

The Infection Connection

LAWRENCE-DOUGLAS COUNTY
Health Department
www.ldchealth.org



Beeta Kashani, center, a Health Insurance Marketplace navigator at the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department, helps Brenda and Stephen Powell.

Staff available to assist clients as Marketplace deadline looms

March 31 is the deadline to enroll in any health insurance plan to avoid a fine under the Affordable Care Act. It's also the last day the Health Insurance Marketplace will be open until fall.

"We encourage residents to not wait until the end of March," said Amanda Kong, a certified navigator at the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department.

Kong is one of four Health Department staff members trained to help answer questions about the Marketplace and help anyone enroll in an insurance plan. There is no cost to receive assistance, and the Health Department has one Spanish interpreter available.

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Health Department urges participation in state alert network

The Kansas Health Alert Network (KS-HAN) is a secure, electronic communication system that enables local and state entities to share information rapidly.

The system allows users to send, receive and discuss information of public and environmental health importance in a timely manner.

KS-HAN has more than 3,000 participants. They include local health departments, hospitals, emergency medical services, animal health, clinics, state agencies, private and public health laboratories and other first responders.

If you would like to participate in KS-HAN, email your name, employer, employer phone number, job title or job description to: kshanadmin@kdheks.gov.

The Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department recommends joining KS-HAN because it is an efficient method for communicating critical information important to you and your patients, particularly when prevention and treatment is time-sensitive.

Website to help measure progress toward community health goals

The Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department and the University of Kansas Work Group for Community Health and Development have launched a website — healthydouglascounty.org — to measure and monitor community health. The website specifically focuses on the five priority areas for improvement outlined in the community health plan, "Roadmap to

a Healthier Douglas County." Those are:

- Access to mental health services
- Access to health care services
- Access to healthy foods
- Lack of physical activity
- Poverty/too few jobs

The Health Department and KU are working with community partners to evaluate and report progress toward goals

on the plan. "We encourage everyone in Douglas County — organizations and individuals — to be part of this process by sharing their stories on the website," said Health Department Director Dan Partridge. "The broader the participation, the richer the data and the more we will

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Douglas County Disease Report

Disease category	Disease name	Oct. 13	Nov. 13	Dec. 13	Jan. 14	Total
Enteric	Campylobacteriosis	0	0	0	3	3
	Cryptosporidiosis	0	0	0	1	1
	Giardia	1	0	0	0	1
	Salmonella	1	1	1	0	3
	STEC	0	0	1	0	1
General	Hepatitis B- acute	0	0	1	0	1
	Hepatitis B- chronic	5	0	0	1	6
	Hepatitis C	8	4	3	8	23
	Strep pneumo. invasive	1	1	0	0	2
Vector	Ehrlichiosis	1	0	0	0	1
	Lyme	2	0	0	0	2
	RMSF	3	0	0	0	3
Vaccine-preventable	Pertussis	4	2	2	0	8
	Varicella	4	0	0	1	5
STDs (tested at HD only)	Chlamydia	8	14	8	8	38
	Gonorrhea	2	2	1	1	6
	Syphilis	0	0	1	2	3

This report includes the number of cases investigated by the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department. Case classifications include: Confirmed, probable and suspect.

Insurance Marketplace topic of public forums

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As of Feb. 12, the Health Department had assisted 236 people. Kong said she has helped a variety of people who are in different situations. Some are unemployed. Some are young adults who are about to become ineligible for their parents' plans. Others are older adults who don't qualify for Medicare yet. If you have a patient who needs help, have him or her contact the Health Department at 843-0721 or stop by the clinic at 200 Maine St. during clinic hours.

Three public forums about the Health Insurance Marketplace have been scheduled in March at Lawrence Memorial Hospital, 325 Maine St. The forums will include a short presentation and a question-and-answer session, then certified navigators will be available to meet with anyone who would like one-on-one help. The forums will be:

- **Friday, March 7** — 1:30 p.m.
- **Monday, March 10** — 5:30 p.m.
- **Friday, March 14** — 3:30 p.m.

How-to guide on reporting diseases in Douglas County

Investigation of reportable diseases is a mandated function of all health departments. In Douglas County, the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department receives information about diseases through multiple resources, including

health care providers, child care providers, school nurses and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

The list of reportable diseases for the State of Kansas and the reporting form can be found online at http://www.kdheks.gov/epi/disease_reporting.html#requirements.

To report a disease or even if you suspect someone has a disease, call the Health Department at 785-843-0721 or after hours at 785-856-7305.

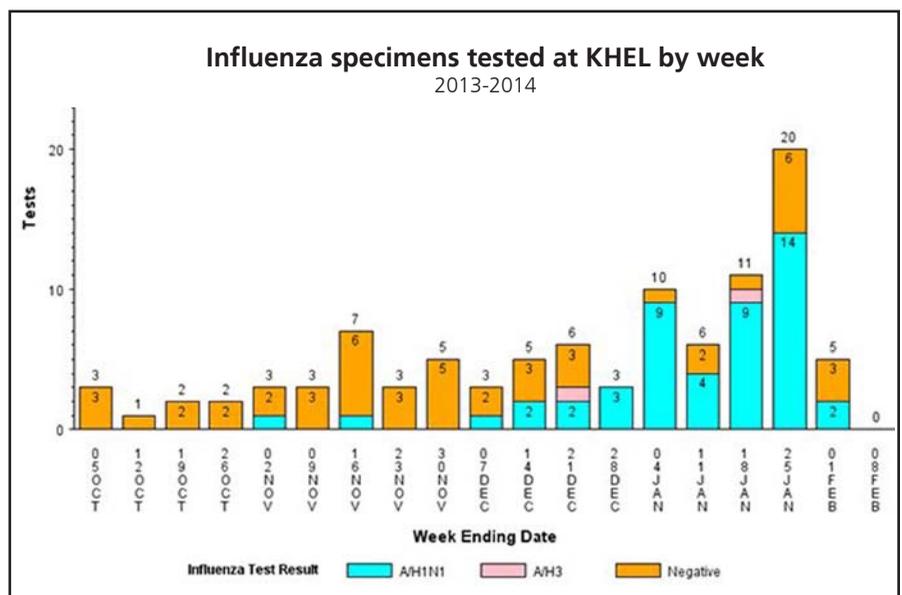
Website to help measure community health goals

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understand the true impact of our collective efforts to improve our health.”

The site was developed in collaboration with the community health plan steering committee, which includes representatives from Lawrence Memorial Hospital, Douglas County Community Foundation, United Way of Douglas County, Heartland Community Health Center, K-State Research and Extension — Douglas County and Bert Nash Community Mental Health Center.

“This is a powerful tool to evaluate community change,” said Vicki Collie-Akers, associate director of health promotion research at the KU Work Group for Community Health and Development.



The above chart shows the number of specimens the Kansas Department of Health and Environmental Laboratories (KHEL) tested for influenza per week. Only specimens from outpatients visiting ILINet clinics or from hospitalized patients are tested; because not all patients are tested at KHEL, this chart may not represent the true percentage of patients infected with influenza, or the true incidence of influenza strains circulating in Kansas.