

PUBLIC HEALTH PREPAREDNESS UPDATE


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 Ganesh Shivaramaiyer, Interim Director

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Dallas County Expands Bus Fleet to Meet the Growing Needs of Seniors

Dallas County Health and Human Services hosted a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on Wednesday, November 14, 2018, to unveil a new fleet of buses for seniors. The donation of new buses is the result of a collaboration between DCHHS and Community Council of Greater Dallas (CCGD), signaling a valued partnership in the effort to serve Dallas County seniors more effectively and safely. "From my point of view as an organization, we are honored to be part of the work that we do with these organizations, especially with Dallas County", said Chief Executive Officer of Community Council of Greater Dallas, Ken Goodgames. Other dignitaries in attendance were Dallas County Judge Clay Jenkins, Commissioner John Wiley Price, and our seniors.

To help meet the challenge of transporting seniors from their homes to the senior centers and back, CCGD – Dallas Area Agency on Aging (DAAA) committed to providing nine (9) brand

new passenger buses to DCHHS – Older Adult Service Program (OASP). The new buses will replace aging vans from the existing fleet and include a combination of 12, 14, 20 and 24 passenger buses; of which, the majority are retrofitted with handicapped accessible lifts.

"Through partnership efforts such as this, we hope to affect a positive outcome throughout Dallas County communities," said Ganesh Shivaramaiyer, DCHHS Interim Director. "This is one of many beneficial outcomes to our community and is a result of our enduring partnership with Community Council and DAAA, guided by our shared belief that service to seniors in our community is of vital importance," said Shivaramaiyer.



L-R: OAS Program Manager, Mark Edwards; CEO of Greater Dallas Community Council, Ken Goodgames; Commissioner John Wiley Price; County Judge Clay Jenkins; DCHHS Interim Director Ganesh Shivaramaiyer and OASP Contract Manager, Oscar Tovar

E. Coli Infections Linked to Romaine Lettuce

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued a food safety alert associated to Romaine Lettuce and E. Coli infections. Escherichia coli (abbreviated E. coli) are a large and diverse group of bacteria. Although most are harmless, others can make you very ill. Some types of E. coli frequently cause diarrhea

(often bloody), severe stomach cramps and vomiting. "Until fully cleared by the CDC we are advising consumers to not eat romaine lettuce labeled as harvest from the Central Coastal regions of northern and central California, instead discard them," Interim Director Shivaramaiyer continued. "If not



Fox 4 News reporter Richard Ray interviews Interim Director Ganesh Shivaramaiyer

labeled the safest thing to do is to not buy or consume the product."



OASP Addresses Key Issues of Social Isolation at Senator Royce West Town Hall

In October, DCHHS-OASP participated in State Senator Royce West's Town Hall meeting "Eggs and Issues." The Town Hall meeting at Baylor Scott & White Juanita J. Craft Recreation Center provided resources and information for Seniors and Caregivers. Following the breakfast session, Senator West led a discussion on the importance of seniors resources.



OAS Program Manager Mark Edwards

"With the senior population expected to triple in North Texas over the next 20-30 years – so will the number of seniors left home alone; thus, leading to social isolation, depression, poor nutrition, and a lower quality of life for a growing population," said Mark Edwards, OASP Program Manager. "The good news is OASP's congregate meals and transportation services is there to ensure older adults in Dallas County are healthy, independent and active," said Mr. Edwards. The Town Hall meeting concluded with seniors

getting free advice from Estate Planning and General Will attorneys, Senior Source, Veteran's Administration and other resources.

Flu Vaccination Mobilization Efforts Continues

With the objective this flu season of encouraging residents to get the flu shots early, DCHHS continues their flu vaccination mobilization efforts at homeless shelters, faith-based organizations and various ethnic groups. "It's important to host these health fairs because it allows patients to come into more neutral settings to receive help and services" said Social Worker Sara Bawany.

"The barriers our community often faces with health care is language and a mutual cultural understanding and this is primarily seen most in immigrant and refugee populations." In addition, DCHHS recently visited Dallas Life Foundation and Austin Street Shelter and will offer the vaccine at Kwanzaa Health Fest December 8-9.



DCHHS staff and Muslim Community Center for Human Services staff

DCHHS staff offer flu shots at Dallas Life Foundation

DCHHS Epidemiologist-David Jung



NHANES Successfully Kicked Off Study in Dallas County

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) successfully kicked off their National Health Survey on November 13, 2018. The study is winding down and will conclude on December 16, 2018. The onsite medical examination center tested individuals that were selected at random and include all ages, races and ethnicities in order to represent the U. S. population as a whole. While no medical care is provided directly in the mobile examination center, a report on physical findings is given to each participant along with an explanation from survey medical staff. The study's findings will provide important data on public health problems from a national perspective.



DCHHS and Medical Reserve Corp Participates in HEB Central Market Feast of Sharing



Public Health Educator-Marisa Gonzales with Medical Reserve Corp volunteers

The Feast of Sharing dinner is a free holiday celebration and is open to people of all ages. The celebration includes a free Thanksgiving dinner served by volunteers. In addition, the celebrations include a Family and Social Services Area, Kid's Zone, photos with Santa Claus and live music. DCHHS and MRC volunteers provided emergency document bags, along with flu and West Nile Virus information.



Dr. Martellini Presents Dallas County's Flu Mobilization Efforts at APHA

Chief Epidemiology Planner, Dr. Julie Martellini presented a poster at the American Public Health Association (APHA) National Conference this fall. APHA prides itself on championing the health of all people and all communities, and is the only public health association that influences federal policy. The theme at the 145th annual APHA conference was "Creating the Healthiest Nation: Health Equity Now", and over 12,500 professionals from all fields and all levels of public health were in attendance to share their knowledge and research. The seminars, posters and meetings addressed the inclusion of all people, along multiple dimensions, including race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, gender and disability.

Dr. Martellini attended the conference while presenting a poster that displayed the work performed by Dallas County HHS Immunizations and PHEP staff on the Free Adult Flu Vaccination Mobile Clinics in the spring of 2018. It showed that in just 3 months (Feb – April 2018), the mobile clinics expanded the adult flu shots administered by DCHHS by 17% during the 2017/2018 flu season. The success of the free adult flu-vaccine pilot project led to DCHHS providing Hepatitis A vaccines to the homeless population and "Back to School" immunizations to children in underserved areas this past summer.



Chief Epidemiology Planner, Dr. Julie Martellini

DCHHS Lab Staff Receive Laboratory Director's Merit Award

The Laboratory Director's Merit Award was developed to recognize employees who embody a culture of excellence in their laboratory service. Ms. Raquel Salmeron and Sean Berno were awarded this honor for their excellent lab performance and professionalism. They are exemplary of the leadership that continues to make the Dallas County Laboratory a vital pillar in the public health infrastructure of Texas.



L – R Lab Supervisor-Raquel Salmeron and Medical Lab Tech-Sean Berno

DCHHS Welcomes New Assistant Director of Public Health Preparedness

Dallas County Health and Human Services welcomes Stephanie McKinnis (formerly Patrick) as the new Assistant Director of Public Health Preparedness. Mrs. McKinnis has over 10 years of public health and medical experience. She started her career in public health at Dallas County Health and Human Services in 2007 as the Public Health Preparedness Trainer and was promoted to program manager in 2010. She continued her career at the Department of State Health Services Region 2/3 (DSHS 2/3) and later for the Hospital Preparedness Program at the North Central Texas Trauma Regional Advisory Council (NCTTRAC). Over the years,

Mrs. McKinnis participated in numerous responses including Hurricanes Gustav, Ike and Harvey and also the Ebola incident in Dallas. "In public health, I found my passion in working on 'The Public Health Core Functions-Assurance' which involves promoting and protecting public interests through programs and events," said Mrs. McKinnis. She is married with two adult sons, and in her free time she enjoys spending time with her family and enjoys volunteering for her favorite charities. Mrs. McKinnis looks forward to returning to her roots, her home Dallas County Health and Human Services Public Health Preparedness Department. Please join us in welcoming back Mrs. McKinnis.



DCHHS
Safe families, healthy lives
Dallas County Health and Human Services



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