A Snapshot: El Paso County Health Indicators 2012

National Public Health Week is April 2-8 and this year’s theme, *A Healthier America Begins Today: Join the Movement*, encourages more Americans and their communities to take preventive measures to help improve their lives. The El Paso County Board of Health and Board of County Commissioners have issued a joint proclamation recognizing National Public Health Week and the work of El Paso County Public Health (EPCPH) to keep our community healthy and safe.

In conjunction with National Public Health Week, EPCPH is proud to announce the release of the *El Paso County Health Indicators 2012 Report*. This report represents many months of careful and systematic review of data that tells the story about the health of people in our community. The information updates our residents about health issues that cause illness, injury, loss of quality of life, and death in El Paso County. This data, in turn, can and should be used to mobilize resources to find ways to make us healthier.

El Paso County Public Health collected and analyzed data to assess the county’s “health” using indicators that align with Colorado’s 10 Winnable Battles. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment announced the 10 Winnable Battles for the state earlier this year, which represent key public health and environmental issues where progress can be made in the next three to five years. Find out more about Colorado’s Winnable Battles at [www.cdphe.state.co.us/hs/winnable.html](http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/hs/winnable.html).

To begin steps towards addressing one of the concerning health trends found in the report—the marked rise in obesity—Public Health convened the Health Community Collaborative, a group of health leaders, elected officials, schools, hospitals and health systems, non-profit and for-profit, and interested citizens. Over the next several years, the collaborative will focus community efforts and resources using evidence-based practices to increase healthy eating and active living to stop the upward trend of overweight and obesity in adults and children.

The *El Paso County Health Indicators 2012 Report* is available online at [www.elpasocountyhealth.org](http://www.elpasocountyhealth.org) and additional information about the Healthy Community Collaborative is available at [www.elpasocountyhealth.org/service/healthy-community-collaborative](http://www.elpasocountyhealth.org/service/healthy-community-collaborative).

### El Paso County Communicable Disease Trends — Reports Received in March

- 43 communicable disease cases were reported and investigated: Campylobacter (3), Giardia (1), chronic hepatitis B (1), influenza – hospitalized (12), invasive pneumococcal disease (7), Kawasaki Syndrome (1), Legionella (1), pertussis (2), Salmonella (2), viral meningitis (8), and varicella (5).
- 18 possible foodborne illness complaints.
- 4 outbreaks: 2 gastrointestinal illness outbreaks in long-term care facilities (confirmed or suspected to be due to norovirus); 1 gastrointestinal illness outbreak associated with a retail food establishment (suspect norovirus or foodborne toxin-mediated); and 1 pertussis outbreak.
- 6 calls regarding human or pet exposures to potentially rabid animals. From the animals involved in those inquiries, 2 animals (1 horse, 1 dog) were tested for rabies because there were either human or pet animal exposures; test results were negative for both.
- 1 new suspect active TB case.

### Hot Topics: State and National

- In March, cases of fungal endophthalmitis after ocular surgery were reported from a California surgical center. During surgery all patients were exposed to Brilliant Blue G (BBG) dye originating from the same compounding pharmacy. Unopened vials of BBG yielded *Fusarium chlamydosporum*. To date, there are 22 confirmed cases and 18 probable cases in five states (CA, LA, IN, NV and CO). Health care professionals who diagnose cases of fungal endophthalmitis, particularly due to *Fusarium* species, following invasive ocular procedures since August 2011 should contact Julie Duran at 303-692-3186.
- May 2011, FDA expanded the period for administering VariZIG, immune globulin preparation for post-exposure prophylaxis of varicella, from 96 hours (4 days) to 10 days after exposure to varicella virus in eligible persons without immunity to varicella who are at high risk for severe disease. More information is available at [www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6112a4.htm?s_cid=mm6112a4_w](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6112a4.htm?u_cid=mm6112a4_w).