



DATE: August 23, 2018
TO: Southern Nevada District Board of Health Members
FROM: Joseph Iser, MD, DrPH, MSc, Chief Health Officer
SUBJECT: Chief Health Officer Report

2017-2018 Influenza Season Wrap-Up

The Southern Nevada Health District provided an overview of the 2017-2018 Influenza Season. Locally, influenza activity increased in mid-December 2017 and peaked between December 24, 2017 - January 13, 2018. Season totals include 1,348 confirmed cases, 980 hospitalizations, and 62 deaths, including three deaths of children under the age of 18.

Influenza type A was the predominant virus identified in patients hospitalized for influenza (83.4 percent). Of those hospitalized for influenza with documented immunization status (n=228), 91 percent received the seasonal flu vaccine. The highest percentage of hospitalization and death was among adults aged ≥ 65 years. Hospitalized patients were also assessed for underlying conditions on admission. Of those with a documented status of underlying conditions (n=856), 633 (75 percent) had one or more underlying conditions at the time of hospitalization. Cardiovascular disease was the most common documented underlying condition (45.2 percent).

The Health District encourages providers to report cases of influenza throughout the year at www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/diseasereports/forms/disease-reporting.

Preparing for a Pandemic

The 1918 influenza pandemic was the most severe pandemic in recent history. It killed more than 50 million people worldwide and is estimated to have killed 675,000 people in the United States. Today, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) works with state, local, public, and private health care partners to conduct surveillance, improve preparedness, and provide education on seasonal and pandemic influenza viruses. These efforts have improved our ability to respond to the threat another global pandemic would pose to our communities. Despite this progress, there are gaps that still need to be addressed to ensure we can respond effectively to a future outbreak. More recent influenza activity emphasizes the need for enhancements to response capabilities on a local, state, national, and global scale. The avian influenza A (H5N1) viruses first spread from poultry to infect humans in Hong Kong in 1997. The H1N1 pandemic was first detected in the United States in April 2009. This virus was a

unique combination of influenza genes that had never been identified in either animals or people. To coordinate and improve efforts to prevent, control, and respond to pandemic influenza viruses, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) developed a Pandemic Influenza Plan in 2005. At the local level, the Southern Nevada Health District has response plans that are exercised regularly. Seasonal flu clinics provide real-world experience, and both public and private partners are engaged in testing elements of preparedness plans on both a small and large scale throughout each year.

This past flu season, the effectiveness of one of the virus strains contained in the flu vaccine received a great deal of attention. While this was a legitimate issue, and improving vaccine development must be addressed, public health professionals, health care providers, and health care agencies can best serve their patients by staying united in delivering the overriding message that the flu vaccine is still the best protection from the flu. The Health District will continue to provide flu vaccinations, educational messaging, and surveillance this flu season. Surveillance is a collaborative effort with local health care partners to determine when flu activity begins in the community, what types of influenza viruses are circulating, the impact the disease is having on the community in terms of morbidity and mortality, and to detect any changes that may be occurring in the viruses. The Health District conducts surveillance in keeping with CDC guidelines. When flu cases are reported, the outcome of the case may be delayed. Health District staff members review patient medical records, death certificates, and laboratory records, as well as verify case definitions to reconcile influenza surveillance activities to ensure reporting is as accurate as possible. While there has been a great deal of progress made since the 1918 pandemic, the threat of an influenza pandemic continues to be very real and could be devastating to our communities. Resources are needed for vaccine development, expanded surveillance, and increased reserves of anti-viral medications. For this season, we can encourage patients to get their annual flu vaccine. The Health District will post updated flu surveillance information on its website at www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/stats-reports/influenza-surveillance.php.

Arbovirus Update

The Southern Nevada Health District conducts routine surveillance for arboviruses in mosquitoes and arboviral disease in humans. The Health District's Vector Surveillance program monitors the local mosquito population for West Nile Virus, St. Louis Encephalitis, and Western Equine Encephalitis. In addition to monitoring mosquitoes for arboviruses, program staff also provides information about the types of mosquitoes present in Southern Nevada. Arboviral diseases in humans are reportable to the Health District's Office of Epidemiology and Disease Surveillance. Currently, West Nile Virus and St. Louis Encephalitis are the only locally acquired arboviral diseases that have been reported to the Health District. Sporadic investigations of travel-associated cases of Zika virus, Dengue, and Chikungunya have been conducted.

As of August 10, 2018, the Health District has tested six people for the Zika virus. The CDC no longer recommends testing for asymptomatic pregnant women who only have one recent exposure event. It is recommended that women who are pregnant or thinking of becoming pregnant postpone travel to areas with local Zika transmission. The Health District has additional recommendations for pregnant women with a history of Zika and their providers. A risk assessment will be conducted by staff and laboratory samples may be collected for testing.

Mosquito Surveillance: *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes were first identified in the 89032 ZIP code in 2017. In 2018, 53 female *Aedes aegypti* have been identified in the 89031 and 89032 ZIP codes. Staff conducts surveys to identify breeding sources and places “Oviposition Trap and Kill” monitoring traps to provide a method of ongoing targeted control and monitoring.

Environmental Health staff members have set 1,361 traps throughout Clark County and submitted 1,400 testing pools, representing 29,687 mosquitoes, to the Southern Nevada Public Health Laboratory for arboviral analysis. West Nile Virus has been identified in one mosquito testing pool from the 89122 ZIP code. More information on mosquito activity in Southern Nevada and additional prevention information is available on the Health District website at www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/mosquito-control/index.php.

Give Kids A Boost

The Health District collaborated with Immunize Nevada and other community partners to host Give Kids a Boost, a special Back-to-School Shots and Health Fair on Saturday, August 11, at its main location at 280. S. Decatur Blvd. The clinic offered a convenient weekend option for parents and guardians to ensure their children were appropriately immunized and ready for the new school year. Only immunizations for children up to age 18 were available. The Health District's Family Planning Clinic also offered oral and injectable birth control services as well as STD screenings for walk-in clients at the event. Community partners provided resources and information including blood pressure screenings, SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) and Medicaid program enrollment assistance, and safe sleep information. More than 240 clients received 630 vaccines at the health fair.

Community Meetings

Week of July 30

- Participated in Nevada Public Health Foundation Board meeting
- Participated in Nevada Public Health Institute meeting
- Toured Nevada Task Force One Center
- Participated in the Health Officers Association of California meeting
- Participated in the Nevada Health Authority Conference call

Week of July 23

- Provided media interview to the *Las Vegas Review-Journal* regarding rural health initiative
- Participated in the Southern Nevada Behavioral Health Policy Board meeting
- Attended panel discussion geared to community sector leaders related to emergency management preparedness and the events following 1 October
- Participated in the Nevada Association of Local Health Officers (NALHO) meeting
- Participated in the Desert Meadows Area Health Education Council Special Session
- Met with Dr. Kate Martin, Interim Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education & Designated Institutional Official (DIO), Family Medicine Residency Program Director, UNLV School of Medicine, regarding future collaborative efforts

Week of July 16

- Presented at the Healthy Aging Summit and Workshop in Washington, DC
- Participated in the Nevada State Medical Association House of Delegates meeting
- Met with Dr. Michael Brumage, Assistant Dean for Public Health Practice and Service, West Virginia University School of Public Health, regarding the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)
- Participated in the Nevada Public Health Association Advocacy and Policy Committee meeting
- Participated in the Nevada Association of Local Health Officers (NALHO) meeting
- Met with Dr. Peter Pendergrass, Program Director, GPM/PH Program, University of Mississippi Medical Center, regarding the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)
- Met with Dr. Antonina Capurro, Nevada State Dental Health Officer and Dr. Ihsan Azzam, Nevada State Health Officer, regarding outcomes of the mobile rural trips and next steps
- Met with Assemblyman Steve Yeager regarding potential BDR

Week of July 9

- Participated in the NACCHO Board of Directors meeting, NACCHO Annual Conference and Big Cities Health Coalition meeting and related activities in New Orleans, Louisiana
- Presented at NACCHO regarding Health District activities with the Las Vegas Fusion Center
- Accepted the 2018 National Health Security Award on behalf of the Health District at NACCHO

Week of July 2

- Met with John Burke and Bob Cooper, Las Vegas HEALS Board Synergies, regarding potential future collaborations
- Met with Christopher Ruiz, Touro University, to discuss future clinical rotation
- Participated in Nevada Health Authority Conference call