



Communicable Disease Service Mission Statement

Our mission is to prevent communicable disease among all citizens of New Jersey, and to promote the knowledge and use of healthy lifestyles to maximize the health and well-being of New Jerseyans.

We will accomplish our mission through our leadership, collaborative partnerships, and advocacy for communicable disease surveillance, research, education, treatment, prevention and control.

Phil Murphy, Governor

Sheila Oliver, Lt. Governor

Judith M. Persichilli, RN, BSN, MA
Commissioner

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE SERVICE

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State Epidemiologist/
Assistant Commissioner

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Editor, Research Scientist



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NJ Communi- CABLE

Winter 2022 Quarterly Newsletter

Immunization Data and Resources

The Vaccine Preventable Disease Program works to reduce and eliminate the incidence of vaccine-preventable diseases affecting children, adolescents, and older adults by raising the immunization coverage rates of New Jersey citizens. The New Jersey Department of Health uses various data sources to assess immunization coverage, which in turn, helps to prioritize program planning. Please see the following links for current vaccination coverage data:

- New Jersey Annual Immunization Status Report- School Immunization Coverage and Exemption data — Annual Immunization Status Report, 2020-2021 accessible at <https://nj.gov/health/cd/statistics/imm-status-reports/>.

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention VaxView website provides vaccination coverage rates to assess how well local areas, states, and the nation are protected from vaccine-preventable diseases. Data are available for vaccines routinely recommended for children, adolescents, and adults. For specific coverage reports, visit

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vaxview/index.html>.

- Adult Immunization Data Brief https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/vpdp/adult_data_brief_2021.pdf

As a healthcare professional, your strong recommendation is a critical

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Save the Date!

Virtual New Jersey Immunization Conference

May 25, 2022

Stay tuned for updates at <https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/>

Project Firstline – Bringing Infection Control Front and Center!

New Jersey
Department
of Health

(NJDOH)
Communicable
Disease Service
(CDS) Project
Firstline Team (PFL)
was active during
the summer and fall
months meeting key
benchmarks in the
development and
rollout of Project
Firstline, an
infection prevention
and control (IPC)
training
collaborative
developed by the
Centers for Disease
Control and

Prevention (CDC) for all frontline
healthcare workers throughout the
state. In September 2021, NJDOH CDS
PFL Team submitted the findings of
their Learning Needs Assessment
(LNA) to the CDC and are pleased to
report a total of 1,105 healthcare and
public health workers completed the
assessment. The purpose of the LNA
was to assess current educational needs
and gaps in infection prevention and
control among frontline healthcare and
public health workers and to provide
quality, accessible, and culturally
competent education to meet those
needs. We are still collecting responses
on a rolling basis to assess IPC
educational needs and trends over
time. To complete the LNA, [click here](#)



In October 2021, NJDOH CDS PFL Team coordinated its first two IPC trainings. Staff trained students at the Salem and Cumberland County Vocational and Technical Schools studying to become certified nursing assistants (CNA). A total of 29 students and CNA course instructors attended the virtual training which covered multiple IPC topics such as standard precautions of care, multi-dose vaccine vial basics, and COVID-19 and virus transmission basics. Staff were also invited to present at the Home Care and Hospice Association of NJ Annual Conference where they provided IPC education to 28 home healthcare workers.

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Third Annual Antimicrobial Stewardship Recognition Program Winners Announced!

The New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) remains committed to the reduction of antimicrobial resistance through

stewardship practices in healthcare settings. For the past three years, healthcare facilities have had the opportunity to demonstrate their dedication to stewardship by

submitting applications for the Antimicrobial Resistance Recognition Program (ASRP).

Modeled on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Core Elements of Antibiotic Stewardship, the ASRP offers healthcare facilities an opportunity to submit and share their current efforts. Facilities are required to submit documentation as proof that they meet or exceed the core standards which is then reviewed by NJDOH program staff. In addition to recognizing the achievements of awardees, the program is also intended to encourage facilities to enhance existing programs and influence facilities to develop robust stewardship programs if they are lacking. The

ASRP ultimately seeks to better preserve the power of antimicrobial drugs and prevent the spread of antimicrobial germs.

The 2021 winners were announced during the annual antimicrobial resistance conference sponsored jointly between the New Jersey Hospital Association and the New Jersey Department of Health. The conference was held virtually on December 9, 2021 and featured Lauri Hicks, DO, Director, Office of Antibiotic Stewardship at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Dr. Hicks shared important information about how the COVID-19

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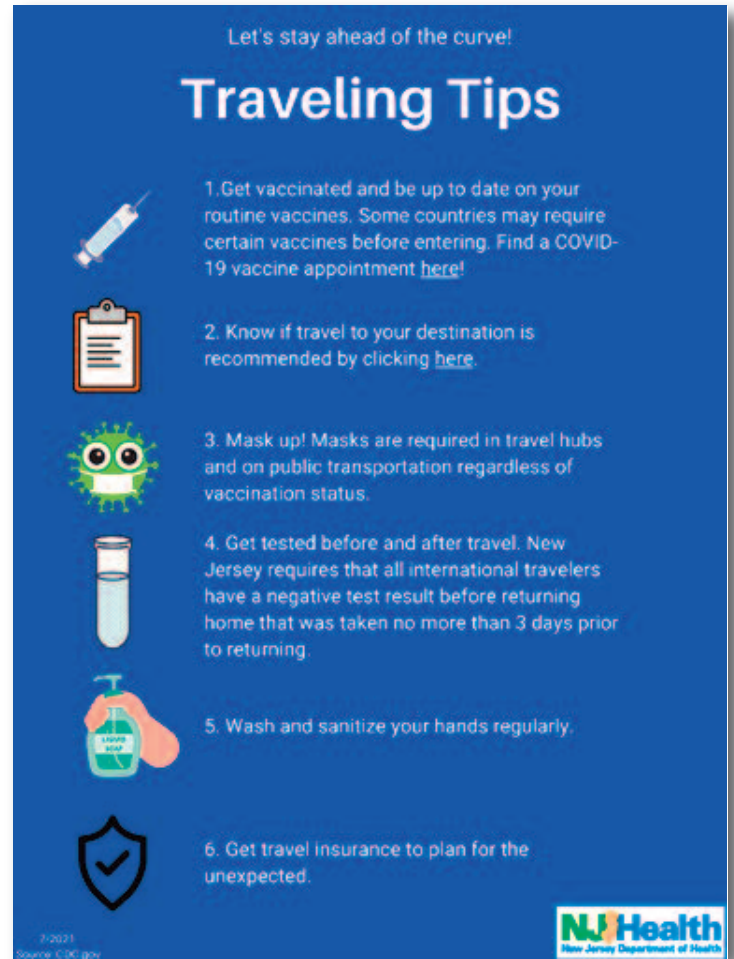
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Lauri Hicks, DO is a medical epidemiologist, Respiratory Diseases Branch (RDB), CDC

New CDS Page for Traveler's Health Sets Sail!

C^{DS} recently launched a Traveler's Health website as part of a new traveler's health initiative! It's a great resource for staying up to date on travel into and out of the great state of New Jersey. Recommendations and guidelines for domestic, international, cruise, and air travel are included in addition to information for how to securely store your vaccination history for easy access. The website currently emphasizes COVID-19, but may expand to other travel-related topics in the future.



Let's stay ahead of the curve!

Traveling Tips

1. Get vaccinated and be up to date on your routine vaccines. Some countries may require certain vaccines before entering. Find a COVID-19 vaccine appointment [here](#)!
2. Know if travel to your destination is recommended by clicking [here](#).
3. Mask up! Masks are required in travel hubs and on public transportation regardless of vaccination status.
4. Get tested before and after travel. New Jersey requires that all international travelers have a negative test result before returning home that was taken no more than 3 days prior to returning.
5. Wash and sanitize your hands regularly.
6. Get travel insurance to plan for the unexpected.

7/2021
Source: CDC.gov

NJ Health
New Jersey Department of Health

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Did you know that regardless of vaccination status, masks must be worn by all travelers while on all forms of public transportation and at transportation hubs? This reminder, as well as others, can be found on the site. Useful resources such as destination checkers to facilitate informed travel are also linked for easy access. Additionally, infographics that organizations and institutes of higher education are able to use and share on their websites and social media platforms are included. The website contains a section for students and faculty and

will provide information on safe travel during breaks. Resources for international students who may not be familiar with New Jersey are provided as are useful tips for students planning to study abroad. See the "Traveling Tips" sample graphic that will be available for use. The site will be updated regularly as guidelines change and will include seasonal messaging. Be sure to visit the webpage located at <https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/travel.shtml> and spread the word!



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Antimicrobial Stewardship, continued from page 3

pandemic is impacting antibiotic prescribing and antibiotic resistance, a very timely topic.

Facilities were awarded with a gold, silver, or bronze recognition level based upon whether they perform tasks that tackle the seven core elements: Hospital Leadership Commitment, Accountability, Pharmacy Expertise, Action, Tracking, Reporting, and Education. The ASRP enables NJDOH to both promote antimicrobial stewardship best practices to prevent development of drug-resistance and collect more detailed information on antimicrobial stewardship and resistance to guide future initiatives.

The winners of the 2021 ASRP are:

Gold Acute Care

Bayonne Medical Center

Bayshore Medical Center

CentraState Medical Center

Chilton Medical Center, Atlantic Health System

Clara Maass Medical Center

Cooper University Health Care

Hackensack Meridian Ocean Medical Center

Hackensack Meridian Raritan Bay Medical Center

Hackensack University Medical Center

Newark Beth Israel Medical Center

Hackettstown Medical Center

Hunterdon Medical Center

Inspira Medical Center Elmer

Inspira Medical Center Mullica Hill

Inspira Medical Center Vineland

Jefferson Health - Cherry Hill Hospital

Jefferson Health - Stratford Hospital

Jefferson Health - Washington Township Hospital

Jersey Shore University Medical Center

JFK Medical Center

Monmouth Medical Center

Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus

Morristown Medical Center - Atlantic Health System

Newton Medical Center

Overlook Medical Center

Penn Medicine Princeton Medical Center

Saint Mary's General Hospital

Southern Ocean Medical Center

St. Joseph's University Medical Center

St. Joseph's Wayne Medical Center

Gold Post Acute Care

Bergen New Bridge Medical Center, LTC

Broadway House for Continuing Care

Preakness Healthcare Center

Silver Acute Care

AtlantiCare Regional Medical Center

Bergen New Bridge Medical Center - Acute Care

Cape Regional Medical Center

Deborah Heart and Lung Center

East Orange General Hospital

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**Wash
Your
Hands**



Get more information at
<http://nj.gov/health/cd/handwashing.shtml>.

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Antimicrobial Stewardship, continued from page 5

Hackensack Meridian Mountainside Medical Center

Holy Name Medical Center

Jersey City Medical Center

Riverview Medical Center

Saint Barnabas Medical Center

Saint Clare's Health - Dover Hospital

Saint Michael's Medical Center

Salem Medical Center

Shore Medical Center

Trinitas Regional Medical Center

University Hospital

Silver Post Acute Care

AristaCare at Delaire

CareOne at East Brunswick

Christian Health Care Center

Parker at Somerset

Virtua Health & Rehabilitation Center at Berlin

Virtua Health and Rehabilitation at Mt. Holly

Bronze Acute Care

Kessler Institute for Rehabilitation Saddle Brook

Kessler Institute for Rehabilitation West Orange campus

Kessler Institute for Rehabilitation Chester Campus

Pascack Valley Medical Center

Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital

Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Somerset

RWJBH Hamilton

RWJBH University Hospital Rahway

Bronze Post Acute Care

Care One at Cresskill

CareOne at Teaneck

CareOne at Valley

Christian Health Care Center: Ramapo Ridge Psychiatric Hospital

Complete Care Woodlands

Heath Village

Job Haines

Kindred Hospital - Morris County

Kindred Hospital - Rahway

Kindred Hospital East

Roosevelt Care Center Edison

Spring Hills Post Acute Wayne

The Manor Health and Rehabilitation Center.

Essex County Hospital Center - Behavioral Healthcare Facility

The Dwelling Place at St Clare's

Outpatient General Award

CompleteCare Health Network



New Lyme Disease Trainings Available!

The CDC has released new clinician training modules for Lyme disease. This four-part series aids front-line healthcare providers with recognition, diagnosis, and treatment of Lyme disease. The free online curriculum serves as a valuable resource for primary care clinicians, public health professionals, pharmacists, and health educators who encounter patients with Lyme disease.

Free Continuing Education credits available: CME, CNE, CPE, CHES, CPH

To register, please go to [CDC TRAIN](#) or click the links below.

Click [here](#) for instructions on how to obtain CE credits.

Module 1:
[Introduction to Tickborne Diseases and Disease Prevention](#) (WB4328)

Module 2:
[Lyme Disease Clinical Overview](#) (WB4329)

Module 3:
[Lyme Disease Testing and Diagnosis](#) (WB4330)

Module 4:
[Lyme Disease Treatment and Management](#) (WB4380)

For NJ Public Health CEs:

Register on [NJLMN](#), complete the CDC module(s), then [e-mail](#) your certificate(s) of completion.

Links to the training modules and more information are available on the NJDOH CDS [Lyme disease page](#) and [Vector-borne disease page](#). 

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Immunization Data, continued from page 1

factor in whether your patients get routine and COVID-19 vaccinations. Your ability to answer common questions, to address vaccine misinformation, and to create a culture of immunization can all increase the likelihood of increasing vaccination

acceptance. For provider tools and resources, please visit:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/conversations/index.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/hcp/pediatrician.html> 

2021 CDRSS Case Close-Out Instructions and Guidance

All local public health agencies (local health departments and regional health commissions) are required to complete their 2021 cases by **Thursday March 31, 2022.**

The New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) will approve cases by **Saturday April 30, 2022.**

The 2021 MMWR year extends from **January 3, 2021 to January 1, 2022.**

Additional instructions will be provided in CDRSS.

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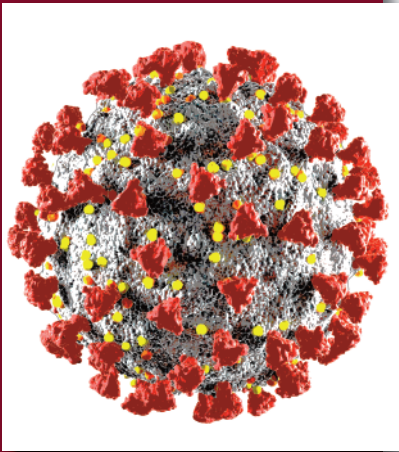
Epidemiology Supporting COVID-19 Prevention and Control in Learning Settings

The COVID-19 pandemic has focused attention on communicable diseases in school settings to a greater degree than at any other time in recent history.

In order to support our local health departments (LHDs), public health partners, parents, and schools during this pandemic, the Communicable Disease Service (CDS) has created a new team of epidemiologists and nursing consultants called the DSH team. The main mission of the DSH team (Daycares, Schools and Institutes of Higher Education) is to prioritize collaboration, education, and training that strengthens public health response and minimizes infectious disease transmission in these settings. Working hand in hand with the Regional Epidemiology Program, CDS's team of school subject matter experts, LHDs, and our partners in these institutions, each region of the State will have one epidemiologist and one nursing consultant dedicated to reducing communicable disease transmission within the schools and childcare centers of that region.

pilot their activity in the northern part of the State. Introductory meetings with local health departments are ongoing. These meetings have resulted in many productive conversations regarding how this new team can best support the LHDs and schools in the region. A needs assessment tool was distributed to approximately 650 childcare centers to solicit requests for tailored trainings from these facilities, which often do not have a nurse or other healthcare provider on staff. The DSH team will provide training, education, resources and support to childcare facilities to be better prepared in preventing and responding to outbreaks of COVID-19 and other communicable disease.

Ultimately, the goal of the DSH team is to assist and facilitate wherever possible with regard to infectious disease in the wider school ecosystem; to serve as that "extra pair of hands" for CDS, local health partners, and schools. Look out for the DSH team in your region over the coming weeks and months!



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Project Firstline, continued from page 2

Healthcare facilities who are interested in scheduling IPC training for their staff can complete our online intake form by [clicking here](#). Currently, we are offering training and educational tools on the following topics:

1. Hand Hygiene
2. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
3. Cleaning and Disinfection
4. Multi-dose Vial Vaccine Basics
4. The Basics of COVID-19, Virus Transmission, and Virus Variants
5. Basic IPC Practices for Students and New Professionals

In addition to the trainings offered by CDS PFL Team, NJDOH awarded \$801,200 in infection control funding to support IPC education among healthcare personnel to the New Jersey Hospital Association, Healthcare Association of New Jersey, Rutgers Project ECHO, and the New Jersey Association of County and City Health Officials. The awarded funding was part of a competitive process in which applicants applied for a range of funding by submitting tentative project plans that were systematically reviewed for their educational content and delivery, target audiences and communication plans. CDS received funding from CDC's Project Firstline and ELC Enhancing Detection to build infection prevention capacity throughout the state.

This initiative's goal is to provide diverse local and regional IPC trainings, develop educational tools,

and engage with frontline healthcare providers in a variety of settings. Regardless of training or educational background, the goal is for training recipients to understand and confidently apply IPC principles and protocols in their respective workplaces.

Each grantee is tasked with offering a targeted focus on their organization's areas of expertise, servicing long-term care and nursing home professionals, acute care providers, local health departments, outpatient facilities and more.

Lastly, healthcare professionals seeking CMEs, CNEs, and CPEs can now "learn and earn" with CDC PFL through their Training and Continuing Education Online (TCEO) System. For convenient access to all self-paced trainings, visit the NJDOH PFL website by [clicking here](#).

NJDOH PFL is also on social media! To like and share our content with your networks, follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#). For more information about IPC training offerings, scheduling a training, or partnering with us, please call 609-826-5964, e-mail us at CDS.IC.PFL@doh.nj.gov. 



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*INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL (IPC)
TIP OF THE WEEK*



**BE ON THE LOOK OUT FOR
WEEKLY TIPS ON ALL NJ DOH
SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES!**

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