

December is Impaired Driving Prevention Awareness Month. The end of the year comes with holidays and gatherings, all of which can increase the opportunities and inclination for drinking and/or using other substances. For those without loved ones to gather with, substance misuse can be a way to cope with isolation or loneliness, and relapse risk is higher during this time of year. The National Highway Safety Traffic Administration reports that an increased number of lives are lost due to impaired driving crashes during the last week of the year. BHRS & PH Prevention and Wellness are raising awareness during this time of year for safe and sober holidays, use of mocktail alternatives, and service programs are supporting clients in healthy and safe peer gatherings for those without connection to families. There are lots of options for celebrating without substances. Check out Community Wellness Rethink Your Drink and other non-impairing options. There are no shortcuts to sobering up, if you chose to imbibe this holiday season, be responsible: plan ahead, designate a driver or utilize a ride service. We all have the power to prevent a tragedy and ensure future celebrations during the holiday season!



Public Health also recognizes December 2-6, as National Influenza Vaccination Week. This month and week is a great time to talk to a doctor about a flu shot if you have not received it yet. Its not too late! Its also a good reminder to stay home when you're sick and cover coughs.

For more information about vaccines provided by Mendocino County Public Health go to www.mendocinocounty.gov/departments/public-health/nursing/vaccines

Learn more about the flu vaccine at <https://bit.ly/4f87TOe>



Public Health - Maternal, Child, Adolescent Health (MCAH) Outreach

On October 19 - 20, MCAH team members actively participated in the City of Ukiah's Pumpkinfest, collaborating with other Public Health and Behavioral Health staff to create a dynamic and engaging event. The team provided interactive activities for children centered on child development and offered valuable resources on home visiting and car seat safety. This collaboration strengthened community awareness of MCAH programs, highlighting their commitment to children, and family well-being.

Workforce and Training

This month, we welcomed a bilingual home visitor to the MCAH team, bringing valuable perspectives that enhance our capacity to maintain a full caseload and deliver culturally relevant services. Her skills and insight will strengthen our ability to connect with diverse families in the community. We're excited to support her as she settles into her role and becomes familiar with our mission and services.

Metrics and Quality Improvement

This month, we transitioned to the new Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) data system, following group staff trainings, collaborative meetings with state partners, and testing. While there will be an initial learning curve, we anticipate that this transition will result in more comprehensive, streamlined, and efficient data management system, aligning our program with best practices used by other Healthy Families America home visiting sites across California.

Public Health - Health Care Program for Children in Foster Care (HCPCFC)

County Public Health Nurses working in the Health Care Program for Children in Foster Care are critical to meeting the health needs of children and youth that are in foster care. These nurses provide trauma-informed care because all of these children and youth have experienced the trauma of loss. Often these children and youth have health disparities that have never been addressed. The Mendocino County HCPCFC team provides care coordination, case management and health oversight as an essential part of the child welfare team in addressing the medical, dental, mental and developmental needs of children and youth in foster care. As the point of contact for addressing these health needs in close collaboration with the child welfare social worker assigned to the case, the foster care nurse actively works to solve issues of access to care. The foster care nurse provides important health knowledge and expertise to social workers. Foster care nurses advocate for foster children and youth and work together with the social workers to retain stable home placements and increase health equity of this population.

Public Health - Nursing Administration

We are continuing with two student interns in our Nursing Program that are currently working on their credentialing through Sonoma State University that started in September and will be interning in the department until the end of the year. One student has already completed their internship hours.





A Safe & Healthy County

December 2024

Public Health - Equity/Wellness

In October, Mendocino County Public Health Department received notice of award for a grant from the California Department of Justice (DOJ) Tobacco Grant Program in the amount of \$789,629; funds are authorized under the California Healthcare, Research and Prevention Tobacco Tax Act 2016. This grant will support county-wide efforts to reduce the illegal sale of tobacco products to underage youth and support for local retailer enforcement, including enforcement of flavored tobacco bans.

Public Health Administration Communications

Public Health will air PSAs in English and Spanish all month-long in December to raise awareness on Lung Cancer Awareness, Respiratory Virus vaccines, and National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month.

- Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths in both men and women. Smoking is the number one cause of lung cancer. Screening is one of the most important ways to detect lung cancer in its early stages. Less than 10% of those eligible are routinely screened. If you smoke, consider a program to help you quit. If you have a history of smoking or are concerned about cancer-causing environmental exposure, contact your healthcare provider for screening recommendations. For more information, go to cancer.gov/types/lung
- Winter is the time to prepare for Flu, COVID-19, and RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus). Prepare yourself and your family. Get the Influenza, COVID-19, and RSV vaccines. Talk to your healthcare provider to determine which is best for you or any family members. Wear a mask. If you are sick, stay home and test for COVID-19. Vaccines provide a strong defense against severe illness. For more information, go to cdc.gov/respiratory-viruses.
- December is National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month. Each December, we go out for fun, parties, and drinks with family and friends. Consuming alcohol, and drugs can affect your senses and judgement and cause impaired driving, even if you don't feel it. The holiday season has more accidents than others on average. Taking personal responsibility for a safe ride saves lives. Don't drive while impaired. Don't let friends drive while impaired. Have a designated driver. Take a ride-share or a bus. Ask a friend for a ride. You'll be saving lives.

Follow us on Social Media



Stay Healthy This Flu Season!

- FREE Flu Vaccine is available for anyone 18 years or older at Public Health.
- FREE Childhood Vaccinations are provided through the California Vaccines for Children (VFC) program for eligible families.

You may also get vaccinations from your primary care provider, if you don't have a care provider you may call Public Health at (707) 472-2716 to assist you.

Vaccines protect you and your quality of life. They're proven to be safe, and effective and a strong defense against severe illness.

For more information visit:
www.mendocinocounty.gov/departments/public-health/nursing/vaccines

IT'S TIME TO GET VACCINATED TODAY!

