

THE CSTE WASHINGTON REPORT

Marcia S. Mabee, MPH, PhD
Editor
11479 Waterview
Reston, Virginia 20190
mmabee@ix.netcom.com
703-709-3001

September 14, 2007

Volume 11, Number 17

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- ... SEN. CLINTON SET TO REINTRODUCE
HEALTH TRACK BILL
 - ... GLOBAL TB ACT WITH ENHANCED CDC
FUNDING MAKES PROGRESS
 - ... U.S. LIFE EXPECTANCY HITS NEW HIGH OF NEARLY
78 YEARS
 - ... US DECLARED CANINE-RABIES FREE
 - ... CDC REPORT SHOWS LARGEST ONE-YEAR INCREASE
IN YOUTH SUICIDE RATE IN 15 YEARS
-

EDITOR'S NOTE: For the last several decades, state and local public health authorities in the United States have been working tirelessly on the prevention and control of rabies. Coincident with the recognition of World Rabies Day, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has formally declared the elimination of the type of rabies previously found in dogs in the United States. This declaration is supported by animal rabies surveillance nationally -- additional details are provided in this *Washington Report*.

The *CSTE Washington Report* is provided as an information resource for members of the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists on federal legislation and regulation affecting public health and epidemiology in the U.S. Legislation cited in the report can be accessed via [_ HYPERLINK "http://www.thomas.loc.gov"](http://www.thomas.loc.gov)

[_ http://www.thomas.loc.gov_](http://www.thomas.loc.gov) Regulations cited can be accessed via [http://_ HYPERLINK "http://www.gpo.gov" _ www.gpo.gov_](http://www.gpo.gov)

SEN. CLINTON SET TO REINTRODUCE HEALTH TRACK BILL – Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY) is preparing, next week, to re-introduce her legislation the Coordinated Environmental Public Health Network Act of 2007 to authorize the CDC Health Track program, which seeks to create a national environmental health surveillance network through grants to states and selected cities. To date, the program has stagnated in funding at \$24 million, not enough to fund all 50 states. The bill authorizes the program at \$100 million for FY 2008. It also creates a federal Rapid Response Team for higher than average occurrence of environmental health conditions, such as a sudden increase in asthma cases, but leaves authority with the states to invite the team in. The bill also authorizes the CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship Program, providing \$2.5 million for non-infectious disease fellows. She has attracted Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-UT) as an original co-sponsor of the bill.

GLOBAL TB ACT WITH ENHANCED CDC FUNDING MAKES PROGRESS – The Senate Foreign Relations Committee marked up the Stop Tuberculosis Now Act of 2007 (S. 968) on September 18th. An amendment by Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH) was adopted on a voice vote that authorizes \$200 million for CDC to combat TB in developing countries. A corresponding House bill (H.R. 1567) includes \$70 million for CDC in FY 2008 and \$100 million in FY 2009 and has also cleared Committee. Two domestic TB bills, the Comprehensive Tuberculosis Elimination Act of 2007 (H.R. 1532/S. 1551) provide, respectively, \$528 million and \$300 million for CDC's domestic TB program. However, no action beyond committee referral has occurred.

U.S. LIFE EXPECTANCY HITS NEW HIGH OF NEARLY 78 YEARS -- A child born in the United States in 2005 can expect to live nearly 78 years (77.9) – a new high – according to a report released today by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *“Deaths: Preliminary Data for 2005.”*

The report from CDC's National Center for Health Statistics is based on approximately 99 percent of death records reported in all 50 states and the District of Columbia for 2005 and documents the latest trends in the leading causes of death and infant mortality.

The increase in life expectancy represents a continuation of a long-running trend. Over the past decade, life expectancy has increased from 75.8 years in 1995, and from 69.6 years in 1955.

“This report highlights the continued reduction in deaths from the three leading killers in the United States, heart disease, cancer and stroke, which is most likely due to better prevention efforts and medical advances in the treatments of these diseases,” said Hsiang-Ching Kung, a survey statistician with CDC's National Center for Health Statistics and one of the report's authors. “If death rates from certain leading causes of death continue to decline, we should continue to see improvements in life expectancy.”

Highlights of the report include:

- Life expectancy for whites was 78.3 in 2005, unchanged from the record high of 2004. Life expectancy for blacks increased slightly from 73.1 years in 2004 to 73.2 years in 2005.

- The age-adjusted U. S. death rate fell to below 800 deaths per 100,000 population in 2005 – an all-time low.
 - The death rate from the three leading killers in the United States – heart disease, cancer and stroke – declined in 2005 compared to the previous year. The age-adjusted death rate from heart disease fell from 217 deaths per 100,000 in 2004 to 210.3 in 2005, while the age-adjusted death rate from cancer dropped from 185.8 per 100,000 in 2004 to 183.8 in 2005. The age-adjusted death rate from stroke declined from 50 per 100,000 in 2004 to 46.6 in 2005.
 - The age-adjusted death rates for the seventh leading cause of death, Alzheimer's disease, and the 14th leading cause of death, Parkinson's disease, both increased approximately 5 percent between 2004 and 2005.
- Preliminary figures also indicate an increase in the U.S. infant mortality rate from 6.79 per 1,000 live births in 2004 to 6.89 in 2005. However, this increase is not considered statistically significant. Congenital malformations, or birth defects, were the leading cause of infant mortality in 2005, followed by disorders related to preterm birth and low birthweight. Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) was the third leading cause of infant death in the United States.

The full report is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/>. Final U.S. mortality data for 2005 will not be available until next year.

US DECLARED CANINE-RABIES FREE -- For the last several decades, state and local public health authorities in the United States have been working tirelessly on the prevention and control of rabies. Coincident with the recognition of World Rabies Day, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has formally declared the elimination of the type of rabies previously found in dogs in the United States. This declaration is supported by animal rabies surveillance nationally.

“The elimination of canine rabies in the United States represents one of the major public health success stories in the last 50 years,” stated Dr. Charles Rupprecht, Chief of the CDC Rabies Program. “However, there is still much work to be done to prevent and control rabies globally.”

Rabies in humans is preventable, yet accounts for at least 55,000 deaths annually around the world – almost one death every 10 minutes. The World Rabies Day initiative, founded by CDC and the UK charity Alliance for Rabies Control and co-sponsored by the World Health Organization (WHO) and World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), aims to bring together the appropriate stakeholders to raise awareness and funding for rabies prevention and control globally.

“We are looking at this as larger than a one-day event,” says Dr. Deborah Briggs, Executive Director of Alliance for Rabies Control, “This is the first-step in a long-term effort towards human rabies prevention and animal rabies control globally.”

In the United States, canine-rabies elimination was achieved through implementation of dog vaccination and licensing, and stray dog control. “We remain optimistic that this official declaration of canine-rabies free status in the United States could be replicated throughout the Western Hemisphere and elsewhere,” says Rupprecht. However adoption of dogs from other countries with canine-rabies demonstrates the fragile nature of the current canine-rabies-free status of the United States and highlights the need for global control and continued emphasis on rabies prevention and control from the local to national levels.

“The elimination of dog-to-dog transmission of rabies does not mean that people in the US can stop vaccinating their pets against rabies,” warns Rupprecht. “Rabies is ever-present in wildlife and can be transmitted to dogs or other pets. We need to stay vigilant.”

Despite the elimination of canine-rabies, the disease remains a human threat in the US particularly from bats. Rabies also remains a potential threat through spillover infections from wildlife to domestic animals adaptation to new animal reservoirs, movement of potentially infected animals, and lack of adequate vaccination coverage of domestic animals, particularly cats and dogs.

“We can thank the tremendous historical efforts at the state and local levels over the past several decades for the ultimate elimination of canine rabies in the US,” says Dr. Rupprecht. “Our public health infrastructure, including our quarantine stations, local animal control programs, veterinarians, and clinicians all play a vital role in preserving the canine-rabies-free status in the US.”

CDC and its numerous global partners will utilize World Rabies Day as an opportunity to celebrate the successes we have made in rabies prevention and control domestically, while recognizing our responsibility to commit to the challenge of global canine rabies elimination, human rabies prevention, and wildlife rabies control.

For more information about World Rabies Day, please visit the CDC (www.cdc.gov/worldrabiesday) or World Rabies Day (www.worldrabiesday.org) web sites.

CDC REPORT SHOWS LARGEST ONE-YEAR INCREASE IN YOUTH SUICIDE RATE IN 15 YEARS -- Following a decline of more than 28 percent, the suicide rate for 10- to-24-year-olds increased by 8 percent, the largest single-year rise in 15 years, according to a report released today in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR).

The decline took place from 1990 to 2003 (from 9.48 to 6.78 per 100,000 people), and the increase took place from 2003 to 2004, (from 6.78 to 7.32), the report said

“This is the biggest annual increase that we’ve seen in 15 years. We don’t yet know if this is a short-lived increase or if it’s the beginning of a trend,” said Dr. Ileana Arias, director of CDC’s National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. “Either way, it’s a harsh reminder that suicide and suicide attempts are affecting too many youth and young

adults. We need to make sure suicide prevention efforts are continuous and reaching children and young adults.”

The report is an analysis of annual data from the CDC's National Vital Statistics System (NVSS). NVSS data are comprised of birth, death, marriage, divorce, and fetal death records in the United States. Researchers looked at trends during the 15-year period by gender, age group and suicide method. It did not examine reasons for the changes in suicide rates.

An increase in the suicide rates for three gender-age groups accounts for the increase in the overall suicide rate, the report said. Rates rose for 10- to-14-year-old females, 15 -to-19-year-old females and 15- to-19-year-old males from 2003 to 2004.

- For 10- to-14-year-old females, the rate increased from 0.54 per 100,000 in 2003 to 0.95 per 100,000 in 2004
 - For 15-to-19 year-old females the rate increased from 2.66 to 3.52 per 100,000
 - For 15-to-19 year-old males, the rate increased from 11.61 to 12.65 per 100,000
- Prior to 2003, the rates for all three groups were generally decreasing.

The analysis also found that changes had taken place in the methods used to attempt suicide. In 1990, firearms were the most common method for both girls and boys. However, in 2004, hanging/suffocation was the most common method of suicide among girls, accounting for 71.4 percent of suicides among 10- to-14-year-old girls and 49 percent among 15-to-19 year-old girls. From 2003 to 2004, there was a 119 percent increase in hanging/suffocation suicides among 10-to -14-year-old girls. For boys and young men, firearms are still the most common method.

“It is important for parents, health care professionals, and educators to recognize the warning signs of suicide in youth,” said Dr. Keri Lubell, a behavioral scientist in CDC's Injury Center and lead author of the study. “Parents and other caring adults should look for changes in youth such as talking about taking one's life, feeling sad or hopeless about the future. Also look for changes in eating or sleeping habits and even losing the desire to take part in favorite activities.”

A previously published CDC survey of youth in grades 9 to 12 in public and private schools in the United States found that 17 percent reported “seriously considering” suicide, 13 percent reported creating a plan and 8 percent reported trying to take their own life in the 12 months preceding the survey.

“This study demands that we strengthen our efforts to help parents, schools and health care providers prevent things that increase the risk of suicide,” said Dr. Arias. “We need to build on the efforts dedicated to education, screening and treatment and bridge the gap between the knowledge we currently have and the action we must take.”

CDC's suicide prevention efforts include expanded surveillance systems for suicide through the National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS). NVDRS is a comprehensive, linked reporting system that collects and centralizes information on suicides and homicides from a variety of sources, such as medical examiners and coroners, law enforcement, hospitals, public health officials and crime labs. As this system evolves, it provides a promising approach to capture data that will help to better understand the circumstances surrounding suicide. Information from NVDRS is helping officials, organizations, and communities develop, implement, and evaluate effective prevention policies and programs.

CDC is also working with states and tribal governments to implement the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention.

<http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/suicideprevention/strategy.asp> The plan is designed to further the dialogue and action that has already begun in communities and to serve as a springboard for changing attitudes, policies, and services.

For more information please visit

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/dvp/Suicide/youthsuicide.htm>

For more information about CDC work on suicide prevention, please visit the CDC Injury Center's website at www.cdc.gov/injury.