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Southern Nevada Health District releases health status report

LAS VEGAS – The Southern Nevada Health District has released the first volume of a series of health status reports for Clark County. The “Clark County Health Status Report” provides an overview of Clark County residents’ public health status in terms of both socio-economic and communicable disease trends.

Significant findings in the report include:

- The overall health of Clark County residents is lower in comparison to the rest of the country. Less than 82 percent of Clark County residents reported to be in “good or better” health, compared to almost 85 percent of all residents in the United States.
- Racial disparities are significant in minority populations, including higher rates of sexually transmitted diseases, higher rates of vaccine preventable illness, higher infant mortality rates and lower life expectancies.
- Hepatitis rates have decreased significantly, to rates lower than reported nationwide. In 1998 there were more than 200 reported cases of hepatitis A in the county. In 2004, seven cases were reported. The institution of a hepatitis A vaccine requirement for health card applicants in 1999 and a school entry requirement in 2002 may have contributed to the decline.
- Rates of sexually transmitted disease increased significantly. Chlamydia rates increased from 2,783 cases per year in 2000 to 5,052 in 2004. During that same time frame, gonorrhea rates increased from 1,382 to 2,646.

“The compilation of the information contained in this report is the first step in developing a community diagnosis to help the health district, our partners and the public better understand and identify the health needs of our population,” said Dr. Lawrence Sands, assistant health officer for the Southern Nevada Health District.

“Ideally, this report will grow to be a valuable planning tool for the health district and our partner agencies. We will use the health status report to better align public health activities with the areas in most need of intervention and to measure our progress over the years,” said Sands.

Subsequent volumes will cover topics including chronic disease, non-communicable diseases and minority health. A copy of the report can be accessed on the health district website at www.SouthernNevadaHealthDistrict.org. For more information about the report contact the health district’s Office of Epidemiology at (702) 759-1300.

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