

Market season closes

PAGE 4

SEPTEMBER 2016

We're ready for flu shots

PAGE 5

PUBLIC Health

Team fights disease

PAGE 3

MONTHLY UPDATE

Changing of the guard

PAGE 2

Read more about what we're doing online



Kelly Isenhour served Catawba County Public Health for 32 years. She retired at the end of September from the position of Assistant Health Director. She is pictured here (left) at her retirement celebration event with both former and current CCPH employees.



MCCRACKEN ASSUMES ASSISTANT HEALTH DIRECTOR ROLE

After the retirement of Kelly Isenhour after 32 years at Catawba County Public Health, Jennifer McCracken has been named the organization’s new Assistant Health Director.

McCracken shared some insights on what Isenhour brought to the role during her tenure at CCPH.

“Kelly has been not only a mentor, but a dear friend to me over the years. Kelly initially hired me in 1998 and saw potential and my desire to be a Public Health nurse. She gave me opportunities to be a participant and leader in Public Health work at the community level very early in my career. These opportunities solidified for me that I was where I was called to be – in Public Health,” said McCracken. “Upon moving into management, Kelly taught and supported me through that transition. I have had the distinct pleasure to work alongside Kelly as a PH Manager for the last 15 years and have been positively impacted in so many ways, thanks to her guidance, leadership and love for Public Health.”

Q: HOW LONG HAVE YOU WORKED AT PUBLIC HEALTH AND IN WHAT ROLES?

A: I started my career in Public Health in September 1998. I was hired as the Child Care Health Consultant at Catawba County Public Health, serving over 80 child care centers. I worked in that role until July 2000 when I became the Children’s Services Nursing Supervisor. I then transitioned in July 2007 to the Health Services Manager position.

Q: WHAT ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO ABOUT THE NEW POSITION?

A: I am looking forward to working directly with the Preparedness Coordinator/Lab Manager and learning more about those areas. Additionally, I am looking forward to continuing to work with the current program areas in which I supervise and continue to foster growth and development among those staff and program areas. Public Health is currently undergoing a Strategic Planning process and I look forward to participating in that process and continuing to move the organization forward.

Q: HOW IS THE POSITION CHANGING?

A: I will continue to manage Clinic/Communicable Disease/Immunizations, WIC, Children’s Services, and School Health, however, we will add the PH Lab and Preparedness to the program areas that I directly oversee. In addition, I will serve as direct back up to the Health Director and look forward to gaining more knowledge/exposure to PH finance, Environmental Health, and Community Health areas of the organization.



McCracken

SHIGELLA

EPI TEAM BATTLES OUTBREAK IN CHILDREN

Catawba County Public Health began seeing an increased number of cases of infectious diarrhea in August and September, and asked the public to be vigilant about using thorough handwashing and disinfection, especially in homes with children. Parents were also asked to keep sick children at home from school or child care, especially if they have diarrhea.

“Frequent, thorough handwashing with soap and water is the most important thing families can do to prevent the spread of disease. This is true for many diseases that make the rounds this time of year, especially among children,” said Doug Umland, Director of Catawba County Public Health.

Handwashing should be performed at key times, such as after going to the bathroom, before preparing meals and before eating, and after changing a diaper.

This recommendation followed laboratory-confirmed cases of Shigella, a highly infectious disease that can cause severe diarrhea. Catawba County Public Health is working with child care providers and schools, along with physicians and state epidemiological experts to stop the spread in the community. Because it is highly contagious in school and child care settings, state leaders work with the local health department to assist with prompt intervention measures, which may help prevent the spread of Shigella to others. This uptick is similar to what is being seen in several other counties across the state.

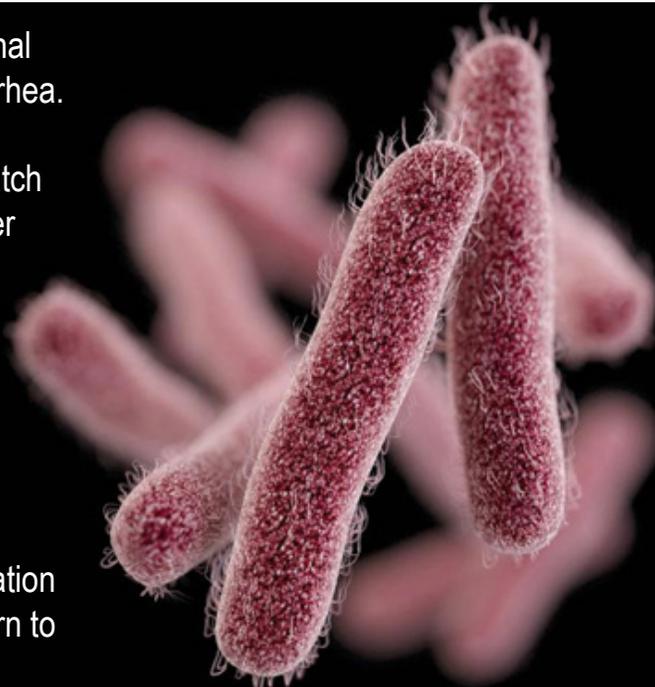
As with other diseases, disinfection in the home can help stop the spread of illness among family members.



Handwashing should be performed at key times, such as after going to the bathroom, before preparing meals and before eating, and after changing a diaper.

SYMPTOMS OF SHIGELLA: Fever, abdominal cramps, chills, headache, body aches or diarrhea.

Parents, caregivers and educators should watch for potential symptoms in children and in other people in the home. Anyone with symptoms should stay home from school, child care and out of other group settings, and should not go to work, especially if they are in foodservice or healthcare settings. For kindergarten-age and younger children, it is recommended that parents take children with symptoms to their medical provider for evaluation and possible testing. Older children may return to school 48 hours after symptoms resolve.



SHIGELLA OUTBREAK
4 SCHOOLS, 5 CHILD CARES AFFECTED



FARMERS MARKET WRAPS SEASON

In the Public Health Farmer’s Market’s fourth season, the project received the Golden Project Award through the North Carolina Public Health Association’s Wellness and Prevention Section. The award was given for the market’s continued innovation and impact on the community by increasing residents’ access to fresh, healthy vegetables and fruits. The award was received on September 15.

SEASON HIGHLIGHTS:

- » Held 18 markets
- » Averaged 5 farmers per market
- » Served 4,265 customers (averaged 237 per market)
- » Redeemed 1,852 WIC farmers market vouchers (record high)
- » Redeemed 280 Bonus Bucks
- » \$1,753 SNAP/EBT
- » \$643 debit (record high)
- » 37 Senior Nutrition vouchers



EXTRAS THIS SEASON:

- » Consulted with Catawba Farms Farmers Market in Newton on SNAP/EBT implementation
- » Provided technical assistance to Moore County Health Department (interested in establishing an on-site market modeled after ours)
- » Several community agencies (DSS Meals on Wheels, United Way 211) set up info booths during our market this season
- » Held two taste tests with 50 participants each time
- » Conducted market tours for two local child care center summer programs



“It’s hard to believe that another successful farmers market season, our fourth, has come and gone! This would not have happened, though, without you — the support of the more than 75 percent of CCPH employees who assisted with all aspects of market operations. Thanks so much! Your efforts are greatly appreciated! The market truly is a ‘labor of love’ that ‘takes a village,’ so let’s all take a moment to proudly acknowledge our accomplishments, but get ready for next year, because our fifth market season will be here before you know it!”

— Tracey Paul, Market Manager

FLU SHOTS HELP RESIDENTS AVOID ILLNESS

October is a time for fun – from decorating for fall to spending time outdoors, playing in fallen leaves, and preparing for the excitement of Halloween. October is also the time when the flu starts to squash families' fun.

Although it's present all year, the flu ramps up in the fall and winter. It is a serious disease that can lead to hospitalization and sometimes even death. From last October to May, 59 North Carolinians died from the flu. In the peak months from October to May, flu viruses are circulating at higher levels in the population, and even healthy people can get very sick from the flu and spread it to others. The flu can seriously affect all ages, too. In the past several years, some of the flu deaths were otherwise healthy folks in their 30s, 40s and 50s.

That's why vaccination each year is important. Flu vaccination is recommended for everyone age 3 months and older and is highly recommended for individuals who are at a higher risk for flu-related complications, including:

- » Anyone with underlying health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, or chronic lung disease
- » Pregnant women
- » People 65 years or older
- » Caregivers, especially those individuals caring for infants or people with health complications.

This year, Catawba County Public Health will offer a walk-in flu clinic on October 13 and 14 for adults and children age 3 and older. Beginning October 17, appointments for flu shots can be made by calling (828) 695-5800. This year's shots are \$27 for adults and children age 3 and older, \$20 for children ages 6-35 months, and for people 65 and older, the high-dose flu shot is available for \$48. Payment may be made by cash, check, debit/credit, Medicare Part B (only), NC Medicaid, and NC HealthChoice. Medicare Advantage and other insurance plans will not be accepted; however, individuals may pay and then file with their insurers for possible reimbursement.

Once a person is vaccinated, antibodies develop in the body in about two weeks. Those antibodies keep a person from contracting and becoming ill from the flu. The vaccine changes each year, so getting a new one before the peak season protects against the flu viruses that research indicates will be most common during flu season. Flu vaccination is the best weapon we have to protect against flu. A flu shot can have mild side effects, such as soreness or swelling where the vaccine was received, a mild fever, or body aches. While these side effects can be uncomfortable and inconvenient, they are mild and usually resolve quickly. While flu vaccine can vary in how well it works each year, the vaccine does protect against illness and can prevent serious flu outcomes like hospitalization.

For those who are not vaccinated and contract the flu, symptoms come on suddenly and can persist for several days to two weeks. Symptoms can include fever, chills, cough, sore throat, runny nose, stuffy nose, muscle aches, body aches, headaches, tiredness, vomiting and diarrhea, and can land people in the hospital with complications such as pneumonia.

Because anyone can get the flu and spread it before they even know they have it, it's important for everyone to get vaccinated because it can prevent the spread of the contagious illness, thus helping protect the most vulnerable people – children, the elderly, people who are already suffering from chronic illness, and pregnant women.

In addition to obtaining a flu shot through medical providers, pharmacies or Catawba County Public Health, everyone should continue using everyday preventive actions (stay away from people who are sick, frequent, thorough handwashing, and covering coughs and sneezes).

CATAWBA COUNTY

Public Health

ARM YOURSELF

Public Health Flu Shot Events

Thursday, Oct. 13

Friday, Oct. 14

8 to 11:30 a.m.

1 to 4:30 p.m.

Walk-ins age 3 and older.

Infants 6-35 months by
appointment only.

Open to the public.

CATAWBA COUNTY
PUBLIC HEALTH
3070 11TH AVE. DR. SE
HICKORY, NC 28602

For more information, call
(828) 695-5800 or go to www.catawbacountync.gov/health

Seasonal flu shot
age 3+ and adults: \$27
6-35 months: \$20
High-dose flu shot: \$48
Pneumonia shot: \$89

Accepted forms of payment include cash, check, debit/credit, Medicare Part B (only), NC Medicaid, and NC HealthChoice. Medicare Advantage and other insurance plans will not be accepted; individuals may pay and then file with their insurers. State-supplied vaccine will be provided at no charge to eligible individuals, including children 6 months through 18 years of age who have Medicaid or no insurance; women with Family Planning Waiver coverage; uninsured women 19 years and older who are pregnant during flu season and are being served by Catawba County Public Health.



AGAINST THE FLU.

VACCINE EVENTS

Seasonal influenza is an illness that can cause serious health complications, including death. The best defense against the flu is vaccination, which is why Catawba County Public Health encourages individuals to visit their medical provider for a flu shot before flu season arrives.

Public Health is offering flu shots to the public during two flu vaccine events at the health department, located at 3070 11th Ave. Dr. SE in Hickory, in October:

» Oct. 13 from 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

» Oct. 14 from 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Vaccinations will be available by walk-in only for individuals age 3 and older. Appointments are recommended for younger children and can be made by calling (828) 695-5800.

Vaccination appointments may be made for the flu shot beginning October 17.

The seasonal flu shot costs \$27 for individuals age 3 and older and \$20 for children ages 6-35 months. For people 65 and older, the high-dose flu shot is available for \$48 and the pneumonia vaccine is available for \$89. Accepted forms of payment include cash, check, debit/credit, Medicare Part B (only), NC Medicaid, and NC HealthChoice. Medicare Advantage and other insurance plans will not be accepted; however, individuals may pay and then file with their insurers for possible reimbursement.

The CDC recommends anyone 6 months or older get the flu vaccine. The vaccination is highly recommended for individuals who are at a higher risk for flu-related complications, including the following:

- » Anyone with underlying health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, or chronic lung disease
- » Pregnant women
- » People 65 years or older
- » Caregivers, especially those individuals caring for infants or people with health complications