



DATE: October 26, 2023

TO: Southern Nevada District Board of Health Members

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

SUBJECT: District Health Officer Report

Updated COVID-19 Vaccines

The Southern Nevada Health District began offering updated COVID-19 vaccines at its clinics in September. The roll-out follows recommendations by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, amid an increase in COVID-19 hospitalizations and concerns about the spread of new variants.

- Everyone 5 years and older should get one dose of an updated COVID-19 vaccine to protect against serious illness from COVID-19.
- Children 6 months to 4 years of age need multiple doses of COVID-19 vaccines to be up to date, including at least one dose of updated COVID-19 vaccine.
- People who are moderately or severely immunocompromised may get additional doses of updated COVID-19 vaccine.

More information about the vaccine recommendations is available on the CDC [website](#).

The Health District is urging everyone eligible to get both the COVID-19 and flu vaccine at one of its clinics or a pharmacy or health care provider office. The Health District has not received the RSV immunizations but will be offering them to infants, patients who are pregnant and those who are over 60 years of age when those products arrive.

For more information about Health District clinics go to www.snhd.info/immunizations.

Influenza Season

As the 2023-2024 influenza season gets underway, the Health District is offering flu vaccines at its clinics. In keeping with CDC guidelines, the Health District strongly recommends everyone 6 months of age and older get the vaccine. It is especially important for those at higher risk of developing serious complications from the flu, including people 65 years of age and older, as well as those with underlying medical conditions. It is also important to protect people more likely to be exposed to both flu and COVID-19, including health care workers.

During the 2022-2023 flu season, the severity of respiratory illness activity in Clark County ranged from minimal to moderate, according to the CDC Influenza-like Illness Surveillance Network (ILINet). There were 50 deaths and 874 hospitalizations associated specifically with influenza in the 2022-2023 season. These numbers far exceeded the 2021-2022 flu season, during which 13 deaths and

411 hospitalizations were recorded. Flu surveillance in Clark County for the 2023-2024 influenza season begins October 1 and runs through May 18. The weekly Influenza Surveillance Snapshot and Influenza Report by Age Group will be available on SNHD's [website](#).

Hispanic Heritage Month

In observance of Hispanic Heritage Month, September 15 to October 15, the Health District paid tribute to the generations of Hispanic Americans who have positively influenced and enriched our nation. During the month, the agency highlighted its programs that create opportunities to improve the health and well-being of Hispanic populations in Southern Nevada.

In Clark County, 24.6% of Hispanic or Latino adults were in fair or poor health in 2021. Among Hispanic adults ages 18 and over in Clark County, approximately 38% had obesity. Diabetes prevalence in Hispanic adults was slightly higher than that in non-Hispanic white adults ages 18 and over (12% and 11%, respectively). Nearly 12% of Hispanic adults in Clark County smoked cigarettes in 2021. Programs and special opportunities offered during Hispanic Heritage Month to specifically address these issues and improve health outcomes included:

Diabetes Self-Management, Education, and Support classes in Spanish, hosted by the Health District, that provided education and resources to help participants self-manage their type 2 diabetes. The classes were open to anyone with type 2 diabetes as well as people with prediabetes or who are at risk for developing type 2 diabetes. Four classes were held at the Health District's Main Public Health Center, 280 S. Decatur, Las Vegas, NV 89107 in September.

The Health District's Por Mi Por Ti Por Nosotros, Viva Saludable Latinx initiative, offered in partnership with the Mexican Patriotic Committee, supported a tobacco-free lifestyle at the annual Fiestas Patrias event. It was held September 16, at the Sammy Davis Jr. Festival Plaza, 770 Twin Lakes Dr., Las Vegas, NV 89107. The Health District provided cessation resources as well as culturally and linguistically tailored information on the dangers of smoking and vaping. More information about the program is available at www.pormiporti.org.

Additionally, the Health District's Por Mi Por Ti Por Nosotros, Viva Saludable Latinx initiative hosted an 8-week in-person tobacco cessation program in Spanish. Participants were able to develop a personalized plan to help them quit, while obtaining professional support and free nicotine replacement therapy. The group sessions took place at the East Las Vegas Community Center, [250 N. Eastern Ave., Las Vegas, NV 89101](#).

The Health District's [Viva Saludable website](#) has information on a variety of chronic disease prevention and self-management health topics, provided in Spanish.

National Latinx AIDS Awareness Day

The National Latinx AIDS Awareness Day observance is an opportunity to help address the disproportionate impact of HIV on Hispanic/Latinx communities. It is a day to promote HIV testing and effective ways to prevent, treat and stop the transmission of HIV and bring communities together. As part of these activities, the Health District participated in the Southern Nevada Health

Consortium's free health fair on October 14, at Chuck Minker Sports Complex. Activities included rapid HIV testing, information on PrEP and PEP, syphilis testing, STD education, substance use resources, vendors and music.

According to the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, in the U.S., approximately 1.2 million people have HIV, with Hispanic/Latino people disproportionately affected. According to the CDC, in 2021, there were an estimated 36,136 new HIV infections. Of the new infections, 29% (10,467) were among Hispanic/Latino people. Issues such as HIV stigma, poverty and limited access to high-quality health care influence health outcomes and drive inequities. More information is available at the CDC's [HIV and Hispanics/Latinos website](#).

National Coming Out Day

The Health District joined with the LGBTQ+ community in observing National Coming Out Day on Wednesday, October 11. The annual observance calls attention to stigmas that affect the LGBTQ+ community, including those associated with HIV. In conjunction with National Coming Out Day, The Health District offered free HIV tests on October 11, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at its Fremont Public Health Center, located at 2830 E. Fremont St., Las Vegas, NV 89104. Free condoms, in addition to information about PrEP were also available.

The Health District regularly offers Express HIV testing at no cost Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. at its Sexual Health Clinic, located at 280 S. Decatur Blvd., Las Vegas, NV 89107. Express testing was also available from 8 a.m. – noon and 1 – 4 p.m. on October 11, for symptomatic clients at its All Saints Sexual Health Clinic, located at 4201 W. Washington Ave., Las Vegas, NV 89107. Additional testing was available for syphilis, gonorrhea and chlamydia. More information is available at the [Sexual Health Clinic](#) page on the Health District's website. Free HIV testing was also available at the Arleen Cooper Clinic at The Center, located at 401 S. Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas, NV 89101. Additionally, the Health District's Collect2Protect program provided free at-home HIV tests. The kits are available on the [Collect2Protect](#) website and provide a convenient and private testing option.

About 13 percent of the approximately 1.2 million people in the U.S. who have HIV don't know it and need testing. HIV testing is recommended for everyone between the ages of 13 and 64 at least once as part of their routine health care. Getting tested and learning their HIV status can help keep individuals healthy by either engaging in HIV prevention services or HIV treatment to gain an undetectable status. When a person is considered undetectable, the virus cannot be sexually transmitted to their partners. Those who are HIV-negative can take further control of their sexual health decisions by exploring additional prevention options like PrEP to help maintain their HIV-negative status.

Community Meetings

Week ending 10/01:

Monthly:

- Participated in the individual Southern Nevada District Board of Health Agenda Review meeting with Councilwoman Brune, Commissioner Kirkpatrick, Councilwoman Gallo, Councilman Knudsen, MPT Black, Scott Nielson, Bobbette Bond, Mayor Hardy, Commissioner Segerblom
- Participated in the Southern Nevada District Board of Health meeting

Quarterly:

- Attended the FQHC Quarterly meeting

Annually:

- Attended the Big Cities Health Coalition (BCHC) Fall meeting

Professional Development/Conferences:

- Attended the “Pain in the Nation 2023: The Epidemics of Alcohol, Drug, and Suicide Deaths” webinar facilitated by the Trust for America’s Health (TFAH)
- Attended the “Creative Strategies to Improve Health Disparities in U.S./Mexico Border Communities webinar

Ad-hoc Meetings:

- Introductory meeting with representatives from FORVIS LLP

Week ending 09/24:

Monthly:

- Attended the Big Cities Health Coalition (BCHC) Monthly Member Call

Annually:

- Attended the Nevada Primary Care Association (NVPCA) Annual Board Retreat and Members meeting
- Attended the Fourth Annual Medical Student Research Symposium at the UNLV School of Medicine

Professional Development/Conferences:

- Attended the Nevada Primary Care Association (NVPCA) Healthcare Conference & Reception

Ad-hoc Meetings:

- Meeting with Commissioner Kirkpatrick regarding the septic conversion

Week ending 09/17:

Bi-weekly (every two weeks):

- Attended the Mpox Briefing facilitated by the HHS Office of Intergovernmental and External Affairs (IEA)

Monthly:

- Attended the Monthly County Health Officer meeting

Quarterly:

- Attended the Graduate Medical Education Committee (GMEC) meeting
- Attended the Board of Governors Meeting (BOG) facilitated by the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department and the Southern Nevada Counter Terrorism Center

Annually:

- Attended the Nevada Primary Care Association (NVPCA) Annual Members meeting

Professional Development/Conferences:

- Attended the “Passing Local Flavored Tobacco Restrictions” webinar facilitated by the Big Cities Health Coalition (BCHC)
- Attended the “What Resettlement Partners Should Know About Public Health Reportable Conditions” webinar facilitated by Minnesota Department of Health

Ad-hoc Meetings:

- Meeting with Jose Melendrez, Chair, and Donna Feliz-Barrows, Vice-Chair, of the SNCHC Governing Board, regarding the Project Director Transition

Week ending 09/10:

Monthly:

- Attended the Big Cities Health Coalition (BCHC) Monthly Member Call

Professional Development/Conferences:

- Attended the “Management of Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) Failure in People with HIV” webinar facilitated by International Antiviral Society (IAS-USA)

Ad-hoc Meetings/Events:

- Meeting with the Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada regarding Refugee Providers and Local Community Consultation
- Orientation - Reviewers for Asynchronous Interviews at the Kirk Kerkorian School of Medicine at UNLV
- Attended a meeting with Drs. Joe Greer, Karin Esposito, & Gregory Schneider (Roseman University College of Medicine)

Week ending 09/03:

Bi-weekly (every two weeks):

- Attended the Mpox Briefing facilitated by the HHS Office of Intergovernmental and External Affairs (IEA)

Monthly:

- Participated in the Nevada Primary Care Association (NVPCA) Policy Committee meeting

Quarterly:

- Participated in the State Board of Health meeting

Professional Development/Conferences:

- Attended the “Doxycycline for Bacterial STI Prevention” webinar facilitated by The Pacific AIDS Education & Training Center Nevada
- Attended the “2023-2024 Recommendations for Influenza Prevention and Treatment in Children: An Update for Pediatric Providers” webinar facilitated by the CDC Clinician Outreach and Communication Activity (COCA)

Ad-hoc Meetings/Events:

- Participated in a meeting with Huron Consulting regarding the Health District’s Strategic Plan
- Participated in a meeting with Father Rafael Pereira regarding the clinic at the All Saints Episcopal Church