

February 2016

### *Points of Interest...*

- As a proactive approach in response to the Flint lead crisis, St. Clair County Health Department (SCCHD) officials met with municipal water treatment plant operators and reviewed their process for providing safe drinking water to their service areas. Important surveillance information about lead testing and prevention strategies for the community were shared. A method of communication to help facilitate accurate information and response to concerned citizens was addressed. Local lead information was also disseminated to local legislators, BOH and BOC members. An opinion-editorial was sent to the media and website/social media information on lead facts were posted. Awareness on the need for more young children to be lead tested in St. Clair County, along with the response to high blood levels in children was also highlighted.

- Zika virus continues to be an emerging public health concern. Though the likelihood of mosquitos carrying Zika in Michigan remains low, the SCCHD is urging those traveling to affected regions to take the CDC recommended precautions:

- Using Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellants
- Wearing long sleeves and long pants
- Using air conditioning, or window and door screens
- Emptying, cleaning or covering outdoor containers that hold water

In addition, *Zika Virus Testing and Recommendations* for pregnant women and partners was sent to healthcare providers, hospital ICPs, emergency departments and OB/GYNs. General Zika information was posted on the SCCHD website and social media pages. Those traveling abroad are encouraged to contact our *Immunization Travel Program* (810) 987-5300 to inquire about other recommended vaccinations.

- SCCHD Teen Health Center staff Kassandre Alexander, RN, presented “LEADS”, *Linking Education and Awareness of Depression and Suicide*, an evidenced based three day curriculum to over 300 Port Huron High School (PHHS) 9<sup>th</sup> grade students. Preliminary results were very positive and indicated a significant improvement overall in pre/post test data, particularly on “ability to recognize signs of depression” and “warning signs of suicide”. Students and instructors reported they valued the curriculum. Classes will also be offered in the Spring at Port Huron Northern High School and again at PHHS.

- Due to the *Joint Committee on Administrative Rules* approval in December 2014 of a new educational requirement for Michigan parents choosing to opt their children out of required vaccines before entering school, St. Clair County’s percentage of children with an immunization waiver has *decreased* by 1.90%! Statewide, the percentage of children with an immunization waiver *decreased* by 1.80%.

- On February 25, SCCHD will be hosting a *Special Pathogens Workshop* designated for local medical and healthcare providers. The workshop will include four speakers from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS). As of this writing, 40 attendees have registered and all spots are now filled.