

Public Health Response – Summary of Activities

Reportable Disease

Reportable diseases are diseases considered to be of public health importance. The Public Health Act, 1994, and Disease Control Regulations are the statutory basis for the reporting, investigation and control of communicable diseases in Saskatchewan. The Act and Regulations outline the roles and responsibilities of individuals and agencies as they relate to communicable disease control.

Under the Act, health care providers (physicians and nurses), school personnel, managers of eating establishments and laboratories are required to report communicable diseases and outbreaks to designated Medical Health Officers. All suspected cases of a reportable disease are assessed to see if they meet the case definition. Disease specific information is gathered as per provincial guidelines.

The goal of the Communicable Disease Control Program (CDC), Population and Public Health, is to reduce the spread of communicable disease through prevention and control measures. The CDC program meets this goal through the following activities:

- Investigating lab confirmed reportable diseases, including contact tracing and reports cases to the Saskatchewan Ministry of Health.
- Monitoring disease trends and adding enhanced surveillance when warranted.
- Following up on blood and body fluid exposures in the community to complete immunization and providing client education, including referrals as needed.
- Following up persons who reported animal bites/exposures and assessing risk of rabies and providing rabies post exposure prophylaxis as recommended.
- Providing prophylactic treatment for reportable disease when advisable.
- Ordering, analyzing and interpreting of serology and specimens.
- Referring clients to the appropriate health services and community support.
- Immunizing special populations and high risk clients (i.e. stem cell transplants, solid organ transplants, etc.).
- Communicating with physician groups, schools, and the general public on risk and prevention of communicable disease.
- Surveillance and management of Long Term Care home outbreaks in partnership with Infection Prevention and Control with the goal of containing outbreaks to under 14 days.
- Surveillance and management of community outbreaks.
- Serving as an appointed member on Advisory Committee on Animal Control to provide public health consult on animal related issues and animal bite prevention.
- Working in partnership with City of Saskatoon and Saskatchewan Ministry of Health to monitor West Nile Virus risk and implementation of control measures as needed.
- Reporting to the Ministry of Health.

2016-17 Activities

- Investigated white powder/suspicious package incidents that occurred in Saskatoon.
- Developed a testing infographic for physicians in response to emerging mumps disease in early 2017, to ensure PCR testing and reporting to CDC program.
- Contributed, as a member of the City of Saskatoon Animal Control Advisory Committee, in the development of a universal "Good Dogs Bite Too" logo for use on promotional materials to prevent dog bites. One of the products produced this year was a "Good Dogs Bite Too" pamphlet.
- Participated in the Kaizen office led team to improve the management and reporting of blood and body fluid exposures in the ER.
- Focused on process improvement through the development of a CDC Work Standard for Long Term Care Home outbreaks.
- Developed an order set for Tamiflu prophylaxis for Long Term Care homes in influenza outbreak.
- Identified the need, and contributed to the development of Transfusion Medicine's Immune Globulin information sheet for patients.
- Developed an integrated Communicable Disease Control/International Travel Clinic position to increase capacity across programs.
- Developed and shared an electronic survey system for investigating large community gastrointestinal outbreaks.
- Developed special nursing protocols and medical directives for ordering laboratory tests and interpreting results for communicable diseases.

For a summary of Sexual Health Department activities see [What's Being Done to Reduce STI and Bloodborne Illness?](#)