

The DPH Bulletin

From the Delaware Division of Public Health

October 2022

Flu vaccine available at many locations

With seven laboratory-confirmed cases of flu, including one pediatric case, as of October 11, the Division of Public Health (DPH) is urging all Delawareans 6 months of age and older to get their annual flu vaccine as soon as possible. It may be a potentially serious and active flu season, and flu vaccine protects against flu-related illness, hospitalization, and death.

Flu vaccine is available to the public at many pharmacies (including many within grocery stores), participating medical provider offices, and Federally Qualified Health Centers (for their patients). Flu vaccine is also offered to uninsured and underinsured individuals at [Public Health Clinics](#), and at community-based locations where DPH mobile units provide additional health services. Many employers and schools offer the flu vaccine on site. Use DPH's Flu Vaccine Finder page at flu.delaware.gov to easily find vaccine sites.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advises flu vaccination for [groups at high risk of having serious flu complications](#), such as:

- all children ages 6 months to 59 months
- all people ages 50 years and older (Individuals ages 65 years and older should receive higher dose or adjuvanted influenza vaccines.)
- people with chronic underlying medical conditions
- people who are immunocompromised
- people who are/will be pregnant during flu season
- American Indian or Alaskan Native persons
- residents of nursing homes and other long-term care facilities.

DPH recommends flu vaccine for those who live or work with infants under 6 months of age and those who live or work in congregant settings such as long-term care and correctional facilities.

For more information, visit flu.delaware.gov or call 1-800-282-8672.

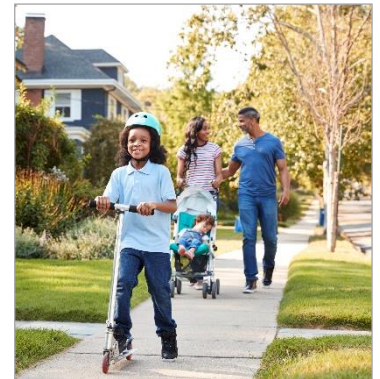


DPH awards eight community grants to advance healthy lifestyles

The Division of Public Health's (DPH) Physical Activity, Nutrition, and Obesity Prevention Program (PANO) awarded mini grants to eight community partners as part of the Advancing Healthy Lifestyles (AHL) Initiative. Using a health equity lens, the AHL Initiative aims to improve community health and reduce chronic conditions through policy, systems, and environmental approaches.

The grants support projects that provide outreach and education and opportunities for physical activity, access to healthy food, and maintaining a healthy weight. For example, the 4-H Cooperative Extension will promote physical activity in schools, the community, and the workplace, including Walk with Ease, Walk Across Delaware, Walking through the Holidays, and "plogging." The Boys and Girls Club of Delaware will enhance educational opportunities on a mini farm, facilitate food education/nutrition programs, and enhance their partnerships with local partners.

The City of Newark's grant supports the establishment of a second community garden to foster community and a healthy lifestyle. The Delaware Breast Cancer Coalition's grant supports a free and public 12-week health education program for individuals at risk for chronic disease, including breast cancer, to increase physical activity and nutritional knowledge.



Other awardees are Delaware Greenways of Northern Delaware, the Inner City Cultural League of Dover, the Worship Christian Center of Camden/Dover, and YMCA of Delaware.

For more information, watch the 28-minute webinar: <https://www.healthydelaware.org/Community-Partners/Advancing-Healthy-Lifestyles#mini-grant-initiative-webinar> or contact Shebra K. Hall, MPA, PANO Program Administrator, at 302-744-1011 or shebra.hall@delaware.gov.



DELAWARE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
Division of Public Health

Children ages 5-11 years can now receive the COVID-19 bivalent vaccine

Children ages 5 through 11 years who completed their primary COVID-19 vaccination series are now eligible to receive the updated (bivalent) booster vaccine. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention signed off on this October 12, 2022, following the [Food and Drug Administration's authorization](#). Pfizer-BioNTech's bivalent booster is available to children ages 5 through 11 years, and Moderna's is for children and adolescents ages 6 through 17 years.

The bivalent booster doses add Omicron BA.4 and BA.5 spike protein components to the current vaccine composition, helping to restore protection that has waned since previous vaccination and targeting recent Omicron variants that are more transmissible and immune-evading.

The Division of Public Health (DPH) recommends that all eligible Delawareans get vaccinated without delay for protection from severe COVID-19 disease, hospitalization, and death. Individuals are eligible if they completed their primary series (gotten both doses of a two-dose vaccine) at least two weeks ago. Visit de.gov/getmyvaccine for vaccination sites. More than 29,000 adult Delawareans have received the bivalent booster dose.

Between March 11, 2020 and October 13, 2022, Delaware had 310,819 positive COVID-19 cases and 3,121 deaths. As of October 13, there were 105 current COVID-19 hospitalizations with eight critically ill.

For information about bivalent boosters, visit de.gov/boosters. For COVID data, visit DPH's [My Healthy Community data portal](#). For COVID-19 information, visit <https://coronavirus.delaware.gov/>, call Delaware 2-1-1, or email delaware211@uwde.org. Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing can text their ZIP code to 898-211 weekdays 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. and Saturdays 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



Monkeypox vaccine eligibility expands

The Division of Public Health (DPH) expanded monkeypox (MPX) vaccine eligibility on September 22 to include all gay, bisexual and transgender or nonbinary persons having sex with men, or females having sex with gay, bisexual, non-binary, or transgender males. Delaware also expanded vaccine eligibility to health care workers who provide direct patient care to confirmed or suspected MPX cases in Emergency Departments, urgent care centers, Federally Qualified Health Centers, DPH clinics, STI/HIV or sexual health clinics, and those at occupational risk such as laboratory staff who handle specimens.

Forty-one MPX cases were reported to DPH as of October 14, including 27 cases in New Castle County, five cases in Kent County, and nine cases in Sussex County.

The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) reported 27,317 MPX cases in the U.S. as of October 14, with Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, and Washington, D.C. each having between 506 and 812 cases.

For more information, including vaccination, visit de.gov/monkeypox. Email questions to DPHCall@delaware.gov.

START PLANNING NOW FOR WHEN COVID-19 ASSISTANCE ENDS

Many extra benefits and services available because of COVID-19 will end in the coming months when the public health emergency comes to an end. Delaware offers many free social service, health, financial, and employment resources. For more information, contact the organizations listed at

https://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dss/files/DHSS_COVIDPlanNowFreeResourcesFlyer5-2-2022English.pdf

Public can order free fentanyl test strips to prevent unintentional fatal overdoses

To prevent unintentional overdoses, the Division of Public Health's (DPH) Office of Health Crisis Response (OHCR) is including fentanyl test strips in its Narcan kits distributed to the public. Fentanyl test strip kits can also be ordered online from DPH.

Individuals can test marijuana, cocaine, meth, ecstasy, and other substances for fentanyl, a synthetic opioid. Fentanyl is unable to be detected by sight, taste, smell, or touch. The highly sensitive test strips will detect fentanyl down to 0.1 mcg/ml.

Fentanyl is now the leading cause of drug overdose deaths in Delaware, found in more than 80 percent of fatal overdoses. According to Division of Forensic Science data, there were 515 overdose deaths in Delaware in 2021, an increase of 15 percent from 2020. Fentanyl was found in 83% of those deaths. Most overdoses are unintentional, and individuals using may not realize the strength of the drug they are using or that it contains fentanyl.



Two milligrams of fentanyl can be lethal. Credit: www.helpsherede.com/

implement alternative harm-reduction strategies, like going slow, not using as much, or/and not using alone... We will continue to discourage drug use and encourage people to seek treatment, but for persons with substance use disorder, we are using a compassionate approach to help raise awareness and empower friends and family to act in an emergency situation."

To order fentanyl test strips, visit helpsherede.com/understanding-addiction/what-is-fentanyl/. For treatment and recovery services, visit HelpsHereDE.com or call the 24/7 Crisis Hotline: in New Castle County, call 1-800-652-2929; in Kent and Sussex counties, call 1-800-345-6785. For free 24/7 counseling, coaching, and support, as well as links to mental health, addiction, and crisis services call the Delaware Hope Line at 1-833-9-HOPEDE.

Delaware Overdose Deaths in 2020

445

The number of people who died of an unintentional drug overdose death in Delaware in 2020

78.2% of all overdose deaths had more than one drug class present

DRUGS LISTED AS CAUSE OF DEATH

- Any opioid: 93.5%
- **FENTANYL: 83.6%**
- Cocaine: 34.4%
- Prescription opioids: 17.5%
- Benzodiazepine: 8.3%
- Methamphetamine: 9.7%

Source: 2020 State Unintentional Drug Overdose Reporting System (SUDORS) fact sheet Delaware Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health, Office of Health Crisis Response, August 2022

#MyReasonWhyDE campaign launches

DPH recently teamed up with The Cause to educate Delaware youth about Substance Use Disorder (SUD) through its #MyReasonWhyDE campaign. Four workshops were held in Wilmington with funding from the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

The youth-created short Public Service Announcement videos in which influencers provide reasons to not use drugs and share SUD information and resources. The PSAs promote the positive aspects of their lives that keep them happy, healthy, drug-free, and engaged in their community.

The #MyReasonWhy campaign is part of DPH's long-term strategy to work with partner organizations in the community and state, such as school systems, to promote resiliency and positive messaging. Youth who are interested in creating a PSA video should visit MyReasonWhyDE.com. Partners interested in promoting alternatives to drugs can contact Katie Capelli at katie.capelli@delaware.gov.

New resources for pharmacists

The Division of Public Health and partners in the medical community created new substance use disorder resources for pharmacists. The Delaware-specific, evidence-based education materials aim to reduce the risk of unintentional opioid prescription overdose deaths. These materials are available on the health care provider page at HelpsHereDE.com.

State's cancer mortality rates decline

Delaware's cancer mortality rate has further declined, according to the latest cancer data from the Division of Public Health (DPH). In the 15 years between 2005 and 2019, all-site cancer mortality rates decreased an average of 1.7% per year in both Delaware and the U.S. During the same period, all-site cancer incidence rates decreased an average of 1.1% per year in Delaware and an average of 0.7% per year in the U.S.

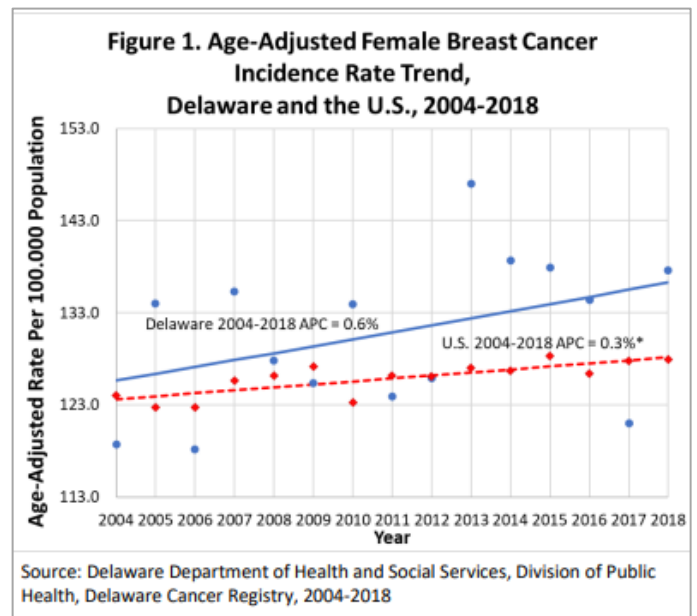
While progress continues to be made, Delaware's 2015 to 2019 all-site cancer incidence rate (468.8 per 100,000 population) is 4 percent higher than the U.S. rate (449.0 per 100,000 population). Between 2005 and 2019, incidence rates for all-site cancer decreased an average of 1.8% per year among non-Hispanic White males and remained stable for non-Hispanic White females. During that same period, incidence rates for all-site cancer decreased an average of 3.1% per year among non-Hispanic Black males and remained stable for non-Hispanic Black females.

The state's cancer mortality rate further declined. For 2005 to 2019, mortality rates for all-site cancer decreased by an average of 1.6% per year among non-Hispanic White males and decreased an average of 1.8% per year among non-Hispanic White females. From 2005 to 2019, all-site mortality rates decreased an average of 2.5% per year among non-Hispanic Black males and remained stable for non-Hispanic Black females.

Among Delaware females for 2015 to 2019, breast cancer had the highest incidence (136.1 per 100,000 population) and lung cancer had the highest mortality (34.5 per 100,000 population). Among Delaware males for 2015-2019, prostate cancer had the highest incidence (125.9 per 100,000 population) and lung cancer had the highest mortality (49.1 per 100,000 population).

Non-Hispanic Black Delawareans are disproportionately more affected by breast, prostate, and colorectal cancers compared to non-Hispanic White and Hispanic Delawareans. Lung cancer affects more non-Hispanic white Delawareans.

For more information, read the reports [Cancer Incidence and Mortality in Delaware, 2015-2019](#) and [Census Tract-Level Cancer Incidence in Delaware, 2013-2017](#). [Four accompanying tables](#) depict age-adjusted rates for the 23 top site-specific cancer types by both gender and race and include comparative U.S. statistics.



This graph is found within *Cancer Data Brief: Breast Cancer Incidence and Mortality in Delaware, 2014-2018*, <https://dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/dpc/cancer.html>.

Cancer program producing data briefs

DPH's Cancer Prevention and Control Bureau recently published a [breast cancer data brief](#) and plans to produce several other cancer data briefs over the next two years.

For the five-year period 2014 to 2018, breast cancer was the most commonly diagnosed cancer among females in the U.S. and Delaware. Of the 4,278 breast cancer cases diagnosed in Delaware in 2014-2018, 99 percent (4,237 cases) were diagnosed in females and 1 percent (41 cases) were diagnosed in males. Non-Hispanic Black females (138.7 per 100,000 population) had a higher breast cancer incidence rate compared to non-Hispanic White females (135.7 per 100,000 population) and Hispanic females (101.6 per 100,000 population).

In 2020, 73 percent of Delaware females ages 40 and older reported having a mammogram in the past two years, compared to a national median of 72 percent. For early breast cancer detection in females without breast symptoms, the Delaware Cancer Consortium recommends:

- ◆ Females 40 years of age and older should get a mammogram and clinical breast exam annually.
- ◆ Females 18 to 39 years of age should get a clinical breast exam annually.

To read the cancer data briefs, visit DPH at <https://dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/dpc/cancer.html>.

Find screening recommendations and services at www.healthylouisiana.org.