

PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS & VIEWS

A Regional Health Professional Newsletter



Karen Luparello, DO, Medical Director

FROM THE MEDICAL DIRECTOR'S DESK

Michigan summers are so beautiful. Many of us are boating on the lakes, enjoying the parks, purchasing fruits and vegetables at the farmer's markets, and spending time with family and friends. To protect our communities in all of these activities the public health world is tracking mosquitos, investigating the spread of Avian Influenza, measuring E. coli levels in lakes, inspecting food trucks, and preparing for county fairs. Our task to protect the public does not slow down.

I hope the summer installment of this public health newsletter provides you with some educational opportunities and topics to ponder during this season. If you have any topics that you wish to see covered, or want to talk about a public health issue that you have encountered, please know that I am available.

Enjoy your summer to the fullest,

Karen Luparello, DO, MPH, Medical Director

luparellok@bhsj.org

517-933-3125

HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA (HPAI)

Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) has confirmed detections of HPAI in dairy cows in 10 counties for a total of 26 herds: Allegan (1), Barry (1), Calhoun (1), Clinton (5), Gratiot (6), Isabella (2), Ingham (1) Ionia (5), Montcalm (2), and Ottawa (2). In addition, eight confirmed poultry detections of HPAI in four counties: Gratiot, Ionia, Newaygo, and Ottawa. All were in commercial poultry facilities except one detection in an Ionia County backyard flock.

As of July 15, 2024, **no cases** of Avian Influenza have been reported in our jurisdiction.

If you suspect Influenza A (H5), obtain the appropriate specimens and immediately contact us for approval to send specimens to Bureau Of Laboratories for processing.

Resources:

[Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza A\(H5\) Virus Testing at MDHHS BOL and CDC](#)

[Updated Clinical Recommendations Regarding Influenza A \(H5N1\) – June 2024](#)

FAIR SEASON, HPAI, AND SWINE FLU

With Fair Season quickly approaching, be on the lookout for patients experiencing flu-like symptoms.

Local fair schedule:

- **Branch County:** August 4th-10th
- **St. Joseph County:** September 15th-21st
- **Hillsdale County:** September 22nd-28th

If a person recently attended a fair where there were suspected or known influenza-positive livestock, and they are experiencing respiratory symptoms, consider H1N1, trH1N2, trH3N2, or H5N1.

Respiratory specimens must be collected from:

- 1) Anyone with signs of influenza who has been exposed to sick livestock suspected of being infected with influenza
- 2) Anyone with signs of influenza who has been exposed to an influenza-positive animal.
- 3) Anyone exhibiting symptoms of influenza, during the warm weather months when human seasonal influenza is not usually circulating.
- 4) When variant influenza is suspected (ill person exposed to sick pigs or during the summer months).

Healthcare providers must send respiratory specimens to the [MDHHS BOL](#) for influenza testing, as most commonly available rapid tests cannot detect variant influenza and may provide a false negative result.

In addition to facilitating specimen collection, it's important to notify us to perform contact tracing (identify other potentially exposed people) and follow up with all ill persons to ensure they are tested and treated if needed.

[Swine Variant Influenza Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\) for Healthcare and Public Health Providers](#)

BACK TO SCHOOL IMMUNIZATION:

Back-to-school time is quickly approaching. Childhood vaccine rates remain low in the tri-county area. Providers are the most trusted advisors to parents in overcoming vaccine hesitancy. We are seeing high waiver rates. This is a crucial time when healthcare providers need to communicate with families to add routine childhood vaccinations to their back-to-school checklist.

We provide free vaccines through the Vaccine for Children Program (VFC) for children who do not have insurance or are underinsured.

BECOME A VACCINES FOR CHILDREN (VFC) PROVIDER:

Patient VFC Program Eligibility- A child is eligible for the VFC Program if they are younger than 19 years of age and are one of the following:

- Uninsured
- Medicaid-eligible or Medicaid-enrolled
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Underinsured

Many parents can't afford to pay for vaccines on their own. Being a VFC Program provider is great for your practice and your patient's health.

To enroll in the VFC Program:

- Contact your [state/local/territory VFC Program coordinator](#) to request enrollment.
- Complete and return the State Provider Enrollment forms as soon as possible.
- Prepare for a site visit to go over the program's administrative requirements and proper storage and handling of vaccines once you have completed and returned the enrollment forms.

2024-2025 WIC UPDATED INCOME GUIDELINES:

Women, Infants & Children (WIC) is a public health nutrition program under the USDA providing **nutrition education, nutritious foods, breastfeeding support, and healthcare referrals** for income-eligible women who are **pregnant or post-partum, infants, and children up to age 5**. Families who receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Family Independence Program (FIP), and Medicaid automatically qualify for WIC. A recent increase in income guidelines means that many families that previously didn't qualify for the program, may now be eligible for WIC.

Resources for Providers:

- [WIC Authorized Formula List \(Effective 7/1/23\)](#)
- [WIC Materials Available to Michigan Maternal Child Health Partners](#)

Flyers to share with patients:

- [English](#)
- [Spanish](#)
- [Arabic](#)

AUGUST IS BREASTFEEDING AWARENESS MONTH:

August is Breastfeeding Awareness Month, our Breastfeeding Peer Counselors are available to all moms for support with breastfeeding. Moms **do not** have to be enrolled in WIC. If you have any patients who may benefit, have them contact their local office.

Our Breastfeeding Newsletter is for patients who may be interested in or are currently breastfeeding.



POST-PARTUM HEALTH WARNING SIGNS:

The CDC reports that 700 women in the United States die of pregnancy complications every year. According to the Maternal Deaths in Michigan 2016-2020 Data Update, among the reviewed pregnancy-related deaths, 74.5 percent were determined to be preventable; among the reviewed pregnancy-associated, not-related deaths, 81.8 percent were deemed to be preventable.

Postpartum hemorrhage, maternal hypertension, and sepsis are the most common causes of maternal death in the week following delivery. Substance use contributed to maternal deaths in Michigan.

Cardiomyopathy (weakening of the heart muscles) is the leading cause of maternal death within the first year after delivery.

What can providers do to reduce the risk?

Know the signs and symptoms of postpartum complications such as:

- Bleeding through 2 heavy flow pads an hour
- Clots larger than a plum
- Pallor
- Uterus boggy (not firm) during fundal massage
- Signs of hypovolemia- increased heart rate, hypotension, lightheadedness, nausea/vomiting, etc.

Additional Resources

[AWHONN's \(The Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses\) POST-BIRTH Warning Sign Tool form for guidance and education.](#)

[CMQCC's Preeclampsia Toolkit](#) for any pregnant woman or any woman who has been pregnant within the last 6 weeks.

HOW WOULD A COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER (CHW) BENEFIT YOUR PRACTICE?

MDHHS Social Determinants of Health Strategy identifies CHWs as a strategic imperative to improve health outcomes and advance health equity.

Potential Benefits of CHW Programs

- Increasing organizational awareness of community resources.
- Increasing patient trust and satisfaction in the health care organization.
- Expand capacity to advanced care coordination.
- Cost Savings for health care organizations.
- Supports behavioral health care.
- Assist with the management of chronic conditions.

Contact 517-933-3042 for more information on partnership opportunities.

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services [On the Front Lines of Health Equity: Community Health Workers \(cms.gov\)](#)

To refer a patient to the CHW program.



TUBERCULOUS

Tuberculosis (TB) and Latent TB cases are a focus for our agency. In 2022, there were 8,331 reported cases of TB in the United States (a rate of 2.5 cases per 100,000 persons). In Michigan there are 1.5 cases per 100,000. It is estimated that there are up to 13 million individuals in the United States living with latent TB infection. As we shift some of our efforts from the COVID-19 pandemic to other public health issues, it is important to not only consider individuals but also the health of the entire community. Ending TB will require efficient diagnosis and treatment of both active and latent TB infections. We are working closely with providers in our communities to care for individuals with TB and latent TB.

We have provided education regarding this communicable disease. We have also treated individuals and counseled them regarding their treatment options. If you have any patients who are at risk for TB, or who have been diagnosed with TB, please feel free to call if you wish to collaborate. Please remember that TB is a reportable disease.

Additional TB resources:

[National Tuberculosis Coalition of America \(NTCA\) Guidelines for Respiratory Isolation and Restrictions to Reduce Transmission of Pulmonary Tuberculosis in Community Settings](#)

[Testing and Treatment of Latent Tuberculosis Infection](#)

HEPATITIS C:

We are seeing an increase in Hepatitis C cases throughout our jurisdiction. All Hepatitis C virus cases (including all HCV test results including positive and negative antibody, RNA, and genotype tests) must be reported to the [Michigan Disease Surveillance System \(MDSS\)](#) or your [local health department](#) within 24 hours if the agent is identified by clinical or laboratory diagnosis.

Continuing Medical Education (CME):

Michigan Opioid Collaborative - Free biweekly education and case consultation on hepatitis C to support primary care and community providers with diagnosis, treatment planning, and medication management of people living with hepatitis C.

- **Free CME available:** <https://michigan-open.org/events/>

Michigan State University & Michigan Center for Rural Health - Assists providers and health care team members throughout Michigan to manage infectious disease patients more effectively and confidently through the Project ECHO model.

- **Free CME available:** [Infectious Diseases | Michigan State University \(msu.edu\)](#)

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA FOR PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATES:



[FACEBOOK/BHSJCHA](#)



[BHSJ_HEALTHAGENCY](#)