

To: Board of Health

From: Jill Law, R.N., B.S.N., M.H.A.
Public Health Director

Date: February 24, 2014 (Reflects January 2014)

Re: Director's Report

Acronyms

- EPCPH – El Paso County Public Health
- CDPHE – Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

Director—*Jill Law, R.N., B.S.N., M.H.A.*

Deputy Director—*Dan Martindale*

Emergency Preparedness staff participated in the annual hazard vulnerability analysis for Memorial Health Systems. This is an annual review of the potential hazards that could impact the hospitals and recommendations for mitigation whenever possible.

Emergency Preparedness staff hosted the regional health care coalition meeting and the South Central region emergency preparedness meeting for local public health departments. The health care coalition meeting topics included leadership sustainment, the role of the Emergency Support Function 8 Coordinated Advisory Team (8CAT) in the coalition, and lessons learned from the summer flooding. In addition, the Regional Epidemiologist gave an update on influenza and the synthetic marijuana outbreak that occurred in the fall. The South Central region local public health meeting topics included mass fatality planning and an overview of how to best utilize the recently provided state template for a Strategic National Stockpile Plan.

Emergency Preparedness program manager attended the first in a series of the Master Exercise Practitioner Program (MEPP) The goal of the MEPP series is to increase the capabilities of MEPP candidates in mastery of the essentials of exercise program management and the overall exercise process in accordance with the homeland security exercise evaluation program.

Disease Prevention and Control—*Dr. Bill Letson, M.D., Medical Director*

Communicable Disease (CD) - reflects CD activities in January, 2014:

- Reportable infectious diseases - 129 infectious disease cases were reported and investigated: campylobacter (2), giardia (3), haemophilus influenza (2), chronic hepatitis B (1), influenza, hospitalized (99), meningococcal disease (1), pertussis (4), Salmonella (1), strep pneumo invasive (9), varicella (4), and viral meningitis (3).
- Possible foodborne illness complaints: 10

- CD staff investigated six outbreaks in January: four in long term care facilities (GI illness/ suspect norovirus); and two in schools (one suspect norovirus, and one impetigo).
- CD program responded to four calls regarding human or pet exposures to potentially rabid animals, or other rabies-related concerns.
- CD staff presented an epidemiological update for the Pikes Peak Regional Medical Response System (which serves as our South Central Region’s Health Care Coalition).

Environmental Health (EH)—*Tom Gonzales, M.P.H., R.E.H.S., Division Director*

Black Forest Fire Response and Recovery

- Environmental health (EH) continues to review on-site wastewater treatment system evaluations as part of the plan approval process that helps assure the property owner that the rebuilt structure will be connected to a system that is adequately sized, and wasn’t damaged by the fire or fire-fighting activities.
- To date, 265 on-site wastewater treatment system evaluations of the 488 homes that were destroyed have been submitted for our review. Of the 265 OWTS evaluations, 39 have required a repair permit to either replace a damaged system or relocate the system.

On-Site Wastewater Treatment Systems and Groundwater Protection Program

Environmental health specialists completed the following activities to promote proper design, siting and installation of on-site wastewater treatment systems (OWTS) to protect drinking water originating from groundwater:

- OWTS final inspections: 34
- OWTS soil and site evaluations: 30
- OWTS new permits issued: 15
- OWTS repair permits issued: 14
- OWTS application/design reviews: 35
- Pumper truck inspections: 3
- EH staff investigated a complaint of a failing OWTS. During the site investigation, surfacing sewage was observed. We are working with the property owner to repair the system in a timely manner to prevent further surfacing sewage.
- Initiated the process of scanning OWTS records (permit and engineering documents) into the County data warehouse system. Our goal is to have all OWTS records (estimated 35,000 property records) electronically scanned and made available on-line for the public.

Retail Food Safety Program

Environmental health specialists completed the following activities to promote food safety and prevent foodborne illness in our community:

- Retail Food Establishment (RFE) routine inspections: 372
- RFE follow-up inspections: 66
- RFE plan reviews – new construction: 6
- RFE plan reviews – remodel: 1
- RFE pre-operational inspections: 52
- RFE complaint investigations: 16
- RFE compliance proceedings: 12
- 25 students attended our online Basic Food Safety class
- 44 students took our on-site Basic Food Safety class

- In collaboration with the Communicable Disease program, a foodborne illness investigation was conducted at an assisted living facility. There was no evidence that the outbreak had spread through food, but a number of recommendations related to food safety were provided.
- The Food Safety Advisory Group (FSAG) quarterly meeting was held on January 21, 2014. FSAG discussed the Excellence in Food Safety recognition, food safety education, risk based frequency, and 2014 RFE license renewal process. The next meeting will be held in April.
- EH staff worked with two RFE's that have a recent history of non-compliance. Their efforts have lead to both RFE's achieving continued compliance.

Air Quality Control Program

- EH staff investigated three complaints of excessive smoke and dust.
- Reviewed and approved two construction activity permits to assure that contractors have adequate fugitive dust control plans.
- Reviewed and approved eight open burning permits to evaluate air quality issues that may impact public health.

Childcare Inspection Program

Environmental health specialists completed the following activities to prevent the spread of disease in licensed childcare facilities.

- Regular inspections: 17
- Preoperational inspections: 4
- Initiated training of two additional field staff on conducting childcare inspections. This will give us more coverage and allow us more flexibility to investigate complaints and conduct routine and follow up inspections.

Recreational Water Program

Environmental health specialists completed the following activities to prevent the spread of disease in public pools and hot tubs.

- Regular inspections: 44
- Follow-up inspections: 2
- We are collaborating with the National Swimming Pool Foundation and the Colorado Springs Fire Department to organize an educational workshop for public pools and hot tubs operators, scheduled for March. The purpose of this workshop is to provide attendees with information on how to prevent recreational water illnesses, proper pool and hot tub chemical storage practices, and reducing critical violations.

Body Art Safety Program

Environmental health specialists completed the following activities to prevent the spread of disease at body art facilities:

- Regular inspections: 2
- Plan reviews – new construction: 2
- Plan reviews – remodel: 1
- The Body Art Advisory Group met on January 27, 2014 and was introduced to the new lead Environmental Health Specialist for the program. The group indicated support for how EH handled 2014 licensing, and supports development of a program to annually recognize El Paso County body art establishments with excellent safety records. The group agreed to work on public education documents related to body art.

Land-Use and Planning

- Five El Paso County Development Services Division projects were submitted for review and comment in January.
- One of the projects proposed a 21-lot subdivision utilizing on-site wastewater treatment systems and individual private wells. Staff provided comments on the proposed development based on a site visit, and review of soils logs and well reports. The use of on-site wastewater treatment systems was approved; however a shallow bedrock formation was noted and will need to be addressed by the OWTS Engineer to ensure adequate soil treatment.

Health Services—*Kelley Christians, R.D. Division Director*

Nurse Family Partnership (NFP):

- Caseload: 203.
- Program Manager and nine Nurse Home Visitors attended Baby and Me Tobacco Free training, a research-based program proven to improve the health of mothers and newborns by helping women stop tobacco use.
- Two Nurse Home Visitors attended training with Bright Beginnings, an organization that promotes early childhood development and literacy to learn about optimal times to give out books to children based on developmental stages.
- Representatives from Invest In Kids, an organization dedicated to improve the health and well-being of vulnerable young children and families throughout Colorado, reported to Program Manager, Nurse Supervisor, and members of the Community Advisory Board about research being conducted. They are organizing collaboration between Nurse Family Partnership and Child Protective Services to get a baseline on the mutual understanding of the two programs and to promote collaboration between the programs, prior to the regional meeting.

Strong and Healthy Families (SHF):

- In January the program received 22 referrals from Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) case managers. Thirteen new referrals enrolled in class; Twenty-one clients previously enrolled continued to attend class; Twenty-two clients attended class on a regular basis (65 percent of enrolled clients); There were five graduates in January.
- Program Manager and Program Assistant attended Baby and Me Tobacco Free training on January 31, 2014.

The Maternal Child Health (MCH) Program:

- MCH Community Health Educator is working with the Public Health Information Officer on promoting the consistent early childhood obesity prevention messages that was developed by the Colorado Department of Health and Environment (CDPHE). The next message that will be promoted is “Give Yourself and your Baby all the Benefits of Breastfeeding.”
- The Community Health Educator set up a three-case display at the Penrose Library focusing on Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL), My Plate, 5-2-1-0 (5 Fruits and Vegetables, no more than 2 hours of recreational screen time, 1 hour of physical activity and 0 sugar sweetened beverages daily) and the message to “drink more water and reduce sugary drinks.”
- The Community Health Educator was asked to join the Executive Team of the Colorado Community Center Collaborative who is also implementing 5-2-1-0 messaging.

- On January 18, 2014 the ECOP Public Health Nurse conducted the first Healthy Eating Active Living class; eight centers were represented with a total of 13 participants. A pre-assessment was administered during the class. Mentoring visits were provided afterwards, a post-assessment was administered and areas were identified where the centers can improve and where we can offer support. Two additional classes in the series will be conducted on February 15 and March 15, 2014.
- The ECOP Public Health Nurse has been working with Healthy Child Care Colorado (HCCC) on a wellness pilot program targeting obesity prevention in child care settings. Healthy Child Care Colorado, a program of Qualistar, is piloting an integrated health program based on the “Let’s Move Child Care” campaign, through funding from The Colorado Health Foundation.

ABCD (Assuring Better Childhood Development) Developmental Screening: An ABCD stakeholder’s meeting was held on January 22, 2014 with 24 participants in attendance. The meeting included a presentation by the Early Intervention Director. Work continues on a Developmental Screening Roadmap. The new ABCD public health nurse hired to work on this project started on January 21, 2014.

Health Care Program for Children with Special Needs (HCPC):

- The HCP public health nurses provide care coordination to children with special needs. Our current caseload is 48. We acquired six new referrals this month. One of the HCP public health nurses attends weekly trans-disciplinary meetings with Early Intervention at The Resource Exchange to coordinate services.
- HCP Staff conducted a presentation to School District 11 school nurses.

Immunization/Travel Program:

- International Travel Clinic began offering “TravelHealth 101” to our travel clients. This is a web-based service that consists of a 25-minute video covering the essentials of international travel such as food, water and insect precautions among other topics. Clients will view a portion of the video during their clinic visit and then may sign up to watch it again from home for 15 logins or 45 days whichever comes first.
- Immunizations staff continued preparing for and testing of Insight software functions upgrade concerning encounters and client financial accounts. Insight training is scheduled for the agency in February 2014.

Clinical Services:

- Staff continues to prepare for the upgrade to Insight software by identifying and assessing current clinic processes and how Insight software can provide improved efficiency.
- Staff has also been involved with testing Insight software for encounters and billing functionality to prepare our clinics to be able to batch bill Medicaid using Insight software and providing functionality to bill insurances other than Medicaid in the near future.

Women, Infants and Children: December 2013 caseload is 13,860.

Office of Communication—*Susan Wheelan, MBA, Communication Director*

Tobacco Education Prevention and Partnership (TEPP)

- El Paso County Public Health recognizes that delaying the age when young people first experiment or begin using tobacco can reduce the risk that they transition to regular or daily tobacco use and increase their chances of successfully quitting, if they do become regular users. Therefore, we signed a letter of support to increase the minimum legal age for the purchase of tobacco products from 18 to 21 presented by the American Lung Association.
- Planning was initiated with the Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services staff to develop and coordinate activities with youth from Colorado Springs Community Centers in support of the smoke-free parks Colorado Springs ordinance. Youth led activities are planned through mid-to-the end of March. The timing of the activities are aligned with “Kick Butts Day,” which is a national day of activism that empowers youth to stand out, speak up and seize control against Big Tobacco. Education and logistical support is being provided for youth-led events to raise awareness about health affects, fire danger and liter related to tobacco use in the community. Youth coalitions referred to as “Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT)” from the Boys & Girls Club and Palmer High School are planning activities in their communities as well.
- Outreached to youth SWAT coalitions to create artwork to be used by the City Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services to develop signage, which will promote the new smoke-free parks and open space ordinance.
- Conducted QuitLine fax referral trainings for all programs within the Health Services Division and TB clinic (about 90 employees). The formal agency policy and program procedures have been finalized. Plans are currently underway to promote the March 1 kick-off of the program, and are working with each program manager to boost client awareness of the QuitLine through posters, displays and handouts. Representatives from the Quality Improvement Team are working on documenting the project to support ongoing agency and accreditation goals.
- Attended a Retail Mapping/Monitoring Advisory Group meeting hosted by State Tobacco Education and Prevention Program (STEPP). Staff reviewed the Counter Tools store mapper and store audit features and gave feedback to STEPP and Counter Tools staff about the usability of each product.
- Met with Health Risk Condition Management Nurse with the El Paso County health insurance plan to review the tobacco education materials we could share through the County’s “Reach Your Peak” program. They are implementing a seven-week tobacco cessation curriculum with current tobacco users, and will be using some Tobacco Education & Prevention (TEPP) resources.
- In partnership with the American Lung Association in Colorado, provided “ONE Step” training for 23 family support staff at Community Partnership for Child Development (CPCD) Head Start Programs. Seventeen family advocates, four school nurses and two enrollment specialists participated in the training. These employees will reach over 1,800 lower income families each month through in-home visits. “ONE Step” training provides information and resources on asthma and environmental tobacco smoke to early childhood educators to equip them to inform parents, through health-focused messaging, about removing asthma triggers and environmental tobacco smoke from their homes.

- Met with the Thoracic Oncology Nurse Navigator at University of Colorado Health, to review the tobacco education materials that could benefit their patients. That office will be using some of the brochures and flyers that were developed using creative provided by STEPP.

Communication Support

Print News Media

01.01.14 – The Gazette, “Flu hospitalizations up in Colorado.” Interview provided by Bill Letson, M.P.H., M.D., Medical Director. Estimated daily circulation, 77,000.

01.10.14 – The Gazette, “H1N1 flu strain making a comeback.” Interview provided by Bill Letson, M.P.H., M.D., Medical Director. Estimated daily circulation, 77,000.

01.22.14 – The Gazette, “Flu hospitalizations leveling off in Colorado after early January spike. Interview provided by Bill Letson, M.P.H., M.D., Medical Director. Estimated daily circulation, 77,000.

Television News Media

The Office of Communication has implemented a measurement tool that captures and places a market value on TV news coverage. Media value dollar figures reflect equivalent costs for 30-second spot advertising during the respective newscasts and times. Multiple newscasts/times are noted, when applicable, and included in value totals. There are other stories, as well as coverage and video on local news media outlets’ websites that are not included in this news media value report.

01.02.14 – KRDO Channel 13 at 4 p.m. Public Health recommends flu vaccination in light of increasing El Paso County flu hospitalizations. Interview provided by Jill Law, Public Health Director, R.N., B.S.N., M.H.A. Local viewership: 25,741; estimated value: \$1,276.

01.03.14 – KKTV Channel 11 at 6:30 and 5:30 p.m. Health experts concerned about this year’s flu season. Interview provided by Bill Letson, M.P.H., M.D., Medical Director. Local viewership: 71,477; estimated value: \$3,551.

01.08.14 – KRDO Channel 13 at 6 p.m. Influenza affecting young, healthy adults. Interview provided by Bill Letson, M.P.H., M.D., Medical Director. Local viewership: 5,391; estimated value: \$229.

01.24.14 – KOAA News 5 at 5 p.m. Public Health reminds it’s not too late to get a flu shot. El Paso County flu update. Interview provided by Bill Letson, M.P.H., M.D., Medical Director. Local viewership: 44,795; estimated value: \$1,470.

Communication Support

- Assist with media and communication planning in the statement of work for Tobacco Education Prevention and Partnership (TEPP) fiscal year 2015.
- Facilitate selection of media vendors from TEPP FY14 request for proposals.
- Coordinate selection of research firm to evaluate TEPP southern Colorado media campaign to be complete in June 2014.

Social Media/Online digital media

The Office of Communication provides content management for social media platforms.

January content included: Tobacco prevention, healthy eating and active living, radon awareness, flu vaccine information, emergency preparedness, and Surgeon General’s Report. Facebook: 458 “likes; Twitter: 1,002 current followers.

Healthinfo requests:

The Office of Communication receives and refers emails that come to our website each day and tracks our responses. These emails reveal information needs that could be addressed through creation of print or website material. Between January 1 and 31, our office received and answered/referred approximately 64 emails through our website.

Website statistics

According to Google Analytics, www.elpasocountyhealth.org had 8,697 unique visitors to the site with 23,031 pageviews (from January 1, to January 31, 2014). The top 5 most visited pages were birth and death records, home page, WIC, immunizations, and retail food establishments.