

RC/PIO News & Notes 3-17-2023



FROM Eric Jens, GA DPH Risk Communicator
Contents may be FYUO – FOR YOUR USE ONLY

News and Notes

Happy St. Patrick's Day. For the second week in a row, we have multiple contributions from folks who have attended recent events to highlight, plus more.

State Board of Health meeting



The monthly State Board of Health meeting was held Tuesday and included an update on brain health efforts from Xavier Crockett and Elizabeth Head. This included an increased focus on creating awareness, diagnosis and direction to treatment plans for Dementia and Alzheimer's Disease among others. DPH Environmental Health Director Galen Baxter told board members about the many services being provided throughout the state. He said there are fewer job vacancies than in the recent past, but openings do remain and there is a large workload for those on the job. Nancy Nydam and Dr. Alex Millman presented the board with an updated version of a fact sheet for promoting vaccinations to those over 50. This now includes COVID-19 vaccines and boosters that heretofore did not exist to post on the downloadable file on the DPH website Immunizations page. "People normally think about childhood vaccinations," said Millman, "and too often vaccinations for those over 50 are overlooked."

Vaccines for Adults 50+

Protect Your Health
Vaccines for Adults 50+
dph.georgia.gov

If you're age 50 or older:

- Shingles vaccine** Shingles causes a painful rash that can last for months.
- Pneumococcal vaccine** (recommended for all 65+) Pneumococcal disease can include pneumonia, meningitis, and blood infections. Some adults with certain medical conditions may need a pneumococcal vaccine earlier. Adults 50-64 years should talk to their healthcare provider about when they should be vaccinated.
- Flu vaccine every year** Standard flu vaccine is recommended for adults ages 50-64. Adults 65 should opt for a high-dose version (quadrivalent) if available. The seasonal flu vaccine is the best way to protect yourself and others from the flu.
- Tdap vaccine** to protect yourself from 3 diseases: tetanus, diphtheria, and whooping cough (pertussis). Everyone needs to get the Tdap vaccine once.
- Td or Tdap booster every 10 years** (after you get a Tdap vaccine) to protect against tetanus and diphtheria.
- COVID-19 vaccine and booster** to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.
- Hepatitis A vaccine** if you have risk factors for hepatitis A infection.
- Hepatitis B vaccine** if you have risk factors for hepatitis B infection.

HEALTH BENEFITS OF VACCINES

Older adults need to get vaccines (shots) to prevent serious diseases. Protect your health by getting all your vaccines on schedule.

Why do I need to get vaccines?
Vaccines help protect you from diseases that can be serious and sometimes deadly. Many of these diseases are common, but vaccines can prevent them. Even if you've always gotten your vaccines on schedule, you still need to get some vaccines as an older adult. That's because:
Older adults are more likely to get certain diseases
Older adults are at higher risk for serious complications from diseases
The protection from some vaccines can wear off over time

Getting vaccinated also protects other people.
When you get vaccines, you don't just protect yourself - you also protect others. This is especially important if you spend time around anyone with a long-term health problem or a weakened immune system (the system in the body that fights infections). Protect yourself and the people around you by staying up to date on your vaccines.

For more information visit
dph.georgia.gov/immunizations/adult-immunizations



GA Sheriff's Chaplin Conference

Thanks to Kimberly Wilson and Jen Wingertsahn for providing this report on how the DPH Opioid and Substance Misuse program contributed at a recent Georgia Sheriff's Office divisional conference:



The Georgia Sheriffs' Association Chaplains' Division was created to promote the availability of chaplains to meet the spiritual and emotional needs of the sheriffs and their staff, families, and members of the community. Every March, the Division offers a conference for chaplains who serve their sheriff as a law enforcement chaplain. These chaplains work closely with their sheriff's departments, ensuring the mental health and wellness of the officers and their families. They do ride-alongs on calls with the officers, they go into jails, all while many also have their own home churches and congregations, and so much more. The conference covered a variety of topics with DPH opioid staff speaking on OD2A funding, fentanyl, xylazine, stigma, harm reduction, both state and local data, Narcan, and the GA 911 Medical Amnesty Law. (DPH representatives) also highlighted projects and community outreach in each of the health districts. They gave out resources (FTS, Detera, opioid pocket guide, Narcan info, all PHA contact info), networked, and made connections with chaplains in our respective districts. The DPH group was also invited to attend and present at another conference hosted by the GA Sheriffs' Association which they fully intend to do.



Shelter Training

Thanks to Byron Lobsinger for providing an update on a Shelter Training session:

Coastal District Environmental Health (EH) Director Brant Phelps coordinated with their local red cross representative Kelly Crane and the State EH Emergency Planner to conduct a shelter inspection training for the 35 plus environmental health inspectors last Wednesday, March 8th in Richmond Hills, just south of Savannah. The partner presentations along with a shelter walk and talk through updated the seasoned staff and informed the new staff on the priorities and concerns for both the Red Cross shelter survey and the EH Shelter inspection report. The State's EH Food Program team also presented updates. It was a real pleasure to see the sweets awards recognition for all of the EH staff's hard work over past quarters.



Next Week Preview

A variety of topics will be covered in meetings and webinars next week, including Georgia Public Health Association, Avian Influenza, COVID-19 and Hantavirus.

About "News & Notes"

"News & Notes" is a weekly communication aimed at risk and public information officers within Georgia's 18 public health districts. The goal of the communication is to increase preparedness through the exchange of information about significant events, training and other planned activities. Some information herein may be considered FYUO or For Your Use Only. Please be judicious when forwarding. For questions, comments or to submit information for inclusion, contact Eric Jens at Eric.Jens@dph.ga.gov