

Connecting Point

A MID MICHIGAN DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER



June 2014

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Visit www.mmdhd.org for more information on agency programs, services and health issues.



Pathways to Better Health

In cooperation with the Ingham Health Plan Corporation (IHPC) and the Ingham County Health Department (ICHD), the Mid-Michigan District Health Department (MMDHD) has been given the opportunity to participate in *Pathways to Better Health*, a federally-funded community HUB project. Community Hub is an evidence-based model that promotes a system of collaboration, accountability, and improved outcomes. This particular project targets individuals who are Medicaid or Medicare eligible, are 18 years of age or older, and have two or more chronic illnesses. With the assistance of a community health worker (CHW), these individuals are provided peer support services that help them to navigate the health care and social service systems. The ultimate goal of the Pathways Project is to improve health outcomes for at-risk individuals and reduce health care costs. These costs are the result of individuals not seeking preventive and primary care for chronic conditions that result in emergency room visits and hospitalization.

MMDHD has recently hired its first CHW to provide case management in Clinton County. The agency hopes to replicate the Pathways to Better Health model in Gratiot and Montcalm

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Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccination Encouraged

HPV is a common virus which spreads through sexual contact. It can cause cervical cancer in women, and leads to other forms of cancer and genital warts in both men and women. Often times, HPV displays no symptoms, putting more people at risk for exposure. Fortunately, a vaccine exists to prevent the most common types of HPV, specifically those that cause cervical cancer and genital warts.

The HPV vaccine is recommended for girls and boys starting at age 11 or 12 years, with a three-dose series given over a six-month period. The State of Michigan reports that vaccination rates across the state are down. According to the Michigan Care Improvement Registry (MCIR), rates of vaccination for adolescents in the three MMDHD counties in May of 2014 are:

County	Percent Vaccinated
Clinton	16%
Gratiot	19%
Montcalm	21%

Improving vaccination rates at the state and local level is an ongoing goal and challenge. For more information on the immunization program, contact Sarah Doak, RN, at (989) 227-3109 or sdoak@mmdhd.org. To schedule an immunization appointment, contact your local health care provider or local MMDHD office at:

County	Phone
Clinton	(989) 224-2195 #5
Gratiot	(989) 875-3681 #5
Montcalm	(989) 831-5237 #5

Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Breastfeeding Peer Counselors

Peer counselors with the WIC nutrition program at MMDHD have proven their effectiveness in promoting breastfeeding with new mothers. Since the peer counselor program began in 2010, the number of women initiating breastfeeding with their new babies has increased by 10% districtwide.

Peer counselors serve as role models, provide breastfeeding information, offer after-hours breastfeeding support, and provide referrals when needed. They also offer instruction on using breast pumps. Studies have shown that mothers who talk to a peer counselor during pregnancy are more likely to breastfeed.

The health benefits of breastfeeding are many. For the mother, there is a reduction in risk for type 2 diabetes, breast cancer, ovarian cancer and post partum depression. For the baby, there is a lower risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, allergies, asthma, obesity, gastrointestinal disease and type 2 diabetes.

For more information on the peer counselor program, contact:

Clinton County	Gratiot County	Montcalm County
Nicole Montgomery	Molly Smith	Jessica Gallop
989-227-3137	989-875-1043	Tammara Van Dop
		989-831-3625

Bat Alert

Two bats within the MMDHD district have tested positive for rabies this season, prompting the need for extra caution around them. Rabies is fatal if left untreated. In order to test for rabies, the bat's head must be left intact, so capture requires thoughtful procedures. For more information, visit www.mmdhd.org (community health and communicable disease sections), to view a video on safe bat capture. For more information, contact your local MMDHD branch office.

Do 1 Thing

The **do1thing** program is designed to help make the job of emergency preparedness easier for individuals, families, and organizations. Each month is devoted to a single preparedness activity. For June, **do1thing** focuses on "unique family needs." Does your household have items that members cannot live without for 72 hours? This could be anything from diapers, to prescription medications and health supplies to pet care. For more information, visit www.do1thing.com.

E-Cigarettes Dangers



E-cigarettes are battery-operated devices designed to turn nicotine and other chemicals into a vapor. "Vaping" is becoming increasingly popular as an alternative to smoking cigarettes, because many believe it is a safer choice. Unfortunately, research about the safety of these devices is limited and the health risks to children and adults are becoming more apparent.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the number of phone calls to poison control centers nationwide involving e-cigarettes rose from one call per month in September of 2010 to 215 per month in February of 2014. Nicotine fluid, injected into the e-cigarettes by the owner, contains varying amounts of nicotine and comes in a variety of fruit and candy flavors that are attractive to children. Drinking the fluid can cause heart palpitations, sweats, irritability, seizures and vomiting. Adults can become ill when the fluid absorbs into the skin.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is currently taking public comment to regulate the sale of e-cigarettes and other unregulated tobacco products, such as cigars and hookahs. Among the goals of the new rules are: preventing the sale of these products to minors, requiring health warnings on labels, restricting vending machine sales and requiring reporting of product and ingredient listings. Keeping the next generation tobacco-free is the ultimate goal of the FDA.

For more information about the hazards of e-cigarette use, visit www.fda.gov or contact Cheryl Thelen, Health Educator II, at (989) 831-3634 or cthelen@mmdhd.org.

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Counties in the near future. For more information on the HUB project, contact Andrea Tabor, Health Services Administrator at (989) 831-3639 or atabor@mmdhd.org.

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

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