

## **KDHE Public Health Call July 24, 2012**

Miranda Steele provided an update on KanCare. The three contracts were signed at the end of June; KDHE and KDADS staff are planning for a week-long educational tour to brief Providers and Consumers on the changes and address FAQs; this first tour is scheduled for July 30-Aug. 2; letters announcing these meetings were sent directly to Consumers, while Providers were asked to register ahead of the meetings. Miranda said the Administration was excited about the changes KanCare will bring to the Medicaid program and about presenting the known details to everyone. She reminded everyone that they can contact KDHE if they have any questions about the KanCare contracts with the three companies, etc.

Charlie Hunt, state epidemiologist, described the ongoing case of potential Hepatitis C exposure at HaysMed and the case in New Hampshire. He said KDHE and HaysMed issued an announcement on July 20 to statewide media, letting the public know that the health care worker who allegedly diverted drugs and misused syringes in NH had also worked at Hays Medical Center for a few months during 2010. The State and HaysMed are contacting former patients who received care in the cardiac catheterization lab during that time frame to recommend that they be tested for HCV. He said test results will be made public when known. KDHE has also asked all general hospitals and ASCs in Kansas to search their employment records to make sure the same health care worker didn't work anywhere else in KS.

Charlie also announced that KDHE would be posting weekly reportable diseases on the home page of KDHE's website so that the statistics (to date) could be easily accessed by LHDs, reporters and others who regularly call for the latest numbers, depending on the outbreak or subject of interest. Charlie asked for LHDs and hospitals to let him know if any concerns arise. KDHE wants to ensure patient confidentiality, so not many other details about the latest counts will be made available online. KDHE is considering providing the weekly counts by county, but that may not be feasible when considering patient (and provider) confidentiality. Charlie, however, noted that these stats per county are made available on the annual report.

Tom Langer, bureau director for environmental health, reminded public health officials that KDHE would be conducting a training session on Aug. 13-17 for elevated blood lead inspectors. He said KDHE covers the cost, and we currently (as of July 24) have 6 openings. The intended audience for this training are those who can assist providers with environmental investigations, to include surveying property to learn the pathway for exposure to lead. People receiving this EBL inspector training can help us address issues causing negative health outcomes. KDHE pays lodging and mileage, but not meals. KDHE's capacity for this function ends in July. Call Jennifer in BEH at 785-296-5606 for more information. Tom thanked everyone for helping to sustain our capacity for this as a statewide effort.

Linda Frazee with KDHE's Office of Local Health reminded everyone of the upcoming round of Quarterly **Regional Public Health Meetings**:

SW- Aug 17- Garden City

SC - Aug 22 – Hutchinson

SE - Aug. 30 – Chanute

NE - Sept. 20 – Topeka

NC - Sept.27 – Smith Center

NW - Oct. 25 – Oakley

Linda said the KS Assoc. of Counties, KALHD, and KDHE are collaborating on a session to involve the County Commissioners at these regional PH meetings. Co. Commissioners and LHD Administrators have been involved in the planning. KAC and KALHD received a 2-year grant to educate Co. Commissioners on public health and their role as the local board of health. Some of the specific goals are to increase their knowledge regarding quality improvement efforts associated with national public health accreditation. The emphasis of this meeting will be to discuss where the participating counties are in the various phases of the community health assessment and improvement process and how the County Commissioners can be helpful or influential in each of these phases. KAC will be sending invitations and information to the Co. Commissioners and KALHD will be sending meeting information to the LH departments and asking that they personally invite their Co. Commissioners.

Linda reminded everyone about the valuable information in **Public Health Connections** each month. She said we try to put important information for local health staff in this publication. We had over 8,000 hits on that site for last month's edition.

Miranda asked everyone to Save the Dates for:

Governor's Obesity Summit –Sept 6 in Topeka (KDHE's Bureau of Health Promotion)

Immunization Conference – Sept 11-13 in Wichita (KDHE's Bureau of Disease Control and Prevention)

KPHA Pre Conf - Oct 1

Next Public Health Call: August 28 at 10 a.m.