**Disease Outbreaks in Childcare**

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**Questions and Answers**

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Below you will find the summary of the questions and answers (Q & A) from the live Webinar Series. For clarity and brevity, the live session of Q & A was trimmed from the original recording. Please keep in mind that this document is meant as a job aide. It does not create or confer any right for or on any person and does not operate to bind federal, state or local food safety regulatory agencies. If you have questions concerning interpretation or application of various portions, please reach out to your District Supervisor for assistance. A current District Map is posted at the top of the page where you found the recording and Q & A document.

Q: How can we deal with outbreaks that have spread to State Pay babysitters approved by DFS (Department of Family Services)? These are entirely unregulated. When a childcare is closed, parents send kids to unlicensed babysitters, and it propagates in the community.

A: From both BCDCP and BEHS, we take community spread into account when making a recommendation of closing a childcare facility. We don’t often close a facility. We try to isolate the outbreak as much as possible. During COVID, there were facilities that were closed due to reduced staffing. Unlicensed care for six or fewer children is allowed by law. This is an opportunity to provide outbreak education to the community.

*Exemptions are set forth in Missouri Statute, sections 210.201 and 210.211, RSMo. Anyone who is caring for six or fewer children, including a maximum of three children under the age of two, at the same physical address is not required to be licensed and does not have to report he/she is providing childcare.*

Q: Is there a set percentage/rule for the number of children or staff who are sick, that requires a childcare facility to close, or is it up to discretion of the provider?

A: The staff: child ratio required by DESE must be maintained.

Q: How are communicable diseases reported?

A: In Missouri, communicable diseases can be reported directly to the state or local health department. It’s up to the medical provider to which of these two authorities they report. Except for COVID, there is no requirement to report diseases directly to the state. Therefore, don’t take for granted that the state is aware of a situation/outbreak.

Q: What if the LPHA gets report from parent that kid got Shigella from daycare?

A: LPHA should reach out to their District Supervisor, send a request to state. LPHA should go out and work the case/do a disease investigation. Check for sanitation methods/practices. Reach out to your local epidemiologist. Discuss with mitigation strategies with providers.

Q: Recently completed annual sanitation inspection at center that had newly hatched chicks and ducklings in tub in lobby. Being used as a teaching tool for pre-K kids. Although set up was clean, with risk of salmonella as mentioned earlier in presentation, what is the timeline to remove animals from center.

A: Once they dry off and get fluffy, we recommend they be removed. They should not remain more than a week after hatching. This is a good opportunity to review sanitation/hand washing practices.

Q: What are some education points we can use in discussion with providers?

A: Especially when providing care to school-age children, it’s a good practice to have every child wash their hands as soon as they come into the home or center. You don’t know the last time they washed their hands before arriving.

Often, providers will put children’s names on desks, cubbies, etc. with tape or other adhesive. When the label is removed, if the adhesive is not completely removed, it can become a “magnet” for bacteria. Discuss awareness of this potential.

Control of Communicable Diseases Manual:

<https://www.apha.org/publications/published-books/ccdm>

19 CSR 30-60.060 Health Requirements for license-exempt child care facilities: <https://www.sos.mo.gov/cmsimages/adrules/csr/previous/19csr/19csr0700/19c30-60.pdf>

Communicable Disease Investigation Reference Manual (CDIRM):

<https://health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/communicable/communicabledisease/cdmanual/index.php>

The childcare guide for communicable diseases: <https://health.mo.gov/living/families/schoolhealth/pdf/Communicable_Disease.pdf>

Code of State Regulations, DCPH, Communicable Diseases:

<https://s1.sos.mo.gov/cmsimages/adrules/csr/current/19csr/19c20-20.pdf>

Bureau of Communicable Disease Control and Prevention (BCDCP) contact information:

<https://health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/communicable/communicabledisease/pdf/BCDCP_district_map.pdf>