

infectionconnection

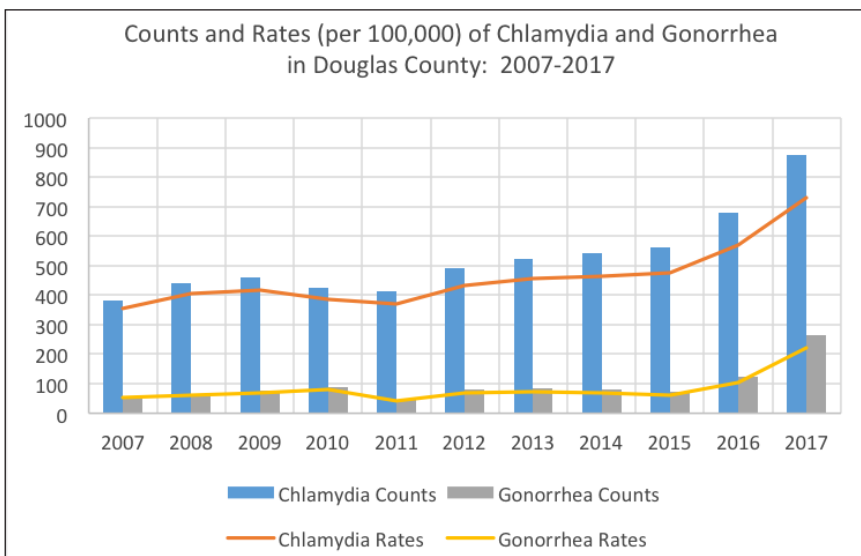
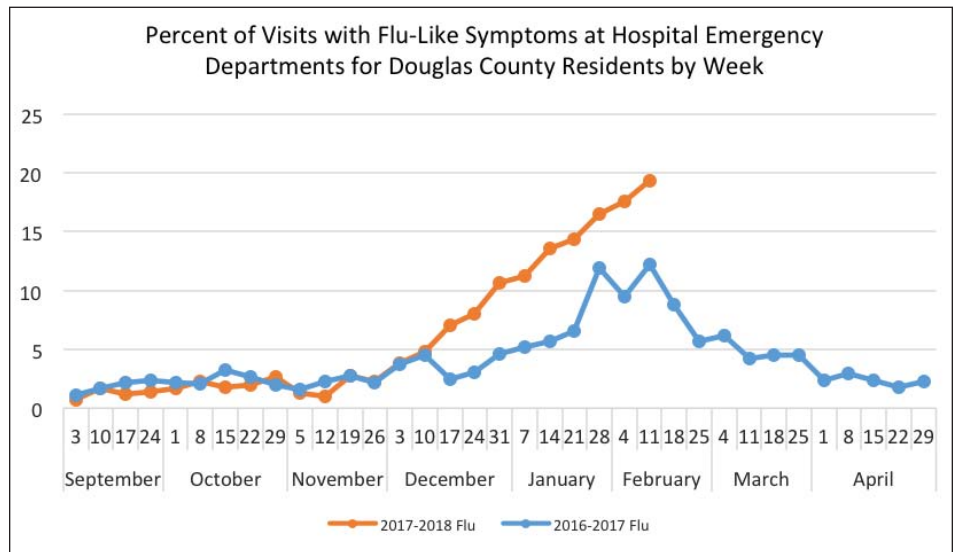
A publication of the LDCHD Epidemiology program

Influenza rates high nationally, in Douglas County

The CDC is reporting that influenza activity continues to remain high across the United States and this holds true for Douglas County and the state of Kansas as well.

Douglas County has had 11 consecutive weeks of increasing influenza-like illness (ILI) presentation at emergency departments across Kansas. This year's ILI percent is exceeding peak ILI levels from the 2016-2017 season by roughly 6 percent. As of the first week of February, roughly 19 percent of all visits to emergency departments by Douglas County residents complained of influenza-like symptoms. Proportionally, the largest age group to visit emergency departments

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STD rates continue to rise at alarming rate in county

Newly-released 2017 numbers for Douglas County are showing a continued increase in new cases of chlamydia and gonorrhea, while cases of syphilis remain constant.

Since 2015, the number of chlamydia and gonorrhea infections have been increasing. In 2017 the numbers surged, representing a one-year increase of nearly 42 percent.

Screening should be done for patients who are: ages 15-24, pregnant, and men who have sex with men.

The Health Department offers STD testing and treatment, which is available as a walk-in service for clients during clinic hours.

Douglas County Disease Report

Disease category	Disease name	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Total
Enteric	Campylobacteriosis	1	2	0	3
	Cryptosporidiosis	0	1	1	2
	Giardia	1	0	1	2
	Salmonella	0	1	0	1
General	Hepatitis A	1	0	0	1
	Hepatitis C, chronic	7	6	9	22
	Strep Pneumo, Invasive	0	1	1	2
Vaccine preventable	Pertussis	3	4	0	7
	Varicella	1	1	3	5
* STDs (tested at HD only)	Chlamydia	28	21	14	63
	Gonorrhea	14	12	8	34
	Syphilis	2	1	2	5

Report includes number of cases investigated by the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department. Case classifications include: confirmed, probable and suspect. * Positives tested at Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department.

Task force seeks medical professionals to assist in local 'Tobacco 21' effort

More than one-fourth of the U.S. population now lives in a place where sales of tobacco to individuals under 21 is illegal. These laws are in place in 19 states and territories, and the District of Columbia, including many Kansas communities.

In communities where the sales age for tobacco has been increased from 18 to 21, the change has been shown to be effective in decreasing tobacco use not only among 18 to 20 year olds, but also younger adolescents, who often get tobacco products from older, legal friends and acquaintances.

A Douglas County task force is seeking additional members and is interested in having more medical professionals – who understand the positive implications of this work to health – involved in the effort.

More information is available on the LiveWell Lawrence website at livewelllawrence.org/tobacco21. And to get involved in the coalition, please email tobacco21@livewelllawrence.org or contact Charlie Bryan, Community Health Planner at the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department, at (785) 843-3060.

Hospitals continue to see increase in influenza among local residents

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with ILI complaints is the 0-4 years age group, followed by those 65 years and older. Of the total visits to the emergency department, approximately 11 percent have been admitted.

Nationally, this year's flu season is rivaling the 2009 pandemic influenza season in terms of intensity and severity. Percent of ILI visits this influenza season are the highest since 2009 and the influenza-related hospitalization rate is the highest it has been for several flu seasons. Nationally, the highest rate of hospitalization is among those 65 years and older, followed by those 50 to 64 years. So far, there have been 63 pediatric deaths related to influenza reported to the CDC. Douglas County has had no reported pediatric deaths due to influenza.

According to the CDC, Influenza A currently remains the dominant strain circulating, specifically the H3N2 strain. However, the total number of Influenza A lab-confirmed cases is beginning to decline in recent weeks, while the number of confirmed Influenza B cases is beginning to increase.

Antiviral treatment continues to be recommended by the CDC. Antiviral resistance testing indicates that there is very low antiviral resistance among the circulating strains of influenza viruses this year. Oseltamivir (Tamiflu), zanamivir (Relenza), and peramivir (Rapivab) are the recommended antivirals for treatment.

To monitor influenza-related surveillance in Douglas County, visit our website at www.ldchealth.org/flu.

LDCHD implements flu vaccination policy

At the beginning of the 2017-2018 influenza season, Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department leadership integrated a mandatory influenza vaccination requirement for all staff into its wellness policy. If your organization is in the health care field and it does not have an influenza vaccination policy, we encourage you to consider implementing one.

Visit www.ldchealth.org/flu, to view reports on the data and research that we used to support the new policy.