

Public Health Services Update

November 1, 2018

Dear Kern County Health Care Provider:

This letter is being sent to call your attention to some important health updates in Kern County. Similar publications will be distributed quarterly or more often if the need arises.

- **Acute Flaccid Myelitis Investigation**

Acute flaccid myelitis (AFM) is a rare condition that affects the spinal cord and results in limb weakness. As of October 26, 2018, this year there have been 72 confirmed cases of AFM in the U.S. The CDC provides periodic updates [here](#). AFM symptoms include:

- Weakness and loss of muscle tone and reflexes in the arms or legs
- Facial droop or weakness
- Difficulty moving the eyes
- Drooping eyelids
- Difficulty swallowing
- Slurred speech

If you suspect a case of AFM, please collect appropriate biological specimens (CSF, serum, stool, respiratory) and contact the Kern County Public Health Services Department at (661) 321-3000 as soon as possible. Enhanced testing is available through the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and CDC.

CDC is hosting a [free continuing education](#) event online on November 13, 2018 from 11:00am to 12:00pm – *AFM: What Health Care Providers Need to Know*. More information can be found [here](#).

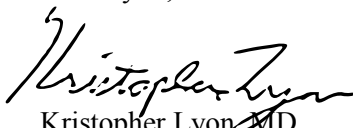
- **Ground Beef Salmonella Outbreak Update**

On October 4, 2018, 6.5 million pounds of beef products was recalled due to contamination with *Salmonella*. As of October 23, 2018, there have been 120 cases associated with this outbreak, 27 of which are California residents. The CDC provides periodic updates [here](#). Stool cultures are the only method by which pathogens like *Salmonella* can be matched to other people or food products. Please consider collecting stool for culture for patients who present with gastrointestinal infection symptoms to confirm diagnosis and assist in disease control investigations.

- The Kern County Opioid Symposium has been postponed; registration information will be shared once available.
- [Influenza Vaccination or Masking Health Order](#) is in effect. Frequently asked questions can be found [here](#). Please ensure all health care workers at your facility are protected.

If you have any questions, please contact the Kern County Public Health Services Department by phone at (661) 321-3000, via email at publichealth@kerncounty.com, or visit our [website](#).

Thank you,



Kristopher Lyon MD
Interim Health Officer