

**ADMINISTRATION, KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF**

**Moderator: Miranda Steele  
May 28, 2013  
11:00 a.m. ET**

Operator: Good morning. My name is (Chris) and I will be your conference operator today. At this time, I'd like to welcome everyone to the Monthly Public Health Conference Call.

All lines have been placed on mute to prevent any background noise. After the speakers' remarks, there will be a question and answer session. If you would like to ask a question during this time, simply press star then the number one on your telephone keypad. If you'd like to withdraw your question, press the pound key.

Miranda Steele, you may begin your conference.

Miranda Steele: Thank you, (Chris). Good morning everyone calling into the May Public Health Call. This is Miranda Steele with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, here in Topeka at the Department Operations Center.

I do sincerely apologize for the delayed start on our call this morning. There were some technical difficulties with the conference line. I just want you to know that we'll try next month to have the call start promptly at 10 o'clock.

Again, this is Miranda. And I want to also thank you for joining the call following the long holiday weekend. I know we're all trying to get back into the swing of things. And for those of you who experienced tornadoes over the holiday, I hope everyone is safe and that you're able to get back into everything you have going on this week.

I want to run through the agenda for this morning and then we'll get started with the updates.

First, we're going to have our Secretary and State Health Officer, Dr. Robert Moser, give an update from the legislature and some other items that he has to brief you on. And then Charlie Hunt, our State Epidemiologist, will provide his monthly update. And then we'll have Emily Nickel provide some information, some latest information, on the K-SERV.

And then Ginger Park and Cherie Sage, from our Bureau of Health Promotion, will have some updates on some new health statistics reports, and heat-related illness updates. And then we'll provide some brief communication updates and then be followed by Jane Shirley from our Office of Local Health. And then we'll have the Q&A, our live question and answer session before moving on to the Monthly Preparedness Call to be facilitated by our new Preparedness Director, Dave Meek.

So with that, I will turn it over to Dr. Moser.

Robert Moser: Good morning. Thank you, Miranda.

Yes, indeed, I echo Miranda's comments about hoping everybody had a restful, quiet, Memorial weekend.

As you know, we're back in session today. The legislature has work to complete before finishing up this legislative year. They have passed a budget in conference committees, which means it still has to go to an up-down vote in both houses. If it would fail in either one of those, we go back to the drawing board.

They're also working on the tax plan going forward, which obviously has some impact on the budget as well. So stay tuned. We're not sure what to expect necessarily this week but we're keeping a close eye on things and we'll keep you informed as we go forward.

June, as you know, is a very busy month in a lot of ways - a lot of folks taking vacations, and a lot of groups and organizations having their annual meetings.

So we'll be busy this month at several annual meetings and providing talks and information to a number of groups going forward.

One that I am excited about, that Jane will talk about a little bit later, is our summit on collectively impacting population health in Kansas, to be followed by some regional meetings on the same topic. And she'll go into more details on that here shortly.

One thing I did want to announce is that we do have some staffing changes, in addition to having Dave Meek as our new Preparedness Director. We are losing one of our own but, I think, it will be a great adventure for her. Brenda Nickel, Director of our Center for Performance Management, has taken the position with Riley County Health Department. We certainly want to thank Brenda for all of her great work and wish her well and good luck in the future. And we look forward to working with her in a different capacity.

As far as our Center for Performance Management goes, it's helped us to not only improve our quality improvement and performance management work, but also working toward accreditation for the agency as a whole. We do plan to look at transitioning and finding another person with skills in quality improvement and performance management.

Meanwhile, I'm going to make Mindee put on another hat for a little while - Mindee Reece will be overseeing some of the work on that, keeping projects moving forward, and we'll adjust accordingly. So stay tuned on that as we'll have more information about that later. But again, thanks and good luck to Brenda Nickel.

So with that, I'm going to turn it over to Charlie Hunt, our State Epidemiologist, for his report.

Charlie Hunt: OK. Thank you very much and good morning everyone.

Of course, with Memorial Day coming this past weekend, the summer season has kicked off. And I just want to make a couple of notes about that.

Last week was Recreational Water Illness and Injury Prevention Week. I want to remind our Local Health Department colleagues that the CDC maintains a healthy swimming website that has a lot of resources for prevention messages and working with the pool operators in the communities. And they even have a link to the water quality and health council's healthy pools page, which describes an option for free chlorine testing so that chlorine levels can be checked also. As a reminder, that with summer here and people swimming, there's potential for increases in water-related illness and injuries. Take advantage of the prevention messages.

Also with the warm weather, we become more concerned about vector-borne insects and mosquitoes. We hope that we don't have another West Nile virus season like we did last year. I will make just one small note about our plans for mosquito surveillance this year.

In year's past, we typically have conducted mosquito surveillance throughout the state in hopes that we would identify positive mosquito pools before human cases. Unfortunately, that really hasn't been the case. We've evaluated this in several different ways and we just don't have enough sites set up throughout the state to be able to do that.

So we're taking a little bit different approach this year. We are concentrating all of our mosquito testing resources in Sedgwick County, around the Wichita area. One reason is that Sedgwick County has typically had a high burden of West Nile virus. And so we're hoping to be able to identify mosquito pools by sampling that county. When we identify human cases, that will serve as our sentinel and we'll provide more information on steps to prevent West Nile virus based on that.

The other thing I'll mention is that you all may recall back in March, we passed along the Health Alert Network message from CDC regarding novel coronavirus infections. CDC has continued to work with the World Health Organization on this novel coronavirus.

As of last week, there have been 44 cases and 22 deaths. All the cases, so far, have been linked in some way to the Middle East, around the Arabian

Peninsula and surrounding countries. But CDC is asking the State and Local Health Departments to report patients under investigation for novel coronavirus. And so this is primarily patients who developed severe respiratory infection after reporting travel to countries in the Arabian Peninsula.

I'm not going to go over all the details on this because CDC has a lot of resources up on their web page about novel coronavirus. But again, I just want to make sure that I bring it to your attention.

If there are patients who developed severe respiratory infection with recent travel to the Arabian Peninsula countries, please contact our hotline at 877-4277-317. And we will be working with you all to rule out other potential causes. Right now, testing is only available through CDC to confirm the cases. But we will be working closely with CDC, and with you, if any such cases do appear. So that's primarily my update for today.

Miranda Steele: Thank you, Charlie. Next, we have Emily Nickel with our Bureau of Community Health Systems.

Emily Nickel: Good morning. I just wanted to provide an update on the recent activities at K-SERV, and respond if there are questions out there. Due to the tornado that occurred last week in Oklahoma and recently over the weekend around the Kansas area.

There have been 59 new K-SERV users registered since May 20th. And so we obtained an increase in registration, which is great. We had sent out a message to all K-SERV users on Wednesday, the 22nd, indicating that there has not been a request for K-SERV volunteers to report to Oklahoma and to not self-deploy. That message still stands as of today, that there has been no contact to Kansas for K-SERV volunteers. There are a lot of organizations, active in disaster that our assisting in response efforts.

So I would encourage you to encourage other healthcare medical professionals to register in K-SERV or to get affiliated with a local volunteer organization within your communities, if they're wishing to assist in any type of disaster-related responses, or/and in just general. If you wish to be informed on

activities related to preparedness and volunteer issues, please follow K-SERV on Facebook. Also, if you ever have questions on K-SERV, please contact me at [enickel@kdheks.gov](mailto:enickel@kdheks.gov). And that is all I have.

Miranda Steele: Thanks, Emily. And for those that may not be familiar with K-SERV, can you just briefly describe the acronym and what it means?

Emily Nickel: Sorry. K-SERV is the Kansas System for the Early Registration of Volunteers. And it's a registration database that we can verify and credential you as a healthcare medical professional that can assist in the disasters. So we can verify 20 different health and medical licenses certificate in the State of Kansas. And if they have questions about what type of license can be verified, they can just email me. It's a really long list.

But it's only really been activated once, and that was last year during the tornado. I guess it was two years ago possibly, over the Memorial Day, weekend holiday last year or two years ago, we did mental and behavioral health volunteers. So it's out there for the use if there needs to be one.

Miranda Steele: Awesome. Thanks, Emily.

Next, we have Ginger and Cherie from our Bureau of Health Promotion.

Ginger Park: Thank you, Miranda. This is Ginger Park.

I want to let you know that health administrators should expect to receive three reports from the Bureau of Health Promotion, probably in the next week or so. One report is the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Report from 2011. That has lots of great statistics in it. Another report you will receive will be the Obesity Report. And the last report will be a report on depression. So these give you all the statistics on the – Kansas statistics on obesity, depression, and then behavioral risk factor surveillance system, on several diseases and injury issues.

So if you would like additional copies, you can email [healthpromotion@kdheks.gov](mailto:healthpromotion@kdheks.gov) or let Miranda know. The reports are also available online.

The other thing I wanted to let you know is the Kansas Evidence-Based Public Health Course is going to be offered August 5th through the 8th. This is a four-day course. And this course is ideal for Tier 2 and Tier 3 public health professionals. This year, it's going to be offered in two locations, in Wichita and in Kansas City.

If you'd like to receive a course application, send an email at [healthpromotion@kdheks.gov](mailto:healthpromotion@kdheks.gov). We're working on continuing education credits for nurses, dieticians, and physicians for this course.

And Cherie would like to talk about the issues.

Cherie Sage: Absolutely. Thank you. This is Cherie Sage.

And we just wanted to make you aware that we have an extreme weather events workgroup that is comprised of multiple programs here at KDHE as well as some external partners. And the purpose of that group is to create a coordinated public health intervention directed at extreme weather events that we see here in our state.

Obviously, right now, we're focusing on heat-related death and injuries. And, in 2011, there were 33 heat-related death in Kansas and more than 530 injuries and illnesses reported by our Kansas hospitals. We also know that extreme heat can aggravate some chronic diseases and it can increase formation of certain air pollutants that also affects people's health.

So this group is working to develop activities and recommendations to prepare for and to respond to these extreme heat events. Some of those things would be coordinated outreach to our public partners, such as, as all of you, in consistent messaging, being able to relay strategies and recommendations to Kansas for staying cool at home, at work, and in designated public cooling shelters and cancellation policies for outdoor activities and events, things of that nature. So our group is continuing to work with that. We would like to receive input from any of you.

All right. That's it.

Miranda Steele: All right. Thanks, Cherie.

And let me offer a few communication updates. Really, I'm relaying this information on behalf of other programs. I have two physical activity updates and then one related to the blue-green algae program for KDHE.

The first program is Move Across Kansas, in which participants log exercise time to move across the state in a virtual fashion on the computer screen, using different routes each month. Move Across Kansas is going to start this summer, on July 1. And this is going to be a program that will launch on the heels of what we just completed with the Governor's Weight Loss Challenge. So it's a way for all Kansas, not just State of Kansas employees, but any Kansan can access this website to log their physical activity time and maintain or intensify their exercise routine.

And of course, as you guys know, what's recommended for adults is 30 minutes a day, five days a week of physical activity. And this announcement will be coming from Dr. Moser and from the Governor, and it will be in partnership with Blue Cross and Blue Shield. Look for that information coming closer to July 1st. And the online access will be set similar to the Governor's Weight Loss Challenge as far as registering and logging in every time that you enter your information.

The next thing I want to mention is an initiative of the Governor's Council on Fitness. And this is in regard to the Annual Health Champion Award that the Governor awards every year. This is for an individual and for an organization. So there are two separate awards that go along with this.

Nominations can be submitted to the Governor's Council on Fitness, through June 28th. And that information can be found on the Governor's Council on Fitness website, which I failed to write it down in front of me, but I think [kansasfitness.org](http://kansasfitness.org), so [www.kansasfitness.org](http://www.kansasfitness.org). If you go to that website, you'll see the Kansas Health Champion Awards link and that will take you to the nomination form.

So any of you, local health department officials, hospital officials, school nurses, anybody can submit a nomination for Health Champion Award to an individual or an organization to be awarded later this year. They are discussing – the council is discussing where to actually present the award this year. In the past, the presentation has been held at the State Fair, so that could possibly be the same location for this year.

And the last thing I'll mention is related to blue-green algae response by KDHE, and not just KDHE, but several other state agencies are joined in the response effort. Luckily, to date, we have not had any reports of potential blue-green algae blooms in our state lakes.

And what we also need to announce for the local health departments is that the toolkit for local health department as it pertains to blue-green algae response is updated on the KDHE website. If you go to our Bureau of Environmental Health web page, they have a blue-green algae link on their section of the KDHE website. In there you can find that toolkit for local health departments. So I wanted to provide that update on behalf of the Bureau of Environmental Health.

At this point, I'll turn it to Jane for her updates.

Jane Shirley: Thank you, Miranda. Hello, everyone. And thank you for joining the call today.

I wanted to mention a couple of things that are going on, really nationally, as well as in Kansas. Dr. Moser taking leadership again, relationship to ASTHO, the Association of State and Territorial Health Officers, on national level, and it brought back to Kansas, a real focus for us to look at improving health delivery, both prevention and healthcare delivery, to Kansas through finding ways to integrate public health and primary care service delivery.

In an effort to do some discussions about this topic, to look for potential opportunities, to discuss for these challenges, to provide information about prospective collaboration, and to talk about what is the existing collaboration in Kansas, there are some events that are occurring this summer. One of

them, I'm sure many of you have already heard and talked about, which is the summit called Impacting Population Health, that we are having on June 11 here at Topeka.

Invitations have gone out for that event. And we have a very strong registration for state level partners that ranged from hospitals, state clinics, our academic partners, our foundations, our state organization partners, hospital association. It's a very, very diverse group that we hope will be having a very robust discussion about this topic and providing some information for all of us in terms of guidance for all of those sectors and going down this road here in Kansas.

So what I really want to talk to you about today is that we are planning to bring that show on the road, so to speak. And we'll be holding regional conversations to bring together those sectors, those organizations, in six different locations around the state this summer.

We sent out a reminder about the call this morning that included the attachment of that announcement. And if you were not on that reminder, please contact Miranda or myself here at KDHE and we will get this flyer out to you.

But a short summary, the dates are June 26th in Wichita, July 1st in Chanute, July 8th in Garden City, July 16th in Salina, August 1st in Colby, and August 6th, back here in Topeka. Each of the events is for 5:00 to 8:30 in the evening.

And our target audience is those sectors that are in our communities that in many cases are already collaborating or potentially be looking to have an increased collaboration for delivering population health. Those individuals would be administrators from our safety net clinics, our private medical providers, physicians of family practice, internal medicine, Pediatrics, our mental health providers, our local public health department administrators and community hospital administrators.

Each of these events, as I mentioned, occurs in the evening, from 5:00 to 8:30. We do need to have registration. And there will be some limits, since we are

buying everyone dinner, who will be attending. The registration for this event is on Kansas (Train) and that course number 1044011. Again, course number 1044011.

We hope that many of you will both register and recruit your community partners to register, to join us to have this discussion; Dr. Moser along with representatives from the state organizations that I mentioned in earlier call, the hospital association. And several of the programs here in the Bureau of Community Health Systems will be at those regional meetings to convene the discussion and hopefully following that, compiling a lot of information about, as I said, where is this cross-sector collaboration already occurring and where there are opportunities.

Again, if you have questions, contact me, [jshirley@kdheks.gov](mailto:jshirley@kdheks.gov) or Miranda Steele, [msteele@kdheks.gov](mailto:msteele@kdheks.gov). Thanks, Miranda.

Miranda Steele: Thank you, Jane. Yes, a lot of great information provided here this morning.

I want to remind everyone, before we go the question and answer session, that the calls that we have each month are now transcribed. And even before that, we would provide the minutes for these call. And so all of the minutes and transcriptions for our monthly calls can be found on the KDHE website on the Office of Local and Public Health web page.

So check those out in the future if you're not able to attend the call, if you just want to revisit what was discussed. The calls are now transcribed by the operator service that we have.

So (Chris), if you're there, let's go ahead and open up the call for questions from our callers.

Operator: At this time, I'd like to remind everyone, in order to ask a question, press star then the number one on your telephone keypad. We'll pause for just a moment to compile the Q&A roster.

Again, if you'd like to ask a question, press star then the number one on your telephone keypad.

There are no questions at this time.

Miranda Steele: OK. Thank you. I guess we surely covered it all.

OK. At this time, I'll turn it over to Dave Meek for the Preparedness Call.

Dave Meek: OK. Thank you. Miranda, I appreciate that.

My name is Dave Meek. Some of you heard from me at the meeting last week.

So basically, I'm going to be going over the grant issues for Jamie, who is not here. So please be gentle with me on the questions that you might specifically have. I'm very excitedly starting my third week here at KDHE in this position, and so really looking forward to meet as many of you personally if possible in the coming weeks and months.

Basically, a quick reminder, of course, we're coming to the end of the fiscal year. If you do have dollars that you're not going to be able to utilize, the quicker you let us know, the better.

The Preparedness Aid to local funding pass through Dr. Moser on 5/23. Redirection forms for locals are due 5/24, which of course, is four days ago. At which time, I will be able to make our final award amount numbers and start getting the Local Health Department contract attachments routing for the regional public health contracts sent out for the 2013-2014 fiscal year.

We're currently working with Aiko Allen and we'll be meeting the first week of June on the tribal contracts. We're preparing presentation materials for the call mid-year meeting. Jamie will be doing the presenting on those. We're waiting final reviews being done on a grant application. Hope you notice that grant awards near summer timeframe.

And after our conference call with our project officers, only one condition of award may be seen on our Notice of Grant Award and that is for the – that is on the HPP side. They'd like to see a NIMS action plan. Specifically, in Preparedness, we have completed interviews for the medical countermeasures

program manager, I'm very excited to say. We're just awaiting HR actions so that we can hopefully get that position filled. And our target is hopefully we'll have somebody starting no later than 30th of June in that particular position.

With that, I would open it up to any questions that you may have.

Miranda Steele: All right, (Chris). We're ready for Q&A again.

Operator: Again, if you would like to ask a question, press star then the number one on your telephone keypad.

Again, if you'd like to ask a question, press star then the number one on your telephone keypad.

There are no questions at this time.

Miranda Steele: Thank you, (Chris). OK.

Does anyone else in here in Topeka have an update for the callers? OK.

Well, I wanted to also mention that the next public health call, the one that we're going to have in June, is scheduled for June 25th. So go ahead and mark your calendar. We'll be sending an email as a reminder, either from Jane Shirley or from my desk.

And again, the calls are at 10 a.m.

If you have any questions, if you think of any questions, or have any comments or suggestions about the call, the information, the topic or information provided, you can always email me at any time, or Jane Shirley from Local Health.

Again, thank you everyone for being on the call and have a great week.

Operator: This concludes today's conference call. You may now disconnect.

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