



NEWS RELEASE

Public Health

CONTACT:

Lana Cao
Public Health Information Officer
(909) 387-9147
Lana.Cao@dph.sbcounty.gov

September 21, 2017

2016 Communicable Disease Annual Morbidity Report released



The San Bernardino County Department of Public Health has released the 2016 Communicable Disease Annual Morbidity Report to inform and educate the community, stakeholders and community partners about reportable diseases and conditions found in San Bernardino County.

Reportable communicable diseases are those that labs and health care providers are required to report to the Public Health department such as tuberculosis, West Nile virus, and influenza. The report aims to help constituents and residents understand disease trends within the county, how diseases are spread and how to protect themselves and their families against them.

What is significant about the report is that it includes Zika for first time, underscoring that diseases are capable of emerging at any time, so education, preparedness and prevention are key. Also, congenital syphilis is shown to have had a 200 percent increase between 2015 and 2016. San Bernardino County Health Officer, Dr. Maxwell Ohikhuare, urges all pregnant women to be screened for syphilis at their first prenatal visit and again in the third trimester between 28-32 weeks.

The report identifies the top three most reported diseases in 2016: chlamydia, gonorrhea, and chronic hepatitis C. Many people with chronic hepatitis C do not have symptoms; it is recommended that anyone born from 1945 through 1965 be tested for hepatitis C.

In response to the surge in sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) within the county, the department has created a Community STD Task Force whose primary goals are to reduce STD rates, increase communication and awareness of the impact of STDs, and increase awareness of the need for prevention, screening and treatment. The task force has met twice this year, with the next meeting scheduled for Sept. 26. For more information about the Task Force or to participate in the meeting call the Communicable Disease Section at 1-800-722-4794.

“One of the Department’s goals is to educate individuals and communities to make informed healthy decisions,” says Dr. Ohikhuare. “This report is a transparent source of information to educate our residents, community partners and stakeholders of diseases that affect their community. Our hope is that by providing this information, they will become more informed and feel encouraged to take even the smallest step to prevent spreading and contracting diseases; be it through condom usage, vaccination or proper handwashing.”

The public is invited to view the entire 2016 Communicable Disease Annual Report by visiting the Department of Public Health website at <http://wp.sbcounty.gov/dph/programs/cds/data/>.