

Director’s Update to the Board of Health December 2023

Protecting Health – Preventing the Spread of Infectious Disease

Respiratory Infections

Currently we are seeing an increase in all respiratory illnesses across the country. Locally, we have not yet seen an increase in COVID but are starting to see an uptick in influenza and RSV. The winter months are typically when we see increased rate of respiratory illnesses. We have been offering flu and COVID vaccines in our clinics with good uptake. RSV vaccine has a nation-wide shortage, especially for children. MPH D continues to recommend the same mitigation strategies that work for all respiratory infections. This includes staying home when you are sick, wearing a mask, social distancing and avoiding prolonged close exposure individuals you don’t know or who might be sick. All three of these illnesses are vaccine preventable so the best way to reduce risk is to get vaccinated or boosted. Optimally, it takes at least two weeks for full immunity after your vaccination or booster, so plan ahead as we approach the holiday season. MPH D will continue its social media and media campaign to encourage everyone to protect themselves and loved ones by getting vaccinated.

Flu Vaccinations

Tracking flu vaccination data can be challenging. The Tennessee Immunization Information System, or TennIIS, is MPH D’s best resource for immunization data across Tennessee. Of course, those data are only as good as what is being entered. Unfortunately, providers are not required to enter vaccination data into TennIIS and there are often issues with electronic communications between TennIIS and the clinics that do report. The TennIIS team is continuously recruiting clinics to report electronically, and the program has seen significant improvement in reporting over the past five years. The hope is that provider participation will continue to increase, allowing for better data availability.

MPH D clinics report all vaccinations into TennIIS, and providers enrolled in the Vaccines For Children (VFC) program are required to record every vaccine administered to all patients under the age of 19 years regardless of VFC status. This helps provide a better idea of actual flu coverage in pediatrics across Davidson County.

MPH D offers flu vaccine to the community through the Lentz, Woodbine, and East Public Health Clinics and also through the mobile MPH D Strike Team in various locations. Below are statistics on MPH D’s flu vaccination activities for the current flu season and last year’s flu season.

MPH D has already given more flu shots through the first few months of the current flu season than there were through the entire flu season last year. This increase can be credited to a diligence in clinic staff offering the flu shot to patients receiving other services and the Strike Team being able to offer flu shots out in the community for the first time.

MPH D Flu Vax Activities 2023-2024 Season				
Age				
0-18	19-49	50-64	65+	TOTAL
729	1,245	733	238	2,945

MPH D Flu Vax Activities 2022-2023 Season				
Age				
0-18	19-49	50-64	65+	TOTAL
770	1,030	419	232	2,453

MPOX

MPH D and surrounding public health departments are experiencing an uptick in mpox cases. The MPH D Vaccine Preventable Disease (VPD) Program is tasked with investigating Davidson County cases and identifying and notifying contacts. The MPH D Strike Team conducted an mpox vaccination clinic on Thursday, December 7, at Lentz Health Center and will be working with community partners in the coming weeks to offer additional

mpox vaccine clinics across the county. Board Members can assist by sharing upcoming mpox vaccination opportunities as they are scheduled.

Creating Healthier Community Environments

School Nurses

We are proud to note that one of our own, Karen Reid, is the Tennessee Association of School Nurses “School Nurse of the Year” for 2023.

Karen has been with MPH D since 2018 at Hickman Elementary and currently Donelson Middle School. The TSNA offers special praise for her ability to mediate with that age group. The association’s announcement of her selection says: “By building trust with both students and parents alike, she is able to have difficult conversations with them ... especially when it comes to dealing with teenage non-compliance.”

The announcement also says she will “dance like no one is watching to promote physical activity, put on the mascot costume to teach hygiene, and serves as a valued mentor to new nurses,” among other accolades.

Our sincere congratulations to Karen on this recognition, and appreciation for what she does.

We Get a Medal

Nashville received its first-ever medal from [CityHealth](#), a joint initiative of the de Beaumont Foundation and Kaiser Permanente, which annually grades cities on their public health policies.

Nashville received a bronze medal in the 2023 assessment. What put us over the top was the elimination of smoking in 21-and-up bars, which until 2022 we were preempted from doing by state law. When the Legislature changed the law to allow local jurisdictions to make those types of decisions, we changed the local ordinance to ban the practice.

Environmental

MACC

MACC has had a stressful few weeks, from a chair hurled (with poor aim, fortunately) at one of our ACOs to the heart-breaking discovery of a bag full of bludgeoned kittens in a dumpster. We met with the shelter’s leadership team a couple of week ago to begin mapping out coping and stress-reduction strategies for our staff there, in particular the stress of overtime and the emotional toll of the work. There are numerous strategies to be pursued in parallel but on differing timelines. The short-term help is in the works, as are several medium-term proposals and concepts for further down the road. We greatly appreciate the difficulty of that job and the dedication shown daily by our staff, and fully intend to provide the support they need.

Organizational Updates

The Feds & WIC et al.

Another short-term funding agreement was reached by Congress in November to prevent a federal government shutdown. That funding will expire on January 19, 2024, and it is unknown whether federal programs can expect to receive full funding for the next year. The health department has a few programs funded federally, including the WIC program. While it is anticipated that the WIC program will continue to be funded, until legislation is passed it is uncertain if funding will be able to support the growing caseloads across the nation or if changes to food benefits or caseloads will need to be made, including potential waitlists. WIC in Davidson County currently serves more than 21,000 women, infants and children and has a monthly caseload that has grown by 7% over the last year and by 22% since 2019. Reasons for increased caseloads could include flexibility for ways to enroll into the program as well as increased food costs. To date for 2023, WIC participants have redeemed just over \$14 million in benefits towards nutritious foods and formulas in stores within Davidson County.



METRO NASHVILLE
ANIMAL CARE & CONTROL

NFHS Basic Data Matrix

11/01/2023 and 11/30/2023

		Species							Totals	
		Canine			Canine Totals	Feline				Feline Totals
		Adult	Up to 5 Months	Unknown Age		Adult	Up to 5 Months	Unknown Age		
Beginning Animal Count as of 11/01/2023		193	17	0	210	24	94	1	119	329
I N T A K E S	Stray/At Large	217	32	2	251	38	48	3	89	340
	Transferred in from Municipal Shelter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Transferred in from Other Rescue Group	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Owner Requested Euthanasia	8	0	0	8	1	0	0	1	9
	Relinquished by Owner	10	1	1	12	10	3	0	13	25
	Other Intakes	13	13	0	26	1	0	0	1	27
	Total Intakes	248	46	3	297	50	51	3	104	401
O U T C O M E S	Adoptions	91	13	0	104	19	52	0	71	175
	Returned to Home	69	1	2	72	4	0	0	4	76
	Transferred to Rescue Group	64	28	0	92	7	15	0	22	114
	Other Live Outcomes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Return to Field	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total Live Outcomes	224	42	2	268	30	67	0	97	365
	Died in Care	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	5	5
	Lost in Care	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
	Euthanasia	50	0	1	51	7	2	3	12	63
	Owner Requested Euthanasia	8	0	0	8	1	0	0	1	9
Total Other Outcomes	60	0	1	61	8	7	3	18	79	
Total Outcomes	284	42	3	329	38	74	3	115	444	
Ending Animal Count as of 11/30/2023		162	16	0	178	39	68	1	108	286
Save Rate		78.33%	100.00%	66.67%	81.66%	85.71%	86.27%	0.00%	83.50%	82.14%