

The Infection Connection

LD LAWRENCE-DOUGLAS COUNTY
Health Department
www.ldchealth.org

Key county health data released

A variety of biological, psychological, sociological and behavioral factors determine our health. Health data released by the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department in March provides a glimpse into the current health of Douglas County residents.

The data, collected by the Kansas Health Institute, reports a variety of health indicators from high school graduation rates to housing with increased lead risk.

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Agency responds to pertussis

Since December, the Health Department has responded to more than 50 reports of pertussis. Twenty-four of the cases tested positive for the illness.

Pertussis activity peaked in early March, with the majority of cases occurring in unvaccinated individuals and their contacts.

The Health Department

provided treatment and prevention recommendations to the families of the ill children, families of other children in the affected day cares and to area physicians.

Other Douglas County day cares also were notified of the cases and the exclusion policies for unvaccinated, exposed children.

Patients 60 and older? Project LIVELY can help

Greetings. My name is Rebecca Holmes (LMSW) and I am the coordinator for Project LIVELY (Life, Vigor and Interest Entering Later Years), a program that has been in the Lawrence-Douglas County community for almost 30 years.



Rebecca Holmes

I already have a strong working relationship with many of your offices and patients, and I want to continue educating the community about the program

See "Project LIVELY" on page 2



Danielle Young, Eudora school nurse, vaccinates Tristin Swain, 11, at a seasonal flu clinic. The Health Department recently provided varicella shots to Eudora sixth graders and is finishing its varicella clinics to Lawrence sixth-graders in early May.

With a new school year, comes new immunization requirements

The major changes for the upcoming 2011-2012 year primarily affect students entering kindergarten through second grade and those entering seventh grade. These students are will be required to receive two doses of varicella vaccine unless they have a physician's proof of history of the illness.

A single dose of Tdap also will be required for seventh- through ninth-grade students if they have no previous history of the vaccination – regardless of the time passed since the last Td vaccine.

Other changes to school immunization requirements can be found at the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department's website at www.ldchealth.org/immunizations.htm.

Health Department nurses are currently working to bring local sixth graders up to date with the new varicella requirements.

A special American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)-funded program has made it possible for a public health nurse to provide the vaccine at no charge to sixth-grade students in area schools. The school clinics will wrap up in early May.

Students (between the ages of 10-18) can still take advantage of the program until June 30 at the Health Department. The vaccine will be available at a reduced fee of \$14 until that date. After June 30, the reduced fee for the varicella vaccine will no longer be available.

Douglas County Disease Report

Disease category	Disease name	Dec. 10	Jan. 11	Feb. 11	March 11	Total
Enteric	Campylobacter	0	0	1	1	2
	E. coli	0	0	0	1	1
	Giardiasis	0	0	1	0	1
	Salmonella	1	0	1	1	3
General	Hepatitis B	0	0	0	1	1
	Hepatitis C	7	4	4	3	18
	Strep pneumo. invasive	1	0	1	0	2
	Strep disease, group A	0	0	2	0	2
Vector	Lyme disease	1	0	1	1	3
	RMSF	1	0	0	1	2
Vaccine-preventable diseases	Pertussis	3	3	8	10	24
	Varicella	0	0	1	1	2
STDs (tested at HD only)	Chlamydia	9	9	10	9	37
	Gonorrhea	4	6	0	2	12
	Syphilis	0	1	0	0	1

This report includes the number of cases investigated by the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department. Case classifications include: Confirmed, probable and suspect.

Foodborne illness increases in spring

With warmer weather, comes frequent travel and the risk of foodborne illness. The Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department saw a slight uptick in enteric illnesses in April, with eight cases investigated by the agency's communicable disease nursing staff.

Three cases of campylobacter, one case of cryptosporidiosis, one case of giardiasis, two cases of salmonella and one case of Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* were reported and managed by the department. Most cases involved travel outside of the county where the illness may have been contracted. Other than an illness occurring in two family members, no links between the cases were identified.

According to Kansas state statute, diarrheal illnesses are reportable to local health departments. If you see a patient presenting with an enteric illness, please contact a Health Department communicable diseases nurse. The report may assist in tracing the source of a broad foodborne investigation and mitigating its spread.

Health data shows decrease in certain smoking indicators

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The report finds that several smoking indicators have decreased. Teen smoking, smoking during pregnancy and the number of current smokers — have declined. The biggest decrease was seen in the number of residents who allow

smoking in their homes. It went from 23 percent of the population in 2005 to 8 percent in 2008, compared to 20 percent statewide.

To see these statistics and other Douglas County health data, go to the Health Department's website at www.ldchealth.org.

Project LIVELY helps seniors maintain their independence

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and services we provide to older adults in Douglas County.

Project LIVELY serves people age 60 and older by providing care management services. This entails a social worker working with clients, their families, medical providers and others to understand what is needed to increase safety and well-being while living independently.

There are several steps in this process. First, a comprehensive assessment is performed which determines a client's cognition, behavior, ability to perform activities of daily living, risk for abuse/neglect/exploitation and social supports.

Once this is finished, we connect clients to community services that address the needs determined during the assessment. Clients can just be seen initially to receive education and professional advice; or ongoing for a long or short-term basis to resolve situations or handle new needs as they arise.

There are many benefits of Project LIVELY. Ongoing care management saves the state money by delaying nursing home placement and reducing unnecessary emergency room visits. We are able to help clients and caregivers seek support and better understand disease processes such as Parkinson's or Alzheimer's.

We can also help qualified clients apply for assistance programs that help cover medical, prescription and other costs.

If you would like to make a referral or learn more about Project LIVELY services, please feel free to call me directly at (785) 856-5353. Thank you for your continued support and all you do for your patients.

Laughter is the best medicine

