

Public Health Services Update

January 2, 2019

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.

- **2018-2019 Influenza Season Update**

As of December 28, 2018 there have been 3 severe influenza cases (those requiring ICU hospitalization) and 2 deaths reported in Kern County in persons under the age of 65. Statewide flu activity is considered widespread. Weekly updates from the California Department of Public Health are provided [here](#). Vaccination is recommended for those who are eligible. [Influenza Vaccination or Masking Health Order](#) is in effect. Please ensure all health care workers at your facility are protected.

- **Kern County Opioid Symposium will be held on February 27, 2019 from 6-8pm at the Bakersfield Marriott Hotel**

This event will update providers regarding clinical and legal considerations for prescribing controlled substances. Pain management, alternative drug options for acute pain control, and red flag indicators for prescriptions will be discussed. In addition, training on how to register and use the Controlled Substance Utilization Review and Evaluation System (CURES) will be provided. Registration is free (includes dinner) and CMEs are available. Information will be available soon on our website.

- **Romaine Lettuce E. coli Outbreak Update**

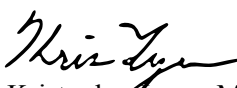
On November 26, 2018, the CDC advised against consumption of romaine lettuce harvested from the Central Coast growing region of Northern and Central California. As of December 6, 2018, there have been 52 cases associated with this outbreak, 11 of which are California residents. Periodic updates are [here](#). Stool cultures are the only method by which pathogens like *E. coli* can be matched to other people or food products. Please consider collecting stool for culture for patients who present with gastrointestinal illness symptoms to confirm diagnosis and assist in outbreak investigations.

- **Kern County Public Health Mobile Clinic Launch**

The Kern County Public Health Services Department's Mobile Clinic is going to be accessible in the community beginning January 8, 2019. All services that are available at the Health Officer's Clinic at the health department are offered on the mobile clinic. Information is available [here](#).

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