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As the state's environmental protection and public health agency, KDHE promotes responsible choices to protect the health and environment for all Kansans.

Through education, direct services and the assessment of data and trends, coupled with policy development and enforcement, KDHE will improve health and quality of life. We prevent illness, injuries and foster a safe and sustainable environment for the people of Kansas.

KS Preparedness Times

Local Health Department Clinics Provide Pandemic H1N1 Vaccinations

The amount of 2009 H1N1 influenza A vaccine available in Kansas doubled from roughly the last week of November through the third week of December and is continuing to increase, and local health departments are conducting additional vaccination clinics. Most community clinics have now transitioned toward administering the vaccine to members of the general population, and away from providing it only to individuals in the five federally identified priority groups.

What follows are the stories of two local health departments and their experiences with H1N1 vaccination clinics.

Cowley Holds Drive-Thru H1N1 Clinics

*By David Brazil,
Administrator, City-Cowley
County Health Department*

The City - Cowley County Health Department, in partnership with South Central Kansas Regional Medical Center and William Newton Hospital, held general public H1N1 drive-thru vaccination clinics December 11 and 16. Each clinic was staffed by employees and volunteers from the health department, community hospital, police department, EMS, emergency auxiliary, and Community Emergency Response Team.



CERT volunteer Glenda Schmidt helps direct traffic at a Cowley drive-thru H1N1 vaccination clinic in December.

These clinics offered a quick and convenient way for people to receive the vaccine and were well-suited for individuals with physical mobility challenges. Another advantage is that this type of clinic helps to limit spread, since people remain in their vehicles. There are also notable challenges associated with operating a drive-thru clinic, including:

- Long sleeves and coats prevent access to an exposed shoulder
- Inclement weather
- Potential safety hazards of moving vehicles
- Once a car enters 'the system' it can be difficult to pull out of lanes for any reason
- May not accommodate people

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A Minute with Mindee

By Mindee Reece, CPHP Director



While the State of Kansas dealt with its usual barrage of weather-related emergencies during 2009, the biggest challenge we faced is certainly the H1N1 influenza A pandemic. Kansas was the first non-border state with confirmed

cases of H1N1 on April 25. The weeks and months that followed have been consumed with response activities. Local health departments are undertaking unprecedented targeted and public vaccination campaigns, hospital emergency rooms and intensive care units have at some points reached capacity, and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment's Immunization Program, Bureau of Surveillance and Epidemiology, Bureau of Public Health Preparedness, Office of Communications, and the Kansas Health and Environmental Laboratory are still busy coordinating and managing the state-level response effort.

Please accept my sincere thanks for the unfaltering dedication and perseverance of the state's health and medical community in the pandemic response effort. You are all at the front lines of this public health emergency and the work you do is saving lives. As for the efforts underway at the state level related to the pandemic response, a few key accomplishments come to mind.

- A pandemic influenza tabletop exercise was conducted with Governor Mark Parkinson and his Cabinet on August 4. Additionally, a majority of Kansas hospitals (approximately 73 percent) participated in the statewide pandemic flu tabletop exercise conducted in September.

- The 2009 Governor's H1N1 Pandemic Influenza Summit was held on August 24 at seven locations throughout Kansas. More than 800 attendees participated either in person or by videoconference. U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services and former Kansas Governor Kathleen Sebelius participated in the summit via teleconference.

- KDHE worked with the Shawnee County Health Agency, which hosted a clinic at the Statehouse

on January 14 in which 133 Legislators and staff were vaccinated against H1N1, reminding Kansans of the importance of getting vaccinated during National Influenza Vaccination Week, January 10-16.

- Governor Parkinson has been extremely supportive regarding the H1N1 response effort and sent a letter to the heads of all Cabinet-level agencies on October 14, directing them to identify staff to assist, as needed, with KDHE's response activities. Staff members of numerous state agencies have helped with the ongoing warehouse operation to distribute personal protective equipment and antivirals statewide. Additionally, KDHE Secretary Roderick L. Bremby has activated the KDHE Emergency Readiness Initiative, which calls for all agency staff to assist as needed with the H1N1 response.

- The Office of Communications is working hard to maintain frequent and open communication with partners and the public. In addition to the monthly conference calls with local health departments, hospitals, and other community partners, an H1N1 website and toll-free hotline are up and running to provide educational information about the 2009 H1N1 flu and vaccine. The "H1N1 – 1 Bad Bug" public education campaign is also in full swing.

- The Kansas Immunization Program has maintained basic levels of Vaccines for Children program activity and has:

- o Enrolled over 1,000 H1N1 vaccine providers since August 1.

- o Facilitated the shipment of over 868,000 doses of vaccine since October 1. Total shipments of VFC seasonal influenza vaccine amounted to 55,000 doses for the 2008-2009 influenza season.

- o Created a new module for the Kansas Immunization Registry to accomplish H1N1 vaccine inventory tracking by county and electronic submission of doses administered by H1N1 providers.

- During 2009, the Kansas Health and Environmental Laboratories analyzed 4,223 H1N1 specimens. The reporting system was totally revamped to do electronic faxing, which saved hours in reporting. Six additional staff members were cross-

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A Minute with Mindee

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trained to process influenza specimens as well as other preparedness-type specimens.

- The Bureau of Surveillance and Epidemiology developed a comprehensive H1N1 surveillance system to provide state-level, regional and local information for assessing the impact of the pandemic and for planning purposes. The number of sentinel outpatient providers was increased three-fold to 75, a new hospital-based reporting system to assess hospitalization rates and a new school absenteeism surveillance system were developed, and a comprehensive weekly report on surveillance and epidemiologic data is still being published.

- Bureau of Public Health Preparedness staff members have maintained a partial activation of the KDHE Departmental Operations Center throughout the pandemic response. Additionally, they have forged a strong partnership with the Kansas Board of Pharmacy and Kansas Pharmacists Association

Beery Joins BPHP as Senior Administrative Assistant



Sarah Beery began her position at the KDHE Bureau of Public Health Preparedness as Senior Administrative Assistant on August 3. She had previously served with the bureau on a temporary basis.

Sarah has earned an associate's degree from Allen County Community College, and has taken a one-year course focusing on office technology. She has worked as a leasing consultant and has four years' experience in clerical office work.

Sarah is also a certified nurses' assistant, and currently plans to pursue a degree in business administration. She is working to become a member of the lay responder teams at KDHE.

She is taking time off from school to raise her two year-old daughter, Addison, and has a boyfriend, Robert. Sarah enjoys reading, funny movies, being outdoors, and spending time with family and friends.

and recruited pharmacies statewide to engage in the antiviral distribution effort, and are distributing antivirals and personal protective equipment from the Strategic National Stockpile as requested.

I share these state-level activities and accomplishments with readers as a way of helping paint the big picture of our collaborative H1N1 response effort. The work all of you are doing to keep Kansans from becoming infected with H1N1 and treating those who are already ill is incredibly important and appreciated. Thank you for creating the most memorable year of my time working in preparedness and response, and for your willingness to keep doing what you're doing.

BPHP Hires Hale as Public Service Administrator



On December 14, Jamie Hale joined the KDHE Bureau of Public Health Preparedness team as Public Service Administrator. She came to KDHE from the Kansas Department of Labor, where she worked in Labor Market Information Services as Office

Manager. At KDOL, she lead projects such as LMIS strategic planning and the Employment & Training Administration audit, performed various budget analyses, and managed grants and contracts for five Bureau of Labor Statistics programs.

Jamie grew up in Mayetta on the Potawatomi Reservation, about 20 miles north of Topeka. She received her undergraduate degree in Business Management from Friends University and is finishing an MBA from Baker University. She plans to graduate in May 2010.

Jamie lives in Topeka with her boyfriend Dave and six year-old daughter, Tayen. She enjoys college sports and is a KU and Alabama football fan. She likes being outdoors, camping, watching movies, spending time with family and traveling.

Kansas Scores 6 out of 10 in 2009 Trust for America's Health Public Health Preparedness Report

Kansas met six out of 10 criteria for public health emergency preparedness in a report released recently by Trust for America's Health and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The full report, titled "Ready or Not? Protecting the Public's Health from Diseases, Disasters, and Bioterrorism," can be found on the Web at <http://healthyamericans.org>.

The response to the 2009 H1N1 pandemic flu virus demonstrates that Kansas has taken significant steps to protect the health of the public, especially from new and emerging threats. KDHE will integrate the information provided in the TFAH report and into the ongoing, comprehensive assessment of state public health preparedness.

Some of the indicators that Kansas met included:

- Submitting data on available hospital beds for at least 50 percent of healthcare facilities in the state during the response to pandemic H1N1.
- Having adequate laboratory staffing to support working five, 12-hour days for six to eight weeks in response to an infectious disease outbreak such as 2009 H1N1.
- Meeting readiness criteria for the Medical Reserve Corps, a volunteer organization that provides additional health professional support during emergencies.

The report suggests some areas for improvement. One of these is that Kansas' electronic disease tracking system is not fully compatible with the system used by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) because it does not yet include electronic laboratory reporting. KDHE has now finished the work needed to complete the system which will become operable in early 2010.

The report also noted that health investigators identify diseases associated with foodborne outbreaks less frequently than the national average. Most reported foodborne illness outbreaks in Kansas involve only a small number of people, which often makes it difficult to confirm the specific cause of illness. The symptoms of many different foodborne diseases are similar, and patients are often reluctant to submit samples for lab analysis.

According to the report, Kansas also failed to meet the indicator for states to require all licensed childcare facilities to have a written multi-hazard evacuation and relocation plan. Despite the information listed in the report, Kansas does in fact require child care facilities and day care homes to have multi-hazard written evacuation and relocation plans. This regulation (K.A.R. 28-4-128) was put in place in 1990 to address emergency planning needs and pertains to all registered and licensed day care homes, preschools, child care centers, group boarding homes and residential centers in Kansas. This year, in light of H1N1, pandemic flu preparedness and planning was emphasized with child care providers and guidance was provided. KDHE has requested a change in the state score.

The indicators used in the report change from year to year, which causes the scores that states receive to vary from year to year. The 2009 report is the seventh of its kind to be released in as many years. Kansas met six out of 10 indicators in 2008, seven out of 10 indicators in 2007, nine out of 10 in 2006, five out of 10 in 2005, seven out of 10 in 2004, and three out of 10 in 2003.

***Do you have news about
your agency's
preparedness efforts?***

If you would like to include it in the next issue of the KS Preparedness Times, please e-mail your news to Mike Heideman at mheideman@kdheks.gov or Cait Purinton-Day at cpurinton-day@kdheks.gov.

Local Health Dept. H1N1 Vaccination Clinics

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who do not own or have access to a car

- Does not accommodate some special needs populations well

Each drive-thru lane completed between 87-92 vaccinations per hour during the first two hours of operation. The average drive-thru waiting time was less than 19 minutes. In two days' time, 1,376 immunizations were provided.

Geary County Finishes H1N1 School Clinics

By Melody Saxton, Junction City-Geary County Health Department

Geary County completed all school vaccination clinics on Tuesday, December 22. Nineteen schools received the first dose in November and 16 schools received the second dose in December (the high school and middle schools did not need the second dose). The health department was successful in its campaign with the help of its volunteer nurses and the organizational talents of the USD 475 principals and school nurses. The availability of the volunteer nurses allowed the health department to send one or two of its nurses with a team of volunteers, keeping the remainder at the agency to continue programs. Programs were only disrupted one day during the process.

Geary County has completed its outreach to the five priority groups and has now opened up its vaccination to the entire county. The health department is also working closely with Fort Riley to assure that both locations have the materials needed to provide the same services.

Wilson County CERT Members Graduate from Training



On December 11, six residents of Wilson County graduated from the county's second Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training series, for a total of 17 trained local citizen responders. The graduates include, from left-right: Bill Settle, Todd Thompson, Pat Bonner, Kimberly Smith, Cheryl Groth and Marcia Hedges-Smith.



Members of the public health preparedness team at KDHE gathered for their annual holiday luncheon on December 23. Pictured from left to right are, back row: Debbie Nickels, Richard Morrissey, Jamie DeMent, Bryan Barnes, Dr. Jason Eberhart-Phillips, Brian Hart, Michael Douglas, Mike Heideman, Jon Brady, Virginia Barnes, Demond Johnson. Middle row: Cait Purinton-Day, Michael McNulty, Michelle Wishon, Dr. Ingrid Garrison, Jennifer Schwartz, Stacey Sandstrom, Shannon Gabel. Front row: Sarah Beery, Sonia Jordan, Jo Millett, Angela King, Alicia Parkman, Mindee Reece, Kelly Rhoades, Charlie Hunt.

Nobody Left Behind

By Cat Rooney Howland, KU Research and Training Center on Independent Living

A New Year's Resolution: Preparedness

To be prepared is an ideal New Year's resolution for 2010. Preparedness begins with a desire to be better prepared for any type of emergency or disaster, and this desire can move into a lifestyle choice where you and your family are well prepared. Start with this simple assessment. Check the appropriate answer (yes, no, don't know) after each of the questions and then tally your responses. Ignore the MC for now.

1. Do you have an up-to-date pandemic plan at home?
Yes ___ No ___ Don't know ___ MC
2. Does your home preparedness plan include a supply of face masks, latex gloves, and over-the-counter flu and cold medications?
Yes ___ No ___ Don't know ___ MC
3. Do you have a stockpile of at least three to seven days of water, food, medications, nonperishable foods, and other supplies to be prepared?
Yes ___ No ___ Don't know ___ MC
4. Does your preparedness kit have a water-tight container filled with important information and documents?
Yes ___ No ___ Don't know ___ MC
5. Have you made preparedness plans and a supply kit for your pets or service animal?
Yes ___ No ___ Don't know ___ MC

Tally number of answers above with a: Yes = _____ No = _____ Don't Know = _____

How did you do on the assessment? If you answered "Yes" to all of the questions or your "Yes" answers outweigh the "No" answers, congratulations! Preparedness is most likely a lifestyle choice.

If your "No" and "Don't Know" responses are more frequent than your "Yes" answers, you are not alone. This indicates there are areas for possible change and commitment. Take a minute now to review your "No" and "Don't Know" answers. If in any of these areas you desire to move toward "Making Change in 2010" in your preparedness efforts circle MC.

To assist with becoming better prepared, the Research and Training Center on Independent Living at the University of Kansas has compiled checklists and tips in a new 12-page booklet titled "The Prepared Lifestyle." It is designed for all-hazards preparedness with an emphasis on seasonal and pandemic flu prevention and preparedness. Checklists cover seasonal and pandemic flu planning and all-hazards stockpiles for nonperishable foods, emergency supplies and important documents. Included in the booklet are checklists to address the unique

A New Year's Resolution: Preparedness

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needs of people with disabilities and service animal and pet preparedness, which are relatively new categories to be covered by emergency management. The checklist for service animal and pet preparedness appears below.

All Hazards Stockpile Checklist For Service Animal/Pet Preparedness

To ensure your safety and the safety of service animals and pets, prepare as suggested by the Humane Society of the U.S. and the American Red Cross. First and foremost, DO NOT leave your service animal or pet(s) behind during a disaster.

Preplanning

- Make arrangements for someone to care for your animal in times when you cannot get home during a disaster.
- Determine places that will take your animal during an evacuation (relative/friend or hotel/motel).
- Tag or implant each animal with a microchip.

Important Documentation (Keep in waterproof container.)

- Breed, color(s), markings, age, sex, neutered or unneutered, any medical and behavioral problems, and medical and feeding schedules.
- Describe any unusual habits or markings, because many animals look the same (e.g., “tabby cat” or “yellow Lab”), making it difficult to identify otherwise.
- Service animal identification.
- Veterinarian name and number.
- Photo for identification in case you are separated. Put photo on carrier, too.
- Copy of vaccination record.

Go-Kit of Animal Supply Items

- Collar and tag for each animal that has your phone number (very important to ensure your pet gets back to you if lost). Put collar on during disaster.
- Sturdy leash and harness.
- Well-labeled cage/carrier for each animal (for transport, to prevent escape and for safe return) with animal identification information, your phone number, and photo of animal. Carriers should be large enough for animal to stand and turn around in.
- Three-day supply of food and water with can opener, food, water bowls, and medications.
- Bedding, favorite toy, brush, and comb.
- Extra supply of medications.
- Litter, litter pan, and litter scoop.
- Plastic bags/paper towels for disposing of feces.

For a free copy of “The Prepared Lifestyle” booklet, contact Cat Rooney Howland, catr@ku.email or 785-864-4095.

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Bureau of Public Health Preparedness Staff

BUREAU DIRECTOR AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Bureau Director	Mindee Reece	785-296-0201	mreece@kdheks.gov	Policy direction, interagency coordination
Director of Administration & Evaluation	Alicia Parkman	785-296-8115	aparkman@kdheks.gov	Contracting, health department reimbursement
Grant & Contract Specialist	Jo Millett	785-291-3367	jomillett@kdheks.gov	Contracting, HHS grant fiscal
Public Service Administrator	Jamie Hale	785-296-2700	jhale@kdheks.gov	Contract payment processing
Sr. Administrative Assistant	Sarah Beery	785-296-8605	sbeery@kdheks.gov	Administrative duties, clerical support

OPERATIONS & PLANNING SECTION

Operations Director	Michael McNulty	785-291-3065	mmcnulty@kdheks.gov	Mass fatality planning, pandemic influenza planning, Countermeasure Response Administration
Operations Specialist	Gilbert Tabares	785-296-3380	gtabares@kdheks.gov	NIMS, personal protective equipment, CHEMPACK, WebEOC, behavioral health
SNS Coordinator	Michelle Wishon	785-296-7428	mwishon@kdheks.gov	SNS, CRI, Tribal integration
Hospital & Volunteer Outreach Coordinator	Sonia Jordan	785-296-5201	sjordan@kdheks.gov	Regional hospital planning, K-SERV, MRC coordinator
Rural Planning Specialist	Barry Autrey	785-291-3243	bautrey@kdheks.gov	Rural area planning
Contingency Planner	Cait Purinton-Day	785-296-5529	cpurinton-day@kdheks.gov	Urban area planning and COOP

HEALTH ALERT NETWORK & WEB EOC

Communications Coordinator	Bryan Barnes	785-296-6775	bbarnes@kdheks.gov	KS-HAN, WebEOC
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TRAINING & EDUCATION

KS-TRAIN Administrator	Debbie Nickels	785-291-3457	dnickels@kdheks.gov	Training registration
Exercise & Training Coordinator	Kelly Rhoades	785-296-1984	krhoades@kdheks.gov	Exercise development, training opportunities, systems evaluation

RISK COMMUNICATIONS

Director of Communications	Maggie Thompson	785-296-5795	mthompson@kdheks.gov	KDHE public information
Communications and Training Specialist	Mike Heideman	785-296-4363	mheideman@kdheks.gov	KS Preparedness Times, BPHP web site, CERC planning, RC SOG

SURVEILLANCE & EPIDEMIOLOGY 24-HOUR EPI HOTLINE 1-877-427-7317

Environmental Health Officer	Ingrid Garrison, DVM	785-296-2501	igarrison@kdheks.gov	Environmental health, epidemiologic investigations, veterinary health
Sr. Epidemiologist	Cheryl Banez-Ocfemia	785-296-3642	cbanez@kdheks.gov	Epidemiological investigations, emerging infections
Medical Investigator (Hays)	M. Ella Vajnar	785-625-5663	mvajnar@kdheks.gov	Disease investigator
Epidemiologist (Topeka)	Jamie DeMent	785-296-4499	jdement@kdhe.state.ks.us	Epidemiologic Investigations

KDHE LABORATORY

Laboratory Preparedness Director	Shannon Gabel	785-296-7006	sgabel@kdheks.gov	Lab preparedness director
Laboratory Bioterrorism Program Manager	VACANT			