



NJ Communi- CABLE

Summer 2022 Quarterly Newsletter

Communicable Disease Service Mission Statement

Our mission is to prevent communicable disease among all citizens of New Jersey, and to promote the knowledge and use of healthy lifestyles to maximize the health and well-being of New Jerseyans.

We will accomplish our mission through our leadership, collaborative partnerships, and advocacy for communicable disease surveillance, research, education, treatment, prevention and control.

Phil Murphy, Governor

Sheila Oliver, Lt. Governor

Judith M. Persichilli, RN, BSN, MA
Commissioner

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE SERVICE

Christina Tan, MD, MPH
State Epidemiologist/
Assistant Commissioner

Steven Bors, Acting Director

Suzanne Miro, MPH, MCHES
Editor, Research Scientist

Immunizations in the Time of Back to School: From School Requirements to Catch up Vaccinations

Heading back to school is an exciting time of the year for students and families. As students go back to school, it is a prime opportunity to ensure that they are up to date on all their immunizations, including the required vaccines for school. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, many families have fallen behind on routine health care appointments including immunizations for children, and may have not had the opportunity to catch up. Receiving timely and age-appropriate vaccinations and/or catching up on missed vaccinations will keep children, schools, and the community healthy and safe from potential outbreaks of serious diseases.

Children are recommended to receive their primary vaccination series between birth and 18 months and additional doses of MMR, DTaP, polio, and varicella vaccines between ages 4 to 6 years. Children should receive their adolescent Tdap, meningococcal, HPV, and influenza vaccines at 11-12 years of age. The CDC-recommended immunization schedules for children and



adolescents can be found at www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/index.html.

Some vaccines recommended at these ages are also required for attending childcare, preschool facilities, and schools by the New Jersey Department of Health. Encourage your patients to make an appointment before the beginning of this school year to avoid any disruptions in starting school on time or for continued school attendance. For more information on the vaccines required for school attendance in New Jersey, please visit https://nj.gov/health/cd/imm_requirements/.





Summer 2022

Project Firstline Update

In the first half of 2022, New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) Communicable Disease Service (CDS) Project Firstline health educators (PFL) have been aggressive in their efforts in delivering core infection prevention and control (IPC) education to New Jersey's current and future frontline healthcare workforce. As of the beginning of May, 13 in-person and virtual training sessions have been delivered, half of which targeted college students studying healthcare and allied health as part of our first cohort of the *Project Firstline: NJ College Tour Series*. As a result, we have educated over 1,500 frontline healthcare workers and students. As we actively prepare for the fall 2022 semester, college students and faculty are encouraged to sign up for updates from the PFL team when registration for the second cohort becomes available by [clicking here](#). Any colleges and universities who are interested in more information about the *Project Firstline: NJ College Tour Series* and how they can partner or cohost a session can email us directly at CDS.IC.PFL@doh.nj.gov.



education sessions. We invite you to join us and share the following training dates and times with your colleagues:

Monday August 15th at 5:00pm – Introduction to Reservoirs and Basics of Virus Transmission (including COVID-19)

Monday September 19th at 5:00pm – Recognizing Risk Using Reservoirs

Monday October 3rd at 5:00pm – How to Protect Yourself Using Standard Precautions

To register, [click here](#).

New Jersey PFL's goal is to provide diverse local and regional IPC trainings, develop educational tools, and engage with frontline healthcare

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Beginning in August, the PFL team will be offering three, free, virtual IPC

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CDS “Dishing” Up Training for Educational Settings

The Daycare, School, and Higher Education (DSH) team, which focuses on daycares, schools, and higher education, strives to assist with any communicable disease; this year, COVID-19 has taken the spotlight. At the close of the school year, the team paused to reflect on the impressive work that local health departments, daycares, schools, and institutes of higher education have done to make this school year as safe as possible for the students of New Jersey.

From September through June, New Jersey cycled through the vagaries of the Delta variant and the Omicron surge, while also keeping up with changes to COVID-19 vaccine eligibility and evolving mask recommendations. Over 1,100 COVID-19 outbreaks in educational settings were reported to the New Jersey

Department of Health in this timeframe, with local health departments and their partners responding to each one. New Jersey’s daycares, schools, and institutes of higher education have certainly covered much ground this past

year, and it is a privilege to be on hand to support their pandemic response.

The mission of the DSH team is to prioritize collaboration, education, and training that strengthens public health and minimizes infectious disease transmission in these settings. The team collaborates with the Communicable Disease Service’s Regional Epidemiology Program, school subject-matter experts, local health departments, and other partner agencies to identify training and education needs and the best ways to meet those needs.

In response to a needs assessment survey, which was disseminated to over 3,200 licensed childcare centers in the state, the DSH team created original materials to address training needs among childcare providers. These materials addressed the

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The Rapid Response Team Hits One-year Anniversary!


The Rapid Response Team (RRT) was designed to provide rapid support to various divisions within the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) and externally to local health departments for COVID and non-COVID related investigations. The team, comprised of one Supervising Public Health Representative, three Public Health Representative 1 positions and five Public Health Representative 3 positions and three Public Health Representative 3 Bilingual positions, has had an exciting first year. Since March of 2021, RRT has established relationships with infection preventionists, local health departments and other various stakeholders in an effort to better service the community and improve public health. Ongoing assignments include gathering and verifying data for identified vaccine breakthrough cases and hospital outcomes for COVID 19 positive patients. To date over 10,000 vaccine breakthrough cases have been reviewed. RRT has also effectively educated infection preventionists on Communicable Disease Reporting and Surveillance System (CDRSS) COVID case completion to coordinate the updates and closures of approximately 23,000 COVID-related hospital admissions.

RRT provides 24/7 coverage and coordination for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Division of Global Migration and Quarantine (DGMQ). Individuals

from the team rotate on-call responsibilities to report exposures, monitor and provide guidance to COVID positive cases intercepted at the airport who are traveling while infectious. RRT consulted with CDC regarding cases that were non-compliant with public health recommendations to determine issuance of a Do Not Board (DNB) order in conjunction with the US Department of Homeland Security and enforce CDC quarantine guidance.

Other assignments the team has worked on include, but are not limited to:

- Foodborne disease investigations
- Long-term care facility outreach for Infection Control Assessment & Response (ICAR)
- Hepatitis investigations, case creations, perinatal case updates
- Yearly case close outs
- Legionnaires' disease investigations

Three members were also recognized in a published CDC Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) for their contributions to the Omicron cluster investigation surrounding the first Minnesota case and close contacts who attended a New York City anime convention. As RRT continues into its sophomore year, this multifaceted team is looking forward to assisting the New Jersey Department of Health and local health departments in all aspects of public health. 

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NEW! Viral Hepatitis Services Locator Dashboard


Do you know where people can access viral hepatitis vaccination, testing or treatment? Check out the newest dashboard...the Viral Hepatitis Services Locator!

This interactive dashboard can assist with locating publicly-funded sites that provide access to hepatitis vaccine, testing, and treatment. Simply select the type of viral hepatitis service, and county or zip code, and a map will appear with locations. Hepatitis vaccine is available to prevent hepatitis A and hepatitis B. Testing is available to identify if a person is infected with the hepatitis A, B, or C viruses. Treatment for chronic hepatitis B and C is also available. Use the dashboard

to identify which service is needed.

Note: the map shows only publicly-funded sites and not private providers. Publicly-funded sites accept various types of health insurance, sliding-scale self-payment, as well as uninsured persons. Some sites have eligibility requirements. The dashboard replaces a static document on the NJDOH website.

To update information or to add a new publicly-funded hepatitis service/location to the dashboard, please email Viral.Hepatitis@doh.nj.gov

To view the viral hepatitis dashboard, visit: https://nj.gov/health/cd/topics/hepatitis_viral.shtml 

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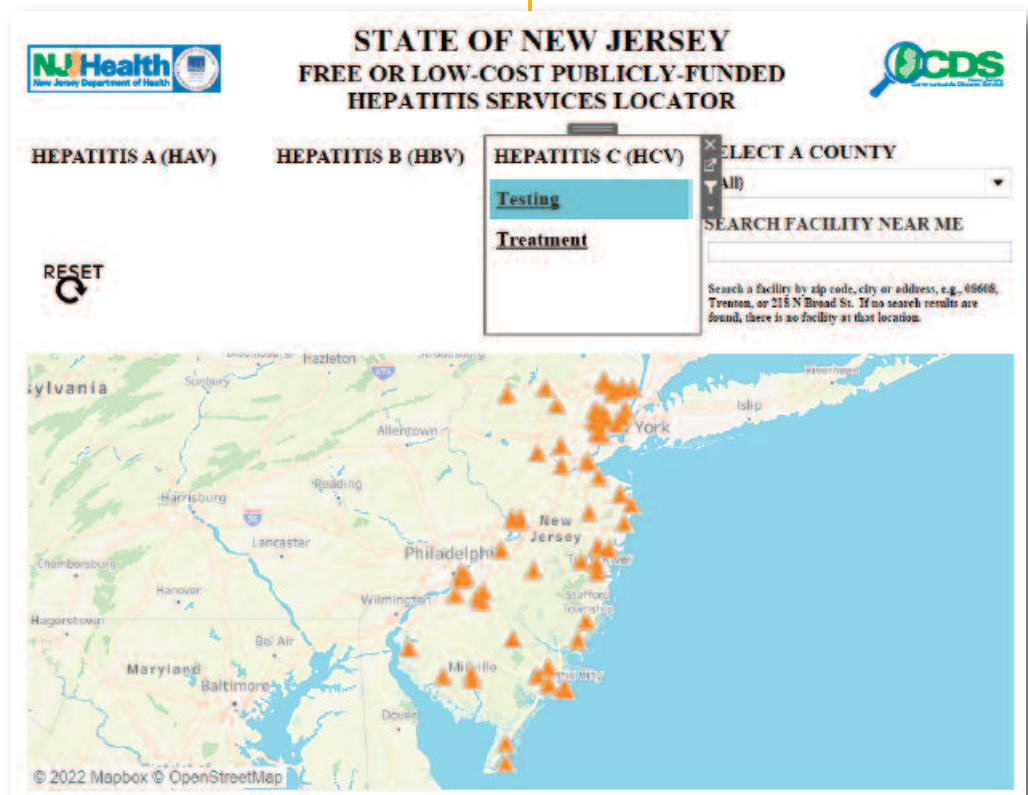
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The screenshot shows the "STATE OF NEW JERSEY FREE OR LOW-COST PUBLICLY-FUNDED HEPATITIS SERVICES LOCATOR" interface. It features three tabs for "HEPATITIS A (HAV)", "HEPATITIS B (HBV)", and "HEPATITIS C (HCV)". The "HEPATITIS C (HCV)" tab is active, showing a dropdown menu with "Testing" and "Treatment" options. To the right, there is a "SELECT A COUNTY" dropdown menu set to "All" and a "SEARCH FACILITY NEAR ME" input field. Below the search field is a map of New Jersey with orange triangles indicating service locations. The map includes labels for various counties and cities like Philadelphia, Trenton, and Newark. Logos for NJ Health and CDS are visible at the top of the interface.



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Flu Initiative Awardees for 2021-22

The NJ College and University Flu Challenge

The Challenge encourages friendly competition between institutions of higher education to determine which campus can achieve the highest flu vaccination rates. Each participating institution develops and implements a unique influenza campaign to fit the needs of the student body. Flu vaccination coverage is measured by a short self-reported student survey. By participating in the Challenge, institutions receive access to educational resources, an award for participation, and a chance to win the traveling trophy for the year.




The winners of the 2021-22 Flu Challenge are *The College of New Jersey* (large schools), *Seton Hall University* (medium schools), and *Centenary University* (small schools). Congratulations to this year's winners!

To sign up for next year's Flu Challenge, or for more information, visit www.nj.gov/health/cd/edu_training/vpdp_flu_challenge.shtml.

The NJ Influenza Honor Roll

The Influenza Honor Roll recognizes institutions that are striving to promote influenza awareness and prevention within their communities.

Four categories of honorees are eligible: institutions of education; businesses; community-based organizations (including faith-based organizations); and medical facilities. Institutions from these categories are encouraged to submit applications detailing their influenza-related activities that were implemented during the flu season. All institutions named to the New Jersey Influenza Honor Roll will be highlighted on the New Jersey Department of Health website and will receive a certificate of recognition.

For the 2021-22 flu season, 14 new awardees received recognition. Congratulations to this year's honorees! You can learn more about their activities and this initiative at https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/edu_training/vpdp_flu_honor_roll.shtml. 

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**SEPTEMBER
SEPSIS** SAY SEPSIS
SAVE LIVES
SEPSISAWARENESSMONTH.ORG

September is sepsis awareness months. Sepsis is a medical emergency and its symptoms must be treated rapidly to reduce the risk of death. In honor of #SepsisAwarenessMonth, @SepsisAlliance is encouraging everyone to learn the signs of sepsis. As many as 80% of sepsis deaths could be prevented with early detection and treatment. Take the time to learn the signs. You could save a life. Learn more at www.SepsisAwarenessMonth.org. #SAM2022

When it comes to sepsis, remember
IT'S ABOUT TIME™. Watch for:



TEMPERATURE

higher or lower than normal



INFECTION

may have signs and symptoms of infection



MENTAL DECLINE

confused, sleepy, difficult to rouse



EXTREMELY ILL

Severe pain, discomfort, shortness of breath

Watch for a combination of these symptoms. If you suspect sepsis, see a doctor urgently, CALL 911, or go to a hospital and say, **"I AM CONCERNED ABOUT SEPSIS."**



sepsis.org

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Get more information at <http://nj.gov/health/cd/handwashing.shtml>.

Project Firstline, continued from page 2

providers in a variety of settings. By the end of the training recipients should understand and confidently apply IPC principles and protocols in their current and future workplaces, regardless of their prior training or educational background. This is done through ongoing assessment of current educational needs and gaps in IPC among frontline healthcare workers to provide quality, accessible, and culturally competent education to meet those needs. We are continuing to collect responses from our Learning Needs Assessment (LNA) to assess IPC educational needs and trends over time. To participate in our LNA, [click here](#).

Continuing education credits will not be offered. However, a certificate of

completion will be provided for each training. For healthcare professionals seeking CMEs, CNEs, and CPEs, they can “learn and earn” with CDC PFL through their Training and Continuing Education Online (TCEO) System. For convenient access to all self-paced trainings, visit the NJDOH PFL website by [clicking here](#).

NJDOH PFL is also on social media! To like and share our content with your networks, follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#). For more information about IPC training offerings, scheduling a training, or partnering with us, please call 609-826-5964, email us at CDS.IC.PFL@doh.nj.gov, or sign up for our newsletter by [clicking here](#). 

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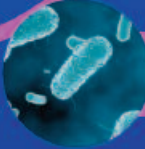
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NJDOH Project Firstline presents...


Introduction to Infection Control in Healthcare



- 

Monday August 15, 2022 at 5:00 PM
Introduction to Reservoirs and Basics of Virus Transmission (Including COVID-19)
- 

Monday September 19, 2022 at 5:00 PM
Recognizing Risk Using Reservoirs
- 

Monday October 3, 2022 at 5:00 PM
How to Protect Yourself Using Standard Precautions

SCAN TO REGISTER 





Summer 2022

“Dishing” Training, continued from page 3

prevention of disease in their centers and how to recognize, report, and contain communicable disease outbreaks when they do occur. In collaboration with the Rutgers Center for Public Health Workforce Development, training was provided to over 750 attendees with a live webinar entitled “Best Practices for Childcare Centers in the COVID-19 Era.”

An additional three live webinars, presented by the team and hosted by the New Jersey Hospital Association, were geared toward K-12 school nurses and the public health nurses who support them. As the COVID-19 guidance changed rapidly, these educational sessions served as a platform for school nurses and childcare providers to provide feedback about the types of education and materials that are needed to help them respond to the COVID-19 pandemic in these settings. The webinars and the many additional materials created by the DSH team made it easier for these frontline professionals to rapidly absorb new recommendations and change their practices accordingly.

In May of 2022, the DSH team mission was furthered by

partnering with the New Jersey Council of County Colleges (NJCCC) to reach out to the 18 county colleges in our state with a survey designed to identify their communicable disease training needs.

The DSH team is grateful to the multiple county-wide school nurse associations and other agencies



such as the Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) who reached out to request training over the course of the year. We encourage our partners in the public health and educational sectors to find the recorded webinars and other materials on the [CDS’s education and training page](#). Please keep those requests coming, as we look forward to working with you all in the 2022-2023 school year!

The team can be reached at: cds.rep.communications@doh.nj.gov



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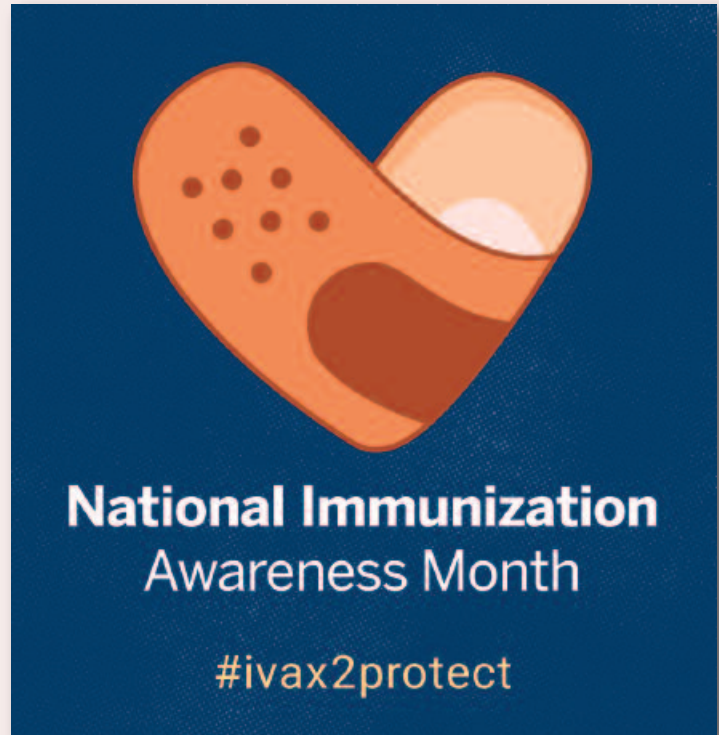



National Immunization Awareness Month (August 2022)

It's time to start planning! August marks the date for two key public health observations for immunizations: National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM) as well as New Jersey's Adult Vaccine Preventable Disease Awareness and Improvement Month.

August serves as a great opportunity to ensure that patients are up to date with routine immunizations including those they may have missed due to the impacts of the pandemic. It is also a great time to remind patients of the importance of receiving vaccinations throughout the lifespan. For more information on NIAM, including campaign resources, please visit: www.cdc.gov/vaccines/events/niam/index.html.

To assist in your NIAM campaigns, The New Jersey Department of Health's Vaccine Preventable



Disease Program (VPDP) has a variety of health education materials available to assist in providing accurate and reliable information to the general public. Materials range from brochures to flyers, placemats, magnets, and more and are available at no cost. Please contact the VPDP at 609-826-4861 or email Jennifer Smith (Jennifer.Smith@doh.nj.gov) to request a full list of available materials or to place a request for hard copies. 

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Are You Antibiotic Aware?

Mark your calendars for U.S. Antibiotic Awareness Week (USA AW), November 18 – 24, 2022. The New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH), Communicable Disease Service (CDS) will once again be supporting national efforts to raise awareness of the threat of antibiotic resistance and the importance of appropriate antibiotic use. Now is the time to start planning your educational efforts! Visit the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) USA AW website](https://www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-awareness/) to access the Partner Toolkit and other resources.

If you would like to order educational materials, please send an email with your name, mailing address, the items you want, quantity requested. We will do our best to fill requests in full depending upon available supplies.

Items available:

Tear off Pads

Viral prescription pads (self-care measures to feel better without an

antibiotic - for providers to give to patients)

You have just filled a prescription for antibiotics (proper antibiotic use information - for pharmacists to give to patients)

Brochures

Antibiotics – Will they work when you really need them? (Available in English and Spanish)

Cold or flu, antibiotics don't work for you. (English only)

Antibiotics aren't always the answer (English only)

A veces, el remedio es peor que la enfermedad (Spanish only)

Fact Sheets for Long-term Care

What to Know about Respiratory Infections (English only)

What to Know about Urinary Tract Infections (English only)

What to Know about Clostridioides difficile Infections (English only) 

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CDS Continues Antimicrobial Stewardship Recognition Program!

The New Jersey Department of Health, Communicable Disease Service is in the process of reviewing applications for the annual Antimicrobial Stewardship Recognition Program (ASRP). The ASRP is an opportunity for healthcare facilities to demonstrate that they are effectively implementing strategies that reflect the CDC's Core Elements of Antibiotic Stewardship. Facilities can earn Gold, Silver, or Bronze status depending upon how

many of the key measures are met. Applications are being accepted beginning June 1, 2022 with a closing date of August 1, 2022. For more information and to see past winners, please visit the [NJDOH Antibiotic Stewardship website](#).

The materials mentioned in the US Antibiotic Awareness Week, on page 11, can be used as part of your educational efforts to improve your ASRP application score! 

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NJDOH is Proud to present...

The Antimicrobial Stewardship Recognition Program

Local Stewardship Program

The banner features a blue background with a wavy light blue line. In the upper right, there is a cluster of various colorful pills and capsules. The text is white and orange.



*INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL (IPC)
TIP OF THE WEEK*



**BE ON THE LOOK OUT FOR
WEEKLY TIPS ON ALL NJ DOH
SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES!**



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