



ALLEN COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

---September/October 2008---

At a glance facts:

Year to Date Statistics
(As of August 31, 2008)

- **Immunizations given: 9,311**
- **Child Health Clinic visits: 420 (closed May 2008)**
- **Family Planning Program visits: 3,949**
- **HIV Tests given: 857**
- **Tuberculosis Tests given: 1,038**
- **Reportable Communicable Diseases: 1,196 total**
 - 0 cases of Class A1 diseases**
Diseases of major public health concern needing immediate response, e.g. human rabies, meningococcal disease
 - 37 cases of Class A2 diseases**
Diseases of public health concern needing timely response, e.g. E.Coli 0157:H7, West Nile Virus, TB
 - 534 cases of Class A3 diseases**
Diseases of significant public health concern, e.g. STD's, Food Borne illnesses
 - 600 cases of Class B diseases**
Diseases tracked for trending purposes, e.g. influenza (flu), chicken pox
 - 25 cases of Class C diseases**
Diseases of concern when seen in multiples, e.g. scabies and staph infections
- **Number of births filed: 1,732**
- **Number of deaths filed: 916**
- **WIC Supplemental Nutrition Program monthly average caseload: 3,978**
- **Environmental Division Field Inspections: 6,412**

Family Planning: 40 Years & Still a Need

On July 24, 1967 the Lima/Allen County Community Action Commission submitted a proposal to Great Lakes Regional office in Chicago, Illinois to begin the operation of family planning services as part of the war on poverty. The Family Planning service began operation on August 26, 1968, in Lima's Memorial Hall. Twenty patients were scheduled for the first clinic – and only two attended.

For the first time, services were widely offered in the community to allow women to prevent unwanted pregnancies and space their children to promote healthier infants and mothers. To better reach the target audience, several locations were used in the early years, with clinics even being held in the Steiner-McBride apartments. Many clients remember when Family Planning was located at St. Luke's Lutheran Church Parish Hall on W. North St.

On October 15, 1980 the Family Planning Service transitioned from the Lima/Allen County Community Action Commission to the Allen County Health Department, where it remains today.

Over the years, as the Lima Family Planning staff and client numbers increased, larger facilities were needed. In 1987 the clinic relocated to 72 Town Square, in downtown Lima. Today, the clinic is located at 1644 North Main Street with newly expanded facilities. The program served 1,482 clients in the past year.

Allen County Family Planning provides quality confidential gynecological and contraceptive services regardless of financial situation. Education and counseling are provided for all contraceptive types, family planning issues, and prevention of sexually transmitted diseases. Many women who don't have a regular source of medical care or find themselves without insurance rely on Family Planning for their annual physical screening exams which can include pap testing, breast health exams, and referral for other healthcare services. Federal and state grant monies, fees, donations, and local funding help support the Allen County Family Planning program.

Despite the rocky start, today's statistics indicate that the foresight of Lima's Family Planning founders led to a valuable service for the community over the past 40 years that is still needed today.

Prepare Yourself – September is National Preparedness Month

Gradually stock up on extra items:

- One week's supply of food items.
- Extra bottles of water.
- Medical/first aid items.
- Prescription medicines.
- Emergency supplies such as battery operated radios, flashlights and extra batteries.



Be Prepared for the Flu Season

The Allen County Health Department would like to announce the flu shot clinic schedule for the 2008-09 season:

October 30, 1-3PM: Delphos Senior Citizen Center

November 6, 9-11AM: Bluffton Senior Citizen Center

Weekly Clinics at Allen County Health Department, starting October 7, 2008:

****Each Tuesday, from 9-11AM****

****Each Friday, from 9-11AM & 1:30-3:30PM****

All Clinics are contingent upon vaccine supply availability.

The CDC suggests flu shots for all adults who wish to reduce their risk of illness with influenza. Allen County Health Department Vaccine will be available only for the following high risk people:

- Children aged 6months up to their 19th birthday
- Pregnant women
- People 50 years of age and older
- People of any age with certain chronic medical conditions
- People who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities
- People who live with or care for those at high risk for complications from the flu, including household contacts and out of home caregivers of children less than 6 months of age (these children are too young to be vaccinated)

This year, the complete change of the three flu strains in the vaccine make getting a flu shot even more important.

We All Have a Role in our Hometown Security

Imagine the 70 employees of the Allen County Health Department staffing a clinic to provide a needed medication to all of Allen County's residents in a disaster. We would be overwhelmed. In times of disaster, we will need to rely on qualified volunteers to help. Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Units are just that - local volunteers who are trained to offer their assistance in times of disaster. The Allen County MRC, coordinated by Health Department staff, is always looking for medically licensed professionals well as people with non-medical backgrounds to volunteer. If you or someone you know would be interested in volunteering, please contact the MRC Coordinators at 419-228-6154.

Public Health Preparedness: An Award Winning Exercise



On September 24, the Pandemic Flu Planning Committee received the EMS Award from the Lima Allen County Safe Communities Coalition for the regional exercise held in Allen County in June.

On June 20, five counties, including Allen, Auglaize, Mercer, Putman and Van Wert, participated in a Pandemic Flu Acute Care Center (ACC) Simulation exercise on the campus of Ohio State University at Lima and Rhodes State College.

The exercise was used to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the health care systems in our region to handle a disaster that overwhelms our current medical capacity.

Representatives from public health departments, hospitals, casualty transport systems, Medical Reserve Corps, American Red Cross volunteers and others from each county participated in the exercise. Twenty-five volunteers served as patients and participants learned how to register, triage, admit, treat and discharge patients from such a facility.

One of the strengths identified during the exercise is that communication between local health departments and hospitals in the region is relatively good and there are well-established relationships with local hospitals, EMA and first responders. This exercise took 13 months of planning.



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