



DATE: September 26, 2019

TO: Southern Nevada District Board of Health Members

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

SUBJECT: Chief Health Officer Report

FQHC Grant

The Southern Nevada Health District received a New Access Point grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to facilitate the implementation of a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) at its 280 S. Decatur location. The grant provides \$650,000 in year one to the Health District. Services delivered by the FQHC will include management of acute conditions in adults and children, family planning, behavioral health, oral health, pharmacy, and treatment of sexually transmitted infections. The target population for the FQHC resides in the 89107 ZCTA.

Severe Respiratory Illness Linked to E-cigarette Use

On Sept. 11, 2019, the Southern Nevada Health District reported Nevada's first confirmed case of severe respiratory illness linked to e-cigarette products in a person under the age of 18. The youth was hospitalized with respiratory symptoms that met the case definition established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). A pulmonary infection has not been identified which would have provided alternative diagnosis. The patient was released from the hospital and is recovering.

The Health District continues to advise people not to use vaping products and e-cigarettes. These products should never be used by youth, young adults, pregnant women, and people who do not currently use tobacco products. Even people who currently use tobacco products who wish to quit smoking should use FDA-approved therapies. Symptoms associated with the reported illnesses include:

- Respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, or chest pain)
- Gastrointestinal symptoms (nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea)
- Non-specific symptoms (fatigue, fever, or weight loss)

People who use e-cigarettes and experience any of these symptoms are advised to seek medical care right away. People seeking help quitting tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, can contact the Nevada Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-Quit-Now or 1-855-DÉJÉLO-YA (1-855-335-3569) from a Nevada area code.

As of September 11, there had been 380 confirmed and probable cases of lung disease associated with e-cigarette product use, or vaping, reported to the CDC by 36 states and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Six deaths have been confirmed; with the most recent reported on September 10. NOTE: The CDC's case report was revised to only include confirmed and probable cases. Previously reported numbers included possible cases still under investigation by local and state health departments. These numbers change frequently. The CDC continues to report that it has not identified any specific substance or e-cigarette product that is linked in all cases. Many but not all patients report using e-cigarette products that contain cannabinoid products such as tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). Up to date information is available on the CDC [website](#).

Solar Parking Structure

The Health District has been exploring options to build a photovoltaic solar parking structure at its main facility at 280. S. Decatur Blvd. to become more energy efficient and environmentally responsible. The Health District will be requesting proposals for the design and construction of a parking structure that will be cost neutral to the agency for a minimum of 20 years, when factoring in reduced electricity payments. The Health District is also interested in exploring alternative financing options, including a Power Purchase Agreement, that would allow it to benefit from steady, predictable energy costs as well as reduce current energy costs.

Hepatitis A Outbreak

In June, the Health District declared an outbreak of acute hepatitis A in Clark County. Since November 2018, the Health District has reported 89 outbreak-associated cases of hepatitis A. One person has died. Of the reported cases, more than 92 percent were among those who used drugs (injection or non-injection), and more than 80 percent were among those experiencing homelessness. Eighty-seven percent had been hospitalized. Weekly hepatitis A outbreak reports and additional resources are available on the Health District's website at www.SNHD.info/hep-a-control.

Other risk factors for hepatitis A infection include:

- Men who have sex with men.
- People with chronic liver disease, including cirrhosis, hepatitis B, or hepatitis C.
- People who have an occupational risk for infection.
- People traveling to or working in countries where hepatitis A is common.
- People with direct contact with people who have hepatitis A.
- People with clotting-factor disorders.
- People working with nonhuman primates.
- People who are currently or were recently incarcerated.

Hepatitis A vaccination is the best prevention against the virus. Since the outbreak announcement, the Health District has administered 1,614 hepatitis A vaccinations to adults ages 18 and older. A total of 2,921 hepatitis A vaccinations have been administered to adults by all providers in Clark County.

The Health District continues to recommend that health care workers review their immunization history to ensure staff who may be caring for ill patients are up to date with their hepatitis A vaccinations. Pre-vaccination serologic testing is not required for the vaccine to be administered.

Arbovirus Update

As of Sept. 13, 2019, the Health District has received reports of 41 cases of West Nile virus, with 31 cases having had the more serious neuroinvasive form of the illness. The Health District's Mosquito Surveillance Program has submitted more than 41,600 mosquitoes to the Southern Nevada Public Health Laboratory for testing. Mosquitoes have tested positive for West Nile virus in 43 unique ZIP codes and St. Louis encephalitis in 15 ZIP codes.

The CDC reports that as of September 4, a total of 45 states and the District of Columbia have reported West Nile virus infection in people, birds, or mosquitoes. There have been 326 cases of West Nile virus disease reported to the CDC as of this date. Of those cases, 207 (63 percent) were classified as neuroinvasive disease.

The Health District continues to remind the public that illnesses caused by West Nile virus and St. Louis encephalitis can be prevented. The most effective way to prevent disease is to avoid getting bitten by mosquitoes. Use an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered repellent, wear long-sleeved shirts, pants, and treat clothing and gear to control mosquitoes. The Health District also urges the public to eliminate breeding sources around their homes.

Health care providers should be vigilant for symptoms of these viruses and order appropriate testing when suspected. West Nile virus and St. Louis encephalitis are closely related, and both cause acute febrile illness and neurologic disease. There are commercially available laboratory tests for acute West Nile virus infection. All St. Louis encephalitis virus testing must be performed by a public health laboratory. More information and testing options are available on the Health District [Public Health Advisories website](#).

More information on the Health District's Mosquito Surveillance activities is available on its website at 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.

Community Meetings

Week of August 26

- Met with Dr. Nicole Green, Los Angeles County Public Health Laboratory Manager, to conduct a peer site visit at the Southern Nevada Public Health Laboratory
- Met with Maxim Gakh, Associate Director, UNLV Health Law Program, regarding the 2019 Nevada Population Health Conference
- Participated in the TB and STD Training Planning call
- Met with Christian Bato, Regional Representative for U.S. Senator Catherine Cortez Masto, regarding matters related to the Health District

Week of August 19

- Participated in NACCHO Finance Committee Monthly meeting
- Participated in Clark County Medical Society (CCMS) Board of Trustees meeting
- Participated in Las Vegas BioWatch Advisory Committee meeting
- Participated in Clark County Behavioral Health Policy Board meeting

Week of August 12

- Participated in a meeting with local health authorities to discuss the local health jurisdiction response to and input regarding the Advisory Council on the State Programs for Wellness and the Prevention of Chronic Disease on August 15
- Met with Suzanne Bierman, new Medicaid Director, regarding matters related to the Health District
- Participated in the NACCHO Executive Committee meeting
- Participated in the Nevada Association of Local Health Officers (NALHO) meeting
- Met with Nicole Thomsen, Health Policy Analyst, Snohomish Health District (Washington) regarding public health
- Participated in the Nevada Public Health Association Advocacy and Policy Committee Monthly call

Week of August 5

- Met with CDC and state staff to discuss Nevada ELC funding
- Met with Julie Murray and Kristy Keller, Nevada Medical Center, regarding the 3rd annual Healthcare Report Card
- Participated in the Bloomberg American Health Initiative Organization call with Shane Bryan, Partnership & Engagement Manager, Bloomberg American Health Initiative, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
- Participated in the Nevada Public Health Institute (NPHI) meeting
- Participated in the Graduate Medical Education Committee (GMEC) meeting
- Provided video/interview for Las Vegas Heals organization