



# PUBLIC HEALTH

## Connections

Bureau of Community Health Systems

## What's Inside

### Governor's Public Health Conference preview

Page 1

### Public health therapy dog in Osage County

Page 1

### Regional meetings spotlight: Climate impacts all Kansans

Page 1

### News & Resources

Page 3

### Job postings

Page 4

### Upcoming trainings, conferences

Page 5

To submit an item for *Public Health Connections* or to join the email list, please email **Lisa Horn** at [lisa.horn@ks.gov](mailto:lisa.horn@ks.gov)



## Register for the Governor's Public Health Conference — March 31- April 2

The 2020 Kansas Governor's Public Health Conference is March 31 through April 2 and features nationally-recognized keynote speakers on topics including:

- Improving school and community cultures to prevent school violence and suicides presented by Craig Scott, a survivor of the Columbine High School mass shooting, and whose sister was killed in the tragedy.



- How to transform yourself and your community to live longer and healthier with research from "Blue Zones," communities where elders live to record-setting ages.

- Lessons learned from disaster response around the world by risk communication specialist Dr. Vincent Covello.

- Strategies to ensure governmental public health is well prepared for present **See 'Engaging' on page 2**

## Therapy dog provides comfort in Osage County

by **Lisa Horn, Public Health Nurse Specialist, KDHE, Local Public Health**

A new staff member at the Osage County Health Department makes immunization visits easier for clients and staff. With four paws, curly black fur and weighing in at 8 pounds, she may not be administering vaccines, but her presence takes the sting out of the experience.

Gracie, a 1 ½-year-old toy poodle, belongs to Osage County Health Department director



Jackie Patterson, nurse and director of the Osage County Health Department, holds Gracie, the therapy dog.

Jackie Patterson. Gracie and Patterson are a registered therapy team with Therapy Dogs International, and

**See 'Gracie' on page 5**



The Sept. 3, 2018 Manhattan, Kan., flood disproportionately affected people living in lower-rent housing (*Riley County Police Department*).

**Regional meeting spotlight:**

## Climate impacts all Kansans

This article takes a closer look at a presentation from the first quarter regional public health meetings.

by **Rachel Myslivy, Climate + Energy Project, Special to Connections**

While the health impacts of our changing climate affect all Kansans, vulnerable populations will be the hardest hit and least able to recover

**See 'Climate' on page 2**

# Climate change exacerbates existing health, social inequities

Continued from page 1

or adapt. Communities of color, the elderly, young children, the sick and the poor bear the greatest burden of disease and death related to climate change. Both rural and urban populations will be equally, but differently challenged. The American Public Health Association (APHA) explains that, "[Climate change exacerbates existing health and social inequities.](#)"

Backed by research from the Kansas Health Institute, APHA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Kansas Climate + Health Declaration highlights climate concerns in Kansas and the resulting health impacts. Throughout the first quarter, the Climate + Energy Project and the Kansas State Climatologist presented information on the implications of weather and climate events on the lives, health and economic well-being of Kansans along with solutions to build resilient communities.

As reported in its "[Policy Brief, Health and Climate Change in Kansas.](#)" the Kansas Health Institute reports that climate change is a substantial concern in Kansas and that the projected climate changes are likely to have negative impacts on human health. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration



Climate change has had an impact on the increase of vector-borne diseases, including those transmitted by ticks.

(NOAA), temperatures in Kansas have risen about 2 degrees since the beginning of the 20th century and projections for increases range from an additional 2 to 11 degrees warmer than the hottest year in the historical record.

Resulting health impacts include longer and more intense asthma and allergy seasons; increases in tick- and mosquito-borne illnesses; increases in cardiovascular diseases, respiratory diseases and other chronic conditions as well as mental health impacts.

The good news is that the solutions that reduce climate risks also make communities more livable and improve health outcomes. Policies that build community resilience in the face of climate change also save money, conserve resources and create environments for individuals

— and communities — to thrive.

Local health departments can be the heroes of the Kansas climate and health story. The APHA report, "[Climate Change, Health, and Equity: A Guide for Local Health Departments.](#)" offers many actions health departments can take to advance health equity and climate resilience within their current programs.

Building resilience to climate change and addressing social and health inequities requires addressing the systemic causes of these challenges through collaboration and shared decision making with impacted communities, community-based organizations and other stakeholders across sectors.

Who better to do this than local public health departments?

The Climate + Energy Project, a Kansas-based non-profit, wants to help make the connections between climate and health in Kansas. Funded by the Kansas Health Foundation and the Sunflower Foundation, the Climate + Energy Project would like to partner with health departments to host workshops and community dialogues on Kansas climate, health and resilience. If your department is interested in learning more, contact **Rachel Myslivy** at [myslivy@climateandenergy.org](mailto:myslivy@climateandenergy.org) or **(785) 764-2055**.

## Engaging speakers, topics will inform public health practice

Continued from page 1

and future health challenges led by Dr. Brian Castrucci of the deBeaumont Foundation.

In addition, a wide selection of breakout sessions tailored to meet the changing needs of populations served by public health programs and initiatives will be offered. The Maternal and Child Health, Family Planning and MCH Home Visiting

sessions include immigration policy, domestic minor sex trafficking, behavioral health and fertility awareness-based methods of contraception. The Public Health sessions include updates on syphilis, earthquakes in Kansas, CBD, vaping, vaccine hesitancy, drug trends and mosquitoes. The conference includes "hot topic" sessions on distracted driving, sexual violence prevention, suicide

prevention and Kansas' electronic surveillance system for notification of community-based epidemics (ESSENCE).

Early bird registration is \$225 (**deadline March 13**) with discounts for those who attend only the general conference or only the pre-conference sessions. For more details, to view the conference brochure and to register, [click here](#).



## Mini grants now available to increase breastfeeding support

The Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition announces its request for proposal for its 2020 Breastfeeding Mini Grants. Through award of these grants, KBC seeks to create a landscape of breastfeeding support across Kansas. Eligible local breastfeeding coalitions in Kansas are encouraged to submit proposals for up to \$1,000 to fund activities that will improve breastfeeding initiation and/or duration.

**Coalitions are encouraged to view KBC tools when developing their proposals.** If you have questions about the mini grants, please contact Brenda Bandy at [bbandy@ksbreastfeeding.org](mailto:bbandy@ksbreastfeeding.org). See the **request for proposals** and **application** [here](#). Applications must be emailed to [bbandy@ksbreastfeeding.org](mailto:bbandy@ksbreastfeeding.org) by **5 p.m. March 20**.

## HRSA opioid response grants focus on rural communities

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) is accepting applications for 2020 Rural Communities Opioid Response Program-Implementation (RCORP-Implementation). Successful recipients will receive \$1 million for a three-year period to enhance and expand services for substance use disorder (including opioid use disorder) in high-risk rural communities.

Applications are due **April 24**. Applicants are encouraged to describe a plan to leverage workforce recruitment and retention programs like the National Health Service Corps (NHSC) and learn more about how to become an NHSC site and NHSC site benefits. NHSC-approved sites provide outpatient, primary health care services to people in health professional shortage areas.

All services must be provided in HRSA-designated rural areas (as defined by the Rural Health Grants Eligibility Analyzer). The applicant organization must be part of an established network or consortium that includes at least three other separately owned (i.e., different Employment Identification Number (EIN)) entities and at least two of these entities must be located in a HRSA-designated rural area. HRSA plans to award approximately 89 grants to rural communities as part of this funding opportunity.

To learn more about the RCORP program, [click here](#). To learn more about how HRSA is addressing the opioid epidemic, [visit this site](#).

## Promoting Addiction Treatment Access webinar scheduled for March 10

Telehealth can help fill the gaps in health care and can be especially useful for clients seeking substance abuse treatment. A KU Medical Center (KUMC) Connect webinar, "Promoting Addiction Treatment Access through Telehealth Models" will be from **noon to 1 p.m. March 10**. The webinar will discuss beginning a telehealth addiction treatment service; two telehealth addiction treatment delivery models (along with the pros and cons of each) and barriers that continue to exist in the health care landscape to promote addiction treatment access via telehealth.

Shane Hudson, president and chief executive officer of CKF Addiction Treatment (CKF), will present. For the past two years, CKF has been the recipient of a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration state-targeted opioid response grant that has served 65 Kansas counties.

Continuing education credits are available and there is no cost to participate. Pre-registration is required. Visit [this site](#) to register (deadline: **March 9**). [Click here](#) to see a flyer. For more info, please call **(620) 235-4040**.

## New traffic safety poster addresses safety of pregnant women

Safe Kids Kansas (SKK) has worked with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and others to develop a poster version of its popular “Occupant Protection for Pregnant Women” flyer.

The poster is available in English and Spanish, as well as with/without crop marks for self-printing. NHTSA developed these posters specifically for Kansas. SKK is seeking funding to print these in quantity. Meanwhile, it welcomes organizations to print posters themselves and post where expectant mothers may be – you might save a life (or two!). [Click here to view and print the posters.](#)

## National Health Service Corps (NHSC) loan repayment application cycle open

The National Health Service Corps (NHSC) applications for three loan repayment programs: the NHSC Loan Repayment Program, the NHSC Substance Use Disorder Workforce Loan Repayment Program and the NHSC Rural Community Loan Repayment Program are now open.

In exchange for loan repayment assistance, licensed clinicians in eligible disciplines commit to at least two years of service at an NHSC-approved site in a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA). Applications are being accepted until **6:30 p.m. April 23** (central time).

For more information or assistance, contact the Kansas Office of Primary Care and Rural Health within the Bureau of Community Health Systems at [kdhe.primarycare@ks.gov](mailto:kdhe.primarycare@ks.gov).

## Quitline social media campaign targets pregnant women who smoke

Enhancing the Impact of Tobacco Cessation, a project funded by the Kansas Health Foundation and CVS Health Foundation, has been developed to enhance the use of existing resources to improve maternal and infant health. This particular project is using social media to promote the Kansas Tobacco Quitline services to help pregnant women in Kansas who smoke or use e-cigarettes to quit. The campaign runs through June.

Pregnant women who call the Quitline will receive nine free tobacco cessation counseling sessions. They also will be educated on the increased risk of sleep-related death for tobacco-exposed infants. The caller will also be referred to the KIDS Network to learn risk-reduction strategies and may qualify to receive free materials, such as a portable crib and wearable blanket to help them create a safe sleep environment.

Here’s how you can help:

- Follow [facebook.com/KIDSNetworkKS/](https://facebook.com/KIDSNetworkKS/) where you can like and share the campaign’s social media posts
- Advise women to quit tobacco and offer assistance, including referral of pregnant women who use tobacco or e-cigarettes to the Kansas Tobacco Quitline (1-800-QUIT-NOW or [ksquit.org](http://ksquit.org))
- If you are a provider, consider using the Kansas Tobacco Quitline fax or web referral service.



For more information, please contact **Dr. Cari Schmidt** at [cschmidt3@kumc.edu](mailto:cschmidt3@kumc.edu) or **(316) 962-7923**.



### Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health

- [Registered Dietitian](#)
- [Public Health Nurse – RN](#)

### Shawnee County

- [RN – Nurse-Family Partnership](#)
- [Social Worker – MSW](#)

# Upcoming Trainings & Conferences

## Spring vision screening workshop dates announced

The KU Area Health Education Center (AHEC) has updated its Vision Screening Workshops for spring 2020 with enlarged class sizes, an additional instructor and new pricing. These popular sessions fill up quickly, and registration is first come, first served.

- **Friday, March 27**, 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Kansas City (Registration deadline: March 19)
- **Friday, April 3**, 12:30 to 4:30 p.m., Salina (Registration deadline: March 26)
- **Friday, April 10**, 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Wichita (Registration deadline: April 2).

To register and for additional information, [click here](#).

## Next Kansas Public Health Grand Rounds provides policy making tool

The Kansas Public Health Grand Rounds is a webcast series featuring public health practitioners and researchers from across the state, region and nation. The purpose is to provide a platform to explore ongoing and emerging public health issues facing the public health system.

All sessions will be hosted by the University of Kansas Master of Public Health (KU-MPH) program and will be broadcast from the KUMC campus. Sessions are free to attend either in person or via Zoom, and will last approximately 50 to 60 minutes.

The next webcast, “**Health Impact Checklist – A Tool for Policy Making**,” will be at **noon March 19**. Tatiana Lin, Carlie Houchen and Wyatt Beckman, all with the Kansas Health Institute, will present. For the full list of presentations and to register, click [here](#).

## Gracie helps calm children, others at health department

**Continued from page 1**

passed their evaluation in November.

Patterson was interested in developing a therapy dog program at her agency and applied for and received a special grant to start the program from the Emporia Community Foundation. The grant paid for Gracie’s training, her official therapy dog vest and travel crate, she said.

Patterson, whose first degree is in animal science from Kansas State University, later earned a nursing degree.

“Animals are my first love,”

she said. “I’ve always liked the idea of marrying my love for animals with nursing.”

Gracie helps calm children during vaccinations, snuggles with clients during their diabetic foot care appointments and is a comfort to staff also.

“It’s stressful,” Patterson said. “The kids – they scream, they cry, they beg and plead. The parents are stressed, too.”

A family with five foster children (all with special needs) recently came to the clinic to update their immunizations. During the visit, the children gave Gracie treats, which was a

great distraction, Patterson said.

“They got their shots and they never even knew they had them,” she said.

Patterson’s plan is to design a research project to add to the growing body of evidence of the benefits of therapy animals. Patterson believes that Gracie is the first therapy animal in any Kansas health department.

“She is happy, energetic, extremely intelligent and friendly,” Patterson said.

In addition to playing with her canine “brothers,” Gracie enjoys hiking and exploring the aisles at pet



Robert Bone cuddles with Gracie during a recent foot care appointment.

and farm supply stores in search of her next special treat.

**Follow Gracie on Instagram [@nursegracie\\_the\\_poodle](#)**