and gradually increase the pace.
- Avoid being out in the sun for extended periods.
- When planning extended outdoor activities, bring an adequate supply of water. Drink plenty of water at regular intervals, regardless of activity level.
- Avoid alcohol or liquids that contain high amounts of sugar.
- Plan well-balanced light meals.
- Check the local weather forecasts and plan activities accordingly.
- Check on the status of homebound neighbors and relatives.

The Health District cautions that people who have epilepsy or heart, kidney, or liver disease; are on fluid-restrictive or low-salt diets; or have a problem with fluid retention should consult a doctor before increasing liquid intake or changing what they eat and drink. More information on extreme heat is available on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website at <https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/index.html>. For additional summer safety tips, visit SNHD's website at <https://www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/safer-summer>.

## **Community Meetings**

### **Week ending 07/30:**

#### **Monthly:**

- Participated in the individual Southern Nevada District Board of Health Agenda Review meeting with Councilwoman Brune, Councilwoman Gallo, Commissioner Segerblom, Commissioner Kirkpatrick, Mayor Hardy
- Participated in the Southern Nevada Community Health Center Governing Board meeting
- Participated in the Southern Nevada District Board of Health Nomination of Officers Committee meeting
- Attended the Big Cities Health Coalition (BCHC) Monthly Member Call

#### **Professional Development/Conferences:**

- Attended the "Homeless Clients: Compassionate solutions to problematic behavior" webinar facilitated by the Homeless Training Institute

### **Week ending 07/23:**

#### **Monthly:**

- Participated in the Southern Nevada Community Health Center Finance & Audit Committee meeting
- Participated in the Clark County Medical Society Board of Trustees meeting

Professional Development/Conferences:

- Attended the “Diagnosing and Treating Congenital Syphilis Training Program” webinar facilitated by The Pacific AIDS Education & Training Center-Nevada

Ad-hoc Meetings/Events:

- Participated in a meeting with representatives from the Clark County School District (CCSC) regarding Tuberculosis Risk Assessment Screening
- Attended the Senate Bill 118 Ceremonial Signing in Fallon, Nevada

**Week ending 07/16:**

Professional Development/Conferences:

- Attended the “2023 NACCHO 360 Conference”

Ad-hoc Meetings/Events:

- Attended a meeting with Drs. Joe Greer, Karin Esposito, & Gregory Schneider (Roseman University College of Medicine)