

The DPH Bulletin

From the Delaware Division of Public Health

February 2021

DHMIC awards grants to improve outcomes for black mothers and infants

The Delaware Healthy Mother and Infant Consortium (DHMIC) awarded more than \$145,500 in grants to four local organizations to help reduce the wide variance in poor birth outcomes between black women and white women and to save infant and maternal lives. The DHMIC awarded the Parent Information Center for its Doula Program, the Rose Hill Community Center for its Stress Relief Program, the Metropolitan Wilmington Urban League for its Doula Training Program, and the Breastfeeding Coalition of Delaware for breastfeeding support.

"Every Delawarean has a role to play in decreasing the black infant and maternal mortality rate, and our community knows best how to connect with and empower women to be healthy to improve outcomes for moms and babies," said Dr. David Paul, DHMIC co-chair. "The consortium has undertaken an aggressive initiative to examine the social determinants of health by taking a life-course approach to both understanding and addressing the disparities that have led to the rise in lack maternal and infant mortality in Delaware."

According to the 2018 Delaware Vital Statistics Annual Report published by the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health (DPH), significant disparities existed between non-Hispanic black and non-Hispanic white infant mortality rates for 2014-2018. In 2014-2018:

- Delaware's infant mortality rate was 7.3 infant deaths per 1,000 live births.
- The non-Hispanic black rate (12.2 infant deaths per 1,000 live births) was nearly three times that of the non-Hispanic white rate (4.5 infant deaths per 1,000 live births).
- The Hispanic infant mortality rate (8.4 infant deaths per 1,000 live births) was 1.5 times higher than the non-Hispanic white infant mortality rate.

For more information, visit DEThrives.com.

World Spay Day is February 23



[The Delaware Office of Animal Welfare's Spay & Neuter Program](#) provides low-cost spay and neuter services to cats and dogs of income-eligible applicants. Those who are eligible may have up to two pets spayed or neutered every fiscal year for \$20 each.



Helen Knott, 85, of New Castle, at left; and David Lim, 72, of Wilmington, right, received were immunized at a COVID-19 vaccination event held at the Chase Center in Wilmington. Photos by Jeff Winslow.

Reaching vulnerable, underserved 65+ Delawareans is a State priority

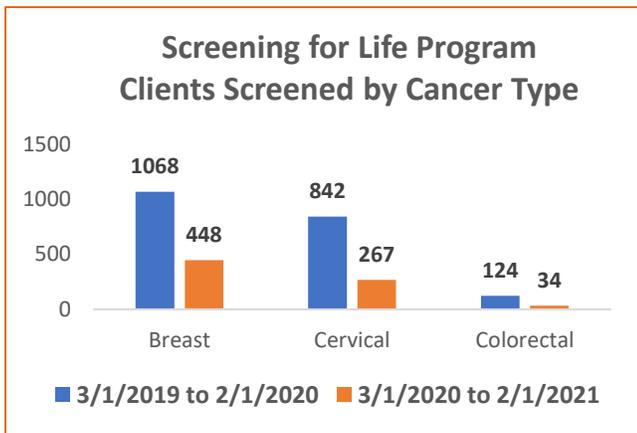
Delawareans age 65+ are currently eligible for COVID-19 vaccination. To reach the 65+ population and underserved communities, the State recently partnered with community organizations and held indoor vaccination events in conjunction with Curative, Vault Health, Delaware Technical Community College, Salesianum School, and Wilmington Housing Authority, and is coordinating with hospital systems, specialty care providers, and enrolled pharmacies serving underserved communities to reach vulnerable Delawareans.

"Our goal remains the same: we're working to vaccinate as many Delawareans as possible, as quickly as possible," said Governor John Carney. "We also need to make sure we're distributing the vaccine equitably and reaching especially those Delaware seniors who are less mobile and don't have access to a computer or smartphone. These additional efforts by the Division of Public Health and their partners will expand access to the COVID-19 vaccine among those populations, so we can reach all of our neighbors with this life-saving vaccine."

Request a vaccination appointment at vaccinerequest.delaware.gov or call DPH's Coronavirus Vaccination Call Center at 1-833-643-1715. Learn about Delaware's COVID-19 vaccination program at de.gov/covidvaccine. Send questions regarding testing, symptoms, and health-related guidance to DPHcall@delaware.gov.



DELAWARE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
Division of Public Health



Source: Delaware Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health, Screening for Life program, 2021.

COVID-19 causes dramatic decline in cancer screenings

An estimated 40.9 percent of U.S. adults avoided medical care during the pandemic because of COVID-19 concerns, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Of those, 12 percent avoided urgent or emergency care and 31.5 percent avoided routine care ([MMWR](#), September 2020).

The [American Cancer Society](#) reported that one consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic was a “substantial decline” in cancer screenings.

The Division of Public Health’s Screening for Life Program (SFL) reports that COVID-19 disruptions have significantly impacted cancer screening and prevention efforts because providers have limited availability and capacity for cancer screening, and that makes scheduling in-person office visits extremely difficult.

The number of SFL screenings decreased 61 percent between the periods of March 1, 2019 to February 1, 2020 and March 1, 2020 to February 1, 2021. Among SFL clients, by cancer type between the same periods of time, there was a 58 percent decrease in the number of breast cancer screenings performed; a 68 percent decrease in the number of cervical cancer screenings performed; and a 73 percent decrease in the number of colorectal cancer screenings performed.

SFL suggests not delaying recommended screenings because early detection improves outcomes. Contact your medical provider or the SFL program to schedule your screenings. Visit SFL at <https://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/dpc/sfl.html>.

Delawareans can sign up for affordable health insurance until May 15

President Joe Biden signed an [executive order](#) on January 28 that created a three-month special enrollment period to give Americans affected by the coronavirus pandemic greater access to health insurance, including those who lost their job or their coverage as part of the fallout from the pandemic.

Delawareans in need of affordable health insurance can sign up for coverage from February 15 to May 15 on [HealthCare.gov](#), the federal online Health Insurance Marketplace created by the Affordable Care Act.

“This special enrollment period provides a great opportunity for Delawareans who are looking for high-quality, affordable health insurance, especially those impacted by the pandemic,” said Delaware Department of Health and Social Services Secretary Molly Magarik. “Despite the success of the Health Insurance Marketplace since it opened eight years ago, many state residents still lack insurance, and some might remain unaware that they can access comprehensive care – and, in many cases, get financial help to afford it – through HealthCare.gov.”

The special enrollment period is available to all marketplace-eligible individuals who are submitting a new application or updating an existing application. You can enroll in marketplace coverage at



[www.HealthCare.gov](#) or [www.CuidadodeSalud.gov](#) or by calling 1-800-318-2596 (TTY: 1-855-889-4325). For more information, go to [www.ChooseHealthDE.com](#).

Delawareans who want free help enrolling in coverage can make appointments with trained specialists at Westside Family Healthcare. Virtual and phone appointments are encouraged; in-person appointments are limited and must be made in advance. Assistance is available in any language and for all Delaware residents. Call 302-472-8655 in New Castle County, 302-678-2205 in Kent/Sussex counties or email enrollment@westsidehealth.org.

State-licensed insurance agents and brokers are also available to help individuals re-enroll and to help employers update their coverage, at no extra charge. See [a list](#) at [ChooseHealthDE.com](#).