

August 2012

# Connecting Point

A MID-MICHIGAN DISTRICT HEALTH

DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER



## Community Health Assessment

Community health assessment projects in Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm Counties aim to improve the overall health of residents by identifying health priorities and making positive community changes. MMDHD and community partners are making significant progress. Listed below is the status of each initiative:

### *Healthy! Capital Counties*

Strategic priorities have been identified and will be the focus of future planning. The identified issues are: Child Health, Obesity, Safety and Social Connection, Healthcare, and Connection to Resources.

### *Live Well Gratiot*

Working towards the development of a community profile, surveys have been distributed countywide to gain input from residents about their health concerns and their perceptions of the county's health needs.

### *Healthy Montcalm*

A Community Health Improvement Plan was recently completed, focusing on the priorities of: Improved Access to Care, Increasing Awareness of Community Resources, Addressing Mental Health, Reducing Obesity, and Reducing Substance Abuse.

For more information about these Community Health Assessment initiatives, visit [www.mmdmd.org](http://www.mmdmd.org).

## Complete Streets

A *Building Healthy Communities* grant awarded through the Michigan Department of Community Health has allowed MMDHD to pursue a Complete Streets initiative in Clinton County. Complete Streets is a concept in which transportation planning takes into account all roadway users: pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, people with disabilities and motorists. The goal is to create safer and more welcoming roadways that improve the livability of communities. Involved in this initiative along with MMDHD are: Clinton County on the Move, Michigan Trails & Greenways Alliance, and the Michigan Department of Community Health. For more information, contact Health Educator Sara Thelen at [sthelen@mmdhd.org](mailto:sthelen@mmdhd.org) or (989)227-3140.

## Vaccine Preventable Diseases

Thanks to the effectiveness of vaccines, vaccine preventable diseases have declined significantly over the years. Unfortunately, many Michigan adults are under-vaccinated, putting themselves and their families at risk. According to Dr. Robert Graham, Medical Director for MMDHD, "Most adults don't realize how important it is that they continue to get vaccinated against serious diseases, and it's a lifelong process." Dr. Graham also stated that vaccinating adults also protects infants, children, seniors and individuals with weakened immune systems.

Whooping Cough (Pertussis), a highly contagious respiratory disease, has been on the rise in recent years in both the U.S. and Michigan. People who have not yet received the Tdap vaccine should be vaccinated at their next healthcare visit, and those 65 years or older should be vaccinated if they are living with or caring for infants under 12 months of age. It is especially important that those in contact with infants get vaccinated against Pertussis, including pregnant women, new parents, siblings, grandparents, daycare and child care workers, and health care personnel. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there were 27,000 cases of Pertussis nationwide in 2010 and 27 deaths. Twenty-five of those deaths occurred in infants.

Adults should also check to see if they are protected against other diseases such as shingles, pneumococcal disease, varicella (chickenpox), tetanus, human papilloma virus, and hepatitis A and B. Parents should ensure that their teens receive a booster dose of meningococcal (meningitis) at 16-18 years of age, as well as college students 19-21 years of age who haven't received the vaccine in the past five years.

Vaccination not only protects the individual, but the people who come in contact with that individual. Adults should consult their physician about what vaccines they might need. For more information, visit [www.adultvaccination.org](http://www.adultvaccination.org) or call MMDHD at (989) 831-5237.

Visit [www.mmdhd.org](http://www.mmdhd.org) for information on agency programs, services and health issues.

## Monthly Healthy Living Recommendations

For the month of August, the Board of Health offers this recommendation:

**Take heat advisories seriously! When it is hot and humid, the body has a more difficult time cooling itself. As a result, heat exhaustion or heat stroke can occur.**

During a heat advisory, it is recommended that individuals:

- Drink plenty of fluids
- Avoid alcoholic beverages and high sugar drinks
- Decrease caffeine intake
- Avoid direct sun exposure
- Wear light-colored, lightweight clothing
- Dab the skin with cool water and sit in moving air
- Check on elderly neighbors
- Take advantage of cooling centers if air conditioning is not available in the home.

With heat waves reaching record highs this summer, ER admissions have been on the increase, according to MMDHD Medical Director Dr. Robert Graham. Seeking cooler environments, staying hydrated and avoiding over-exertion are key to having a healthier, more enjoyable summer.



## Environmental Health Food Licensing

The Food Service Sanitation Program at MMDHD is responsible for:

- Inspecting and licensing locations of public food preparation
- Reviewing new food service establishment plans
- Investigating food establishment complaints
- Providing educational programs on food safety

The licenses for fixed food establishments are renewed each year in April. Below is the breakdown of licensed establishments by county:

<b>County</b>	<b>Licensed Establishments in 2012</b>
Clinton	205
Gratiot	166
Montcalm	234
Total	605

## Region 6 Whole Community Planning Taskforce (Montcalm County)

Montcalm County has long been involved in preparedness planning for at risk populations through Region 6 Homeland Security. The planning group has representation from public health, county emergency management, hospitals, Region 6 Healthcare Coalition, as well as volunteer coordinators. The primary goal of whole community planning is to facilitate community preparation to withstand and recover from all hazards including public health incidents, especially those individuals considered most vulnerable. Vulnerable populations, depending on the incident, might include the elderly, children, those who do not speak English, those living in extreme poverty or isolation, and individuals with hearing or sight impairments.

The Whole Community Planning Taskforce requested and was awarded funding from the Region 6 Homeland Security Planning Board to purchase supplies and equipment to assist with facilitating preparedness for at risk populations. The supplies will be distributed to each county located in Region 6 and includes:

- Visual Language Translators for first responders to enhance communication.
- Citizen Corps 30-second Radio Ad to promote citizen preparedness.
- A Disaster Preparedness 101 PowerPoint course to present to community groups.
- Channing-Bete Emergency Preparedness Handbooks for people with special needs.
- Weather radios for individuals with sensory disabilities including radios with strobe lights for those with sight impairment.

All supplies are expected to be received in August. The Montcalm County Local Planning Team is developing a strategy for distribution in September.

*For more information about these and other Health Department programs, contact:*

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