

The DPH Bulletin

From the Delaware Division of Public Health

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What you need to know about the Zika virus

The Zika virus outbreak in several countries outside the U.S. was declared a public health emergency on Feb. 1 by the World Health Organization. Zika is generally a mild illness. Only one in five people infected with the disease develop symptoms. However, there have been reports of serious birth defects linked to the disease, which is spread by mosquitoes.

Anyone who lives or travels in the impacted areas (Central and South Americas, the Caribbean, and Africa) could be at risk for infection. Symptoms of Zika infection include fever, rash, joint pain, and red eyes.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Zika virus is transmitted by the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito and possibly the *Aedes albopictus* (the Asian tiger mosquito, found in Delaware).

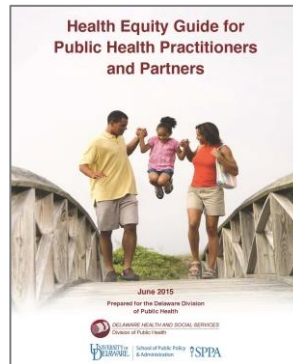


To prevent infection, avoid mosquito bites and follow CDC travel alerts. Women who are pregnant are advised to postpone travel to the countries where Zika virus transmission is ongoing. Male partners of pregnant women who traveled to a country with Zika should use condoms during the pregnancy.

For more information, visit www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/zika.html and www.cdc.gov/.

SHIP annual report available

Healthy lifestyles and access to mental health are addressed in the *Delaware State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) Annual Report, 2015*, released by the Delaware Public Health Institute. The SHIP will be revised every three years to address the most pressing public health issues in an effective, organized, and collaborative way. To view the SHIP annual report, visit www.delawarephi.org.



Diminish Delaware's health inequities with informative Health Equity Guide

Poverty, homelessness, hunger, crime, teenage pregnancy, discrimination, and dropping out of school can lead to elevated rates of disease, disability, injury, and premature death among certain populations. To help Delawareans understand what our health inequities are, and how to reduce them, the Division of Public Health (DPH), the University of Delaware's School of Public Policy & Administration, and other partners created the *Health Equity Guide for Public Health Practitioners and Partners*.

"Everyone has the right to attain their optimal health," said DPH Director Dr. Karyl T. Rattay. "It is unacceptable that in certain cases we may be able to predict how long someone will live based upon their ZIP code or income level."

Dr. Rattay said all sectors have a role to play in reducing health inequities. The health equity guide can help schools, workplaces, businesses, places of worship, and health care settings adopt policies that improve upstream conditions for better health.

The guide is available at this DPH link: www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/mh/healthequityguide.html. For print copies, call 302-744-4879.



Launching the *Health Equity Guide for Public Health Practitioners and Partners* are (from left) Delaware Health and Social Services Secretary Rita Landgraf, Chief of DPH's Community Health Services Cassandra Codes-Johnson, Erin Knight of the University of Delaware, DPH Director Dr. Karyl Rattay, St. Patrick's Center Executive Director Joe Hickey, and Senator Margaret Rose Henry. Photo by Donna Sharp.