



**DATE:** April 25, 2019

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

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

**SUBJECT:** Chief Health Officer Report

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### **Influenza Update**

Influenza surveillance for Clark County, Nevada includes data collected from local acute care hospitals and other health care providers. During week 14 (March 31-April 6), influenza activity continued to decrease, but it remains elevated at the local and national level. In Nevada, the geographic spread of influenza was widespread, but influenza-like illness activity (ILI) was low. In Clark County, 864 influenza-associated hospitalizations have been reported, with 63 percent being people 50 years of age or older. There have been 31 influenza-associated deaths reported, including four deaths in children under the age of 18. The proportion of emergency room and urgent care clinic visits for ILI was 3.9 percent in week 14, which was similar to week 13 (3.8 percent). Approximately 55 percent of area emergency room and urgent care clinic visits for ILI were made by children under 18 years of age. Influenza A was the dominant type circulating. The Southern Nevada Health District will continue to update the public on the flu season and encourage people to get vaccinated. Health District influenza surveillance updates are available at

<http://www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/stats-reports/influenza-surveillance.php>.

### **Mosquito Surveillance**

As temperatures increase in Southern Nevada, the Health District is reminding the public it is the start of mosquito season for Southern Nevada. It is also urging the public to “Fight the Bite” by eliminating standing water around their home, preventing mosquito bites by wearing an EPA-registered repellent, and reporting mosquito activity to the Health District by calling (702) 759-1633.

Health District surveillance activities include setting traps in potential breeding areas that may include public and private property. The Mosquito Surveillance Program uses a few different types of traps that people may see in parks, washes, drainage ditches, or areas of standing water on public property. Traps set on private property are only placed with the permission of the owner. Each trap provides a different method of attracting mosquitoes and targets specific species. Traps used by the Health District include:

**Encephalitis Vector Surveillance (EVS) traps:** Designed to attract host-seeking female mosquitoes using carbon dioxide (dry ice) as the primary attractant. This trap is designed to capture several types of mosquitoes including *Culex*, *Anopheles*, and *Aedes*.

Gravid traps: Designed to capture egg-laden (gravid) female mosquitoes using a baited water solution intended to simulate stagnant water found in the environment. This trap is designed to primarily capture *Culex* mosquitoes.

BG Sentinel Traps: These traps utilize color cues, artificially generated air plumes, and a scent lure to attract mosquitoes. This trap is designed to attract *Aedes albopictus* and *Aedes aegypti*.

Mosquitoes in Southern Nevada have been found with viruses that cause West Nile and St. Louis Encephalitis. In addition to the mosquitoes that can transmit these diseases, the Health District has also identified *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes in Clark County. This is the species that can spread diseases like Zika, dengue fever, and chikungunya. To date, no mosquitoes have tested positive for these viruses. More information on the Health District's Mosquito Surveillance activities is available on its website at [www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/programs/mosquito-surveillance/](http://www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/programs/mosquito-surveillance/). For additional information and prevention tips visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website at [www.cdc.gov/features/stopmosquitoes/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/features/stopmosquitoes/index.html).

### **STD Awareness Month**

In 2017, Clark County ranked first in the nation for rates of primary and secondary syphilis and second for rates of congenital syphilis. Cases of congenital syphilis have been steadily increasing at an alarming rate in Clark County. In 2016, there were nine reported cases, in 2017 there were 20 cases, and in 2018 there were 24 cases of congenital syphilis in Clark County.

To address this issue, the Southern Nevada Health District's Office of Epidemiology and Disease Surveillance collaborated with the Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health to develop a Congenital Syphilis Academic Detailing Packet that contains resources for providers and patients. Academic detailing is an innovative one-on-one outreach technique that helps medical providers deliver education-based care to their patients. Each academic detailing packet provided by the Health District contains both provider and patient education material along with disease reporting information, case management resources, and recommended discussion points for providers to discuss with their patients. The resources are created using current, evidence-based sources of data to assist medical professionals in providing the most up to date, effective treatments for their patients.

This initiative is vital to improving the health of Southern Nevadans. Rates of all STDs and HIV in Clark County are higher than in Nevada as a whole and in the nation. In 2017, Clark County's primary and secondary syphilis rate was 24.1 per 100,000 population compared to the U.S rate of 9.5. The congenital syphilis rate was 76.7 per 100,000 live births. The U.S rate was 23.3.

2017 Clark County rates for Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, and HIV:  
(Rate per 100,000 population)

	Chlamydia	Gonorrhea	New HIV Diagnosis Rate
Clark County	581.7	2213	20.2
Nevada	553.1	187.8	16.5
United States	528.8	171.9	11.8

If left untreated, sexually transmitted diseases can increase a person's risk of giving or getting HIV. In women, they can cause infertility or pregnancy complications. The Health District and partner initiative encourages patients to interrupt the increase of STDs with these three steps:

1. TALK: Talk openly about STDs with your partners and health care providers.
2. TEST: Get tested. It's the only way to know if you have an STD.
3. TREAT: If you have an STD, work with your provider to get the right medicine.

These high rates of syphilis and cases of congenital syphilis should never be an acceptable outcome. All of this can be prevented with early detection which is accomplished by testing all pregnant women for syphilis – this is not just recommended; it's required by statute. In Nevada, state law dictates that pregnant women be tested during the first and third trimester of their pregnancy. With the continued support of its partners, the Health District is confident that syphilis elimination is an achievable goal in Southern Nevada.

More information about syphilis is available on the Health District website at [www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/Health-Topics/syphilis/](http://www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/Health-Topics/syphilis/) and on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at [www.cdc.gov/std/syphilis/default.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/std/syphilis/default.htm).

### **2019 Legislative Session**

The Health District is monitoring proposed legislation that would have a direct impact on the agency, would serve to promote public health in the community, or would impact services, programs, or funding. April 12 was the first committee passage deadline. Status for bills of interest to the Health District include:

#### **AB97 – Assembly Committee on Health and Human Services: Failed deadline**

Summary: Revises provisions relating to certain expenditures of money for public health. (BDR 40-529)

Provided for the Public Health Improvement Fund. Opportunities to incorporate measures into other public health bills will be explored.

#### **AB317 – Assembly Committee on Health and Human Services: Amend, and do pass as amended**

Summary: Revises provisions governing the licensing and operation of certain medical facilities. (BDR 40-1034)

Revises provisions governing the approval of trauma centers. The Health District has been monitoring this bill. As amended, trauma designation in Clark County would be reversed. The Division of Public and Behavioral Health would conduct a needs assessment. Once the state establishes a need, the District Board of Health would then consider trauma designation.

Health District staff have questions regarding the process, authority, and available state resources related to this amended bill language.

#### **AB470 – Assembly Committee on Health and Human Services: Failed deadline**

Summary: Revises provisions relating to public health. (BDR 15-813)

This bill would have modernized the Nevada Clean Indoor Air Act to include e- vapor product from being used in the same public places where traditional cigarettes and other smoked tobacco products are prohibited. It would also raise the legal sales age for purchasing all tobacco products from 18 to 21 and contained additional language that eliminated inconsistent and conflicting provisions within the current law. A hearing scheduled for the bill was canceled. No additional hearings were canceled, and the bill failed the deadline.

#### **SB171 – Senate Committee on Commerce and Labor: Amend, and do pass as amended**

Summary: Provides for the collection of information from certain providers of health care. (BDR 54-73)

SB171 would require laboratories to report chronic disease markers to the Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health. The Southern Nevada Health District supports this mandate as chronic disease markers provide vital information about a population's risk for developing chronic diseases as well as increased cancer deaths. Currently, the Division of Public and Behavioral Health relies solely on self-reported data for this information or on medical claims data collected through Medicaid or hospital discharge billing. Information collected through laboratory reporting would allow the Health District to obtain a more robust, accurate representation of the population's health and to better provide targeted services.

#### **SB263 – Senate Committee on Revenue and Economic Development: Re-referred to Committee on Finance. Exemption effective**

Summary: Revises provisions relating to the regulation and taxation of certain vapor products and tobacco products. (BDR 32-700)

SB263 proposes to bring vapor products under the existing tax structure of other tobacco products. Tobacco-tax increases are proven to reduce use of these products by making them too expensive for many children to buy and give users another incentive to quit.

#### **SB418 – Senate Health and Human Service: Amend, and do pass as amended**

Summary: Revises provisions governing the distribution and sale of raw milk. (BDR 51-1073)

The amended language of this bill would allow for raw milk and raw milk products to be sold in Nevada with language that allows for lax oversight, and exemptions from oversight in some instances. The Health District and its local, state, and federal partners are on record opposing the sale of raw milk products. The dangers of consuming raw milk are well documented, with outbreaks directly linked to states where raw milk is legal and to dairy farms that sell the products.

## **Community Meetings**

### **Week of March 25**

- Met with Margaret Tran, Program Manager, American College of Preventive Medicine, regarding Global Health
- Testified on SB 238 – e-cigarette taxation at legislative session
- Participated in the Nevada Public Health Association APC conference call

### **Week of March 18**

- Facilitated the annual County Health Rankings meeting on March 19, 2019
- Provided media interviews as required
- Participated in Clark County Medical Society Board of Trustees meeting
- Met with Dr. Kartika Shetty and Dr. Dirjees Ahmed, Sunrise Hospital Internal Medical Program regarding potential collaborative efforts
- Participated in the Nevada Association of Local Health Officers meeting
- Met with Dr. DeValliere of the CDC to discuss CDC's Overdose Data to Action funding opportunity and next steps

### **Week of March 11**

- Attended the Big Cities Health Coalition and NACCHO Leadership meeting in Washington, DC
- Met with staff of Senators Catherine Cortez Masto and Jacky Rosen and Representative Steven Horsford regarding matters related to the Health District
- Met with Director of CDC regarding matters related to the Health District and possible future collaborative efforts

### **Week of March 4**

- Met with CDC staff to determine if the Health District is an acceptable location to host a CDC Epidemic Intelligence Service Officer (EISO)
- Met with Dr. Antonina Capurro, Nevada State Dental Officer and Dr. Christina Demopoulos, Associate Professor, Biomedical Sciences, UNLV School of Dental Medicine, regarding rural dental program
- Met with Kate Ingalsby, Regional Director for the Alzheimer's Association in Las Vegas and other Alzheimer's Association staff (Jeff Klein and Jeff Doucet) regarding Alzheimer's initiatives and education
- Participated in Nevada Public Health Institute teleconference
- Met with Hank Melton, new Nye County Health Officer, regarding matter related to the Health District and collaborative efforts
- Participated in Health Officers Association of California Board meeting
- Participated in Nevada Health Authority conference call
- Participated in Nevada State Board of Health meeting