



**DATE:** February 20, 2020

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

**FROM:** Fermin Leguen, MD, MPH, Acting Chief Health Officer

**SUBJECT:** Chief Health Officer Report

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### 2019 Novel Coronavirus Update

The Southern Nevada Health District is working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to closely monitor the outbreak of 2019 novel coronavirus first identified in Wuhan, China. According to the CDC, the potential global public health threat posed by this virus is high, but right now, the immediate risk to most Americans is low. Most cases are still limited to mainland China, and the virus is not currently spreading in the United States. The greatest risk is for people who have recently traveled to China or their close contacts.

Currently, no cases of the virus have been confirmed in Clark County. The Southern Nevada Public Health Laboratory will have the capacity to test for the novel coronavirus. This will allow the Health District to receive results in a timely manner. Only patients who meet the CDC criteria and have been assessed by a medical provider and the Health District will be tested. Moving forward and in keeping with its standard disease reporting practices, if additional Clark County residents do meet the CDC criteria of a person under investigation for the 2019 novel coronavirus and require testing, the Health District will only announce confirmed cases of the virus.

In keeping with updated CDC guidance, the Health District is monitoring Clark County residents who have returned from mainland China (outside of Hubei province). These are individuals who do not have symptoms after receiving a medical screening and are allowed to return home and be monitored under a 14-day self-quarantine. As of February 10, approximately 30,000 people have been screened at U.S. airports.

The Health District continues to provide important prevention messages to the public. Everyday precautions everyone can take to help prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses, including the novel coronavirus and seasonal flu include:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Clean your hands often by washing them with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- Hands should be cleaned after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

The use of facemasks is not recommended for the public at this time. Masks should be reserved for people who are sick, so they can protect others from getting infected. Additional prevention information is available at [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention-treatment.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention-treatment.html). Updated information about the 2019 novel coronavirus is available at <https://www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/coronavirus>.

### **2019-2020 Influenza Season Update**

Influenza activity in the United States declined in the first two weeks of the year but increased over the last three weeks. During week 5 (Jan. 26, 2020 – Feb. 1, 2020), influenza-like illness (ILI) activity was moderate and widespread in Nevada. In Clark County, 1,033 influenza-associated hospitalizations and 24 influenza-related deaths were reported to the Health District since the beginning of the current influenza season. The proportion of emergency department and urgent care clinic visits for ILI was 5.5 percent in week 5 which was similar to week 4 (5.6 percent). Approximately 45.5 percent of area emergency department and urgent care clinic visits for ILI were made by children under 18 years of age. Influenza A has become the dominant type circulating.

The Southern Nevada Health District's Office of Epidemiology and Disease Surveillance began its 2019-2020 influenza season surveillance activities on Oct. 1, 2019, and will continue through May 16, 2020. Weekly surveillance reports are available on the Health District website at [www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/news-info/statistics-surveillance-reports/influenza-surveillance/](http://www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/news-info/statistics-surveillance-reports/influenza-surveillance/).

### **Lung Injury Associated with the Use of E-cigarette, or Vaping, Products**

The CDC only reports hospitalized e-cigarette, or vaping, product use-associated lung injury (EVALI) cases and EVALI deaths regardless of hospitalization status. The CDC has removed non-hospitalized cases from previously reported case counts. As of Jan. 21, 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is reporting that 2,711 cases of EVALI from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and two U.S. territories. Sixty deaths have been confirmed in 27 states and the District of Columbia.

The Health District has reported six cases of EVALI in Clark County. All the individuals reported purchasing or acquiring their products from different sources, including friends, retail outlets, and through online purchases. An overview of the cases is available at [www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/Health-Topics/nevada-clean-indoor-air-act/outbreak-vaping-e-cigarette-related-lung-injuries/](http://www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/Health-Topics/nevada-clean-indoor-air-act/outbreak-vaping-e-cigarette-related-lung-injuries/).

The CDC identified vitamin E acetate as being strongly linked to the EVALI outbreak. It has been found in product samples tested by the FDA and state laboratories and in patient lung fluid samples tested by the CDC. It is important to note, the evidence is not sufficient rule out the contribution of other chemicals of concern, including chemicals in both THC or non-THC products.

The Health District, the CDC, and FDA continue to recommend that people not use THC-containing e-cigarette, or vaping, products. Vitamin E acetate should not be added to e-cigarette or vaping products. People should not add substances not intended by the manufacturer to any products, including products purchased through a licensed manufacturer. People should not buy any type of e-cigarette or vaping products, particularly those containing THC, from informal sources such as friends, or family, or in-person or online dealers. Devices and substances should not be modified or used in ways that are not intended by the manufacturer, including products purchased through retail establishments. People who currently use tobacco products who wish to quit smoking should use FDA-approved therapies. These products should never be used by youth, young adults, pregnant women, and people who do not currently use tobacco products. Nevada residents, ages 13 and older who are seeking help quitting tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, can contact the Nevada Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW or 1-855-DÉJELO-YA (1-855-335-3569) from a Nevada area code.

Up to date information on the outbreak is available on the CDC [website](#).

## **Community Meetings**

### Month of January:

- Attended State of the City Address in North Las Vegas
- Participated in Nevada Association of Local Health Officials (NALHO)
- Participated in SB263 plan with Julia Peek (HHS), Nicki Aaker (Carson City) Kevin Dick (Washoe)
- Participated in meeting with Emergency Managers to discuss coronavirus outbreak
- Meet with County Commissioners, Las Vegas Convention Center, and McCarran International Airport representatives to discuss coronavirus outbreak
- Participated in UNLV School of Medicine Applicant Interviews
- Met with representatives of AmeriHealth, a Medicaid-related managed care company interested in the Nurse Family Partnership
- Attended State of the City Address in Boulder City
- Attended Legislative Committee on Health Care
- Attended Nevada State Medical Association