



Central Nevada Health District Health Officer's Report

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Attached is a summary of events and activities for the Central Nevada Health District (CNHD) for the **first** quarter of 2024.

Environmental Health

Accomplishments for the Environmental Health Services program first quarter include successfully completing our first independent participation at the 2024 Black Rock City Burning Man Project event. This year the event reached a capacity of 69,141 people and the Central Nevada Health District Environmental Health team reviewed and approved over 400 applications for the event.

The EHS team welcomed our newest Environmental Health Specialist, Olivia Diaz, in September! Our new Environmental Health Specialist led the efforts of a new Bed Bug Grant acquired in partnership from Churchill County Social Services and participated in two outreach events promoting educational outreach to adult and youth populations on the sanitation and hygienic practices of Bed Bugs.

The EHS program would like to highlight Sharon Montiel in her leading and training efforts in the Environmental Health program and becoming CNHDs first State of Nevada EPA certified Lead Inspector/Assessor and will be taking the examination to become a State of Nevada Registered Environmental Health Specialist (Health Inspector) as well.

The EH team performed over 280 temporary, construction, routine and site visit inspections in the first quarter.

Epidemiology

The Epidemiology Department has been focusing on enhancing respiratory surveillance in preparation for the 2024/2025 respiratory virus season, which officially started on September 29, 2024. During the previous season, CNHD counties experienced notable surges, including a spike in COVID-19 cases in October 2023, an influenza surge in December 2023/January 2024, and a rise in RSV cases in January 2024. These trends were consistent with patterns observed statewide and nationally. According to the CDC, the 2024/2025 respiratory virus season is expected to mirror the trends seen in the previous year.

In addition to respiratory surveillance, CNHD continues to monitor a range of communicable diseases, including sexually transmitted infections, healthcare-associated infections, lead

poisoning, and other potential outbreaks. This year, one COVID-19 outbreak has been reported at a daycare facility, with no other outbreaks identified to date.

CNHD Epidemiology staff is working closely with the school nurses for each county. The nurses and CNHD communicate weekly and have monthly meetings to discuss school absenteeism, trends, student illnesses, outbreaks, and infection control. These meetings have helped establish open lines of communication between the schools from each county.

CNHD Epidemiology staff collaborates closely with school nurses across each county, maintaining weekly communication and holding monthly meetings to discuss student absenteeism, emerging trends, student illnesses, outbreaks, and infection control measures. These regular meetings have created strong lines of communication between schools in each county, enhancing coordination and responsiveness to public health concerns.

CNHD is currently developing a plan to develop a detailed respiratory virus surveillance report. The Epidemiology Department is also currently developing foodborne illness response policies, and protocols on responding to animal bites related to rabies control.

2024 YTD WNV Surveillance:

In September 2024, one human case of West Nile Virus was identified.

No Harmful Algae Blooms have been reported in the CNHD.

The Central Nevada Health District mirrors the state of Nevada and the United States regarding incidents and trends for COVID-19, RSV, and influenza. Covid-19 rates are low and decreasing. RSV rates are minimal with no trends upper or down. Influenza rates are minimal with no trends upper or down.

CDC Alerts and Upcoming CNHD Educational Presentations (By Subject)

National: Measles, Polio, Lead, Congenital Syphilis, Adult Syphilis, Mycoplasma, Pneumonia,
Regional: Salmonella (cucumbers), Listeria (deli meats), Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (ticks),
West Nile Disease (mosquitoes), Rabies (bats, pet bites), Hanta' Virus (mice feces), Harmful
Algae Blooms (algae toxins).

Local: None

Clinical

Clinical visits for vaccinations and family planning services increased in number in all counties from September through November. Back-to-school vaccines offered in the schools and CNHD clinics continued into mid-September with a higher number of students being vaccinated than in the prior school year. There was a notable increase in HPV9 vaccinations, and expanded educational outreach coordinated with Nevada Cancer Coalition.

In October, CNHD focus was on Influenza vaccines. Community vaccination events were offered in Fallon, Churchill County, Pershing County, Eureka and Crescent Valley, and Mineral County. In addition, vaccine outreach was offered at the senior centers, inmates, residential treatment facilities, and homebound individuals in these counties. The number of people vaccinated was slightly higher overall than in 2023.

The grant program that subsidized TB testing of residential treatment facilities ended on September 30, 2024. CNHD has agreed to continue testing clients of the New Frontier Treatment Center in Fallon for a nominal fee. We perform QuantiFERON blood testing on an average of 25 patients from New Frontier per month and provide follow-up chest X-ray orders for positive lab tests and referrals for latent TB infection treatment.

CNHD has received an agreement to participate from Women's Health Connection, which will offer coverage for qualified, uninsured women to obtain breast and cervical cancer screening, and referral to specialists when needed. Additionally, an agreement to participate was obtained from Silver Summit (Medicaid MCO) and Ambetter Commercial and Medicare Advantage plans. Enrollment with other insurance companies is under review at this time.

CNHD nurses will be joining nurses from Southern Nevada Health District (SNHD) to complete a specialized RN speculum training at University of Nevada Reno (UNR) in November. The training is being offered in partnership with the California Prevention Training Center (CAPTC), University of California San Francisco (UCSF) which will provide the instructor and UNR which is donating the space for the course.

Public Health Preparedness

The Central Nevada Health District completed five FLU POD events in the district. The first event was held October 15, 2024 in Lovelock, NV and the last event was held on October 30, 2024 in Hawthorne, NV.

Our Public Health Preparedness Planner has been shadowing and working closely with Northern Nevada Public Health Preparedness Team in building and drafting emergency response and preparedness plans for the Central Nevada Health District and is planning to host an after action

Trainings attended - Nevada Rural Summit

Miscellaneous

University of Nevada School of Medicine provided free services in Churchill County, Sunday, October 13, 2024 at the Central Nevada Health District clinic. 13 patients were seen by the Rural Outreach Team and were provided labs, examinations, referrals, medication refills, and immunizations free of charge.

On November 1, 2024 Banner Medical Group Clinic in Fallon had a site visit from Residency Programs Solutions (RPS). This consultant visit was to determine the capability of the clinics to have resources to host a residency program and make recommendations for improvement as needed. A report will be presented to the investigative committee in the next 2 to 4 weeks. If

favorable, Applications for grant funding and establishing binding relationships between Banner Corporation, UNSOM, Renowned Health Corporation, State Department of Rural Medical Education, and local governmental entities, including the Central Nevada Health District, will be initiated.

The CNHD has two new board members. They are replacing two resigning members. There may be one or two new members after the first of the year reflecting election of new county commissioners in the four counties served by the CNHD.

Jim Barbee, Churchill Co. Manager : Churchill County

Brandon Chadock MBA, CEO Pershing General Hospital: Pershing County

Concerns

As our communities recognize the services of CNHD, utilization and demand increases. Projections indicate that environmental services, epidemiology, clinical, and emergency management utilization will increase by 25% in the next year exceeding our current personnel capabilities. A lack of funding would be a barrier to the appropriate and necessary growth in the next 1-3 years.

Leadership is focusing on plans to address significant decrease in funding should state funding for public health not be renewed for the fiscal year 2025-26. There is a current hold on filling non-critical positions. Consideration is being given on how to best deliver mandated services without affecting non-mandated clinical services for next fiscal year.

The CNHD is closely evaluationg the fee schedule for the Burning Man Event and expects to recommend increases in fees for the 2025 year. This process has started and is expected to come to the Nevada Board of Health in the next two quarters.

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