

Know Before You Go...  
#ZapZika



- ❖ Learn where Zika is active
- ❖ Use insect repellent
- ❖ Wear long sleeves and pants



www.nj.gov/cd/zika

@NJDeptofHealth

## Working Together to Zap Zika

By Cathleen Bennett, Acting Commissioner  
New Jersey Department of Health



The severity of the Zika virus outbreak in Central and South Americas and the Caribbean highlights the importance of a strong network of partners dedicated to keeping residents informed and healthy. The World Health Organization has declared Zika an international public health emergency. While the United States does not expect to see widespread outbreaks here, combatting the virus and its associated health effects requires close surveillance, preparedness and prevention to protect individuals in New Jersey and beyond.

A public education campaign by the Department is underway to explain the Zika virus risks to pregnant women, college students and others considering travel to Latin America and the Caribbean. To date, there have been no reports of Zika being spread by mosquitoes in the continental United States, but about 100 cases have been reported in travelers, including two in New Jersey who were infected in Honduras and Columbia.

As part of the #ZapZika campaign, Acting Commissioner Cathleen D. Bennett and the Department of Health's top doctors — including Deputy Commissioner Dr. Arturo Brito, a bilingual pediatrician — will meet with pregnant women in health centers and hospitals, physician groups, college students, professional medical societies and public health officials. Radio public service announcements have been developed in English and Spanish, along with NJ Transit bus advertising encouraging pregnant women to avoid travel to Zika-affected countries and travelers to prevent mosquito bites by using EPA-registered insect repellent and wearing long sleeves and pants. Check [here](#) for an updated list of Zika-impacted countries.

The Department's campaign will build on previous outreach efforts. More than 1,000 public health and health care professionals and maternal and child health advocates have participated in five conference calls hosted by the Department to share information from the CDC, and more than 350 local health officials joined a training webinar and received tool kits to use in their communities. The Department also shares CDC information, guidance and alerts via our New Jersey Local Information Network and Communication Systems (LINCS) alert system and have posted those materials on our Zika website, which contains resources in English, Spanish and Portuguese.

Information is also shared on the Department's Twitter and Facebook pages daily, using the hashtag #ZapZika for people to stay connected and updated.

Zika is primarily spread through a bite of the *Aedes* species mosquito, typically found in southern states. There is a closely-related species in New Jersey, and

*continued on page 6*

## Inside this Edition

Grant Announcements	2
Healthy NJ Regional Meetings	3
E-Cigarette Ad Exposure	4
Zika Awareness Event	4
Community Outreach	5
Data-Driven World	5
Cervical Cancer	7
National Nutrition Month	7
Cancer Matters	8

## \$5.5 Million to Improve Health Care for Veterans



The Department of Health announced \$5.5 million in grants to implement programs that will help close the gap of unmet veteran needs by improving health care for veterans and their families throughout the state.

- ❖ \$2.05 million to Cooper Health System
- ❖ \$1.55 million to Rutgers University - Behavioral Healthcare
- ❖ \$1.4 million to Kennedy University Hospital
- ❖ \$50,000 to Zufall Health Center
- ❖ \$50,000 to Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital – New Brunswick
- ❖ \$50,000 to Catholic Family and Community Services
- ❖ \$50,000 to Deborah Hospital Foundation
- ❖ \$50,000 to Ocean Health Initiatives, Inc.
- ❖ \$50,000 to Trinitas Regional Medical Center
- ❖ \$50,000 to Catholic Charities Archdiocese of Newark
- ❖ \$45,000 to Visiting Nurse Association of Central Jersey, Inc.
- ❖ \$39,000 to Veterans Foundation of America
- ❖ \$33,500 to Servicio Latinos de Burlington County
- ❖ \$33,300 to Rowan University

## \$190,000 in *ShapingNJ* Healthy Community Grants



The Department of Health announced \$190,000 in *ShapingNJ* Healthy Community Grants to 19 community organizations that will launch initiatives resulting in greater access to healthy foods and opportunities to be physically active.

Launched in 2009, *ShapingNJ* is a public-private partnership of more than 200 organizations working together to improve health outcomes and advance policy and environmental changes that support healthy eating and active living in New Jersey. Each agency will receive a \$10,000 grant for 2016.



- ❖ Advocates for Children of New Jersey
- ❖ Bergen County Technical Schools
- ❖ Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers
- ❖ Camden Tri-State Transportation Campaign
- ❖ Cumberland Cape Atlantic YMCA
- ❖ Hunterdon County YMCA
- ❖ Meadowlands Transportation Brokerage Corporation
- ❖ Metropolitan YMCA of the Oranges
- ❖ Morris Park Alliance
- ❖ National Park School District
- ❖ Programs for Patents - Newark
- ❖ Raritan Bay Area YMCA
- ❖ Raritan Valley YMCA
- ❖ RWJ University Hospital Foundation
- ❖ Smile for Charity
- ❖ Union City Board of Education
- ❖ Warren County Health Department
- ❖ Woodbridge Department of Health & Human Services
- ❖ YMCA of Trenton


 Healthy New Jersey 2020


Colette Lamothe-Galette

## Healthy NJ 2020 Regional Meetings Convened 170 Stakeholders from 6 Cities

In October and November 2015, the New Jersey Department of Health (DOH) hosted a series of meetings to assess the [State Health Improvement Plan](#) (SHIP) and gain feedback from public and private sector leaders.

The SHIP is informed by the [New Jersey State Health Assessment](#) (Healthy NJ 2020). DOH grantees, local public health agencies, healthcare providers, and community stakeholders were asked to assess the impact, value, and success of health improvement activities statewide, and identify opportunities for acceleration or course correction. The meetings were convened by the Rutgers Center for State Health Policy (CSHP), on behalf of the [State of New Jersey Innovation Model \(SIM\)](#) Design Project, and were hosted in Asbury Park, Camden, Newark, Paterson, Trenton, and Vineland.

The meetings focused on topics aligned with key Healthy NJ 2020 priority areas for the state, also known as Leading Health Indicators (LHI), which include improving birth outcomes and childhood immunizations, reducing the burden of chronic conditions, and access to primary care. Updates on how these priority areas are being addressed were illustrated by implementation stories presented by community agencies and partnering organizations. An interactive feedback session followed each community presentation to explore emerging health indicators and discuss recommendations for advancement over the next five years.

An evaluation of the meeting series among the 170 attendees revealed the most frequently proposed addition to the list of Healthy NJ 2020 Leading Health Indicators was mental health. Participants also offered a variety of recommendations to better improve state health improvement planning. Attendees reported that the meetings provided an excellent opportunity to learn about both state and local programs and available resources. A midcourse evaluation of the SHIP indicators is underway. DOH will convene those engaged in SHIP implementation to identify and share best practices, and advise on strategies for achieving the targeted improvements in health outcomes by 2020.

### *Congratulations to:*

**Colette Lamothe-Galette**, Acting Director of the Office of Population Health for being selected by AcademyHealth as a Population Health Scholar. As part of the program, Colette attended a policy boot camp designed to immerse scholars in the health policymaking process and introduce them to the top priorities of health policymakers. The boot camp also provided an opportunity to connect local-level efforts to national health policy and meet with state and national health agencies, community leaders, and other individuals who are leading systems change efforts to share best practices. In addition, she participated in the National Health Policy Conference held in Washington DC in February, which provided an in-depth view of the national health policy agenda from policy experts. [AcademyHealth](#) is a national organization serving the fields of health services and policy research and professionals that conduct this work.



## Millions of Teens Exposed to E-Cigarette Ads

In 2014, about 2.4 million middle and high school students used electronic cigarettes. That figure is alarming, considering most e-cigarettes contain nicotine, which causes addiction and may harm brain development. It could also lead to continued tobacco product use among youth.

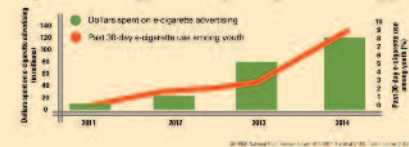
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [analyzed data](#) from the 2014 National Youth Tobacco Survey to estimate the prevalence of e-cigarette advertisement exposure among U.S. middle school and high school students.

In 2014, 70% of middle and high school students (18.3 million) were exposed to e-cigarette advertisements from at least one source. Among middle school students, exposure was highest for retail stores (53%), followed by Internet (36%), TV and movies (34%), and newspapers and magazines (25%). Among high school students, exposure was highest for retail stores (56%), followed by Internet (43%), TV and movies (38%), and newspapers and magazines (35%).

Tobacco product advertising may entice youth to use tobacco, and e-cigarette spending has increased rapidly since 2011. Exposure to these ads may contribute to increases in e-cigarette use among youth. Multiple approaches are needed to reduce e-cigarette use among teens, including efforts to educate teens early about the dangers of tobacco use and promote healthy environments free of tobacco.

Visit the New Jersey [Department of Health's tobacco webpage](#) for more resources.

E-cigarette use among youth is rising as e-cigarette advertising grows



State Epidemiologist Dr. Tina Tan (L) and Acting Commissioner Cathleen Bennett (R) kicked off the Department's #ZapZika public awareness campaign at Montclair State University on March 3.

## Department Kicks Off #ZapZika Campaign at Montclair State University

As college students across the state prepare to travel to Brazil and other Latin America countries to study and vacation this spring, Acting Commissioner Cathleen Bennett and State Epidemiologist Dr. Tina Tan kicked off the Department's #ZapZika public awareness campaign at Montclair State University on March 3 to highlight risks associated with the evolving virus.

"It is important to be informed about the Zika virus, especially if you might be traveling to tropical areas where transmission is ongoing," Acting Commissioner Bennett said before a group of Montclair officials, students and staff before taking questions. "We cannot emphasize enough that pregnant women in any trimester should consider postponing travel to Zika-impacted areas."

The public education campaign is designed to educate pregnant women, college students and others considering travel to Latin America and the Caribbean. As part of these efforts, Acting Commissioner Bennett and the Department's top doctors and epidemiologists will meet with pregnant women in health centers and hospitals, physician groups, professional medical societies and public health officials. Upcoming public events are scheduled at Newark Community Health Center and Clara Maas Medical Center (both March 7) and North Hudson Community Action Corporation (March 16).

"There have been reports of microcephaly and other poor pregnancy outcomes in babies of mothers who were infected with Zika while pregnant," Dr. Tan said. "Prevention is crucial because children born with microcephaly face various developmental disabilities."

To learn more about the #ZapZika campaign, follow the Department on Twitter at [twitter.com/NJDeptofHealth](https://twitter.com/NJDeptofHealth) and like us on Facebook at [facebook.com/NJDeptofHealth](https://facebook.com/NJDeptofHealth).



## Community Outreach & Events

### January-February 2016



Acting Health Commissioner Cathleen Bennett emphasizes the importance of keeping healthcare data secure.



Chris Rodriguez, Director of the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, highlights how the healthcare system can protect against cyber threats.



Dave Weinstein, New Jersey's Director of Cybersecurity, stresses how strategic partnerships can strengthen cyber intelligence.

- January 13** Acting Commissioner Bennett spoke at Hunterdon Medical Center's Legislative Day event in Trenton.
- January 22** Deputy Commissioner Dr. Arturo Brito and State Epidemiologist Dr. Tina Tan held the first in a series of conference calls with healthcare providers and community groups to update them on CDC Zika guidance.
- January 26** Acting Commissioner Bennett joined Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness Director, Chris Rodriguez, to showcase the state's partnership with hospitals during public health emergencies.
- February 5** Deputy Commissioner Dr. Arturo Brito and Connie Calisti-Meyers, Assistant Commissioner of the Division of HIV, STD and TB Services, joined local community leaders in Trenton at the Greater Mt. Zion Church to observe National Black HIV Awareness Day.
- February 19** Communicable Disease Service team hosted a training webinar for more than 350 local public health staff to educate their communities.

## Sharing Intelligence and Information in a Data-Driven World

As technologies become more complex, it is increasingly important for the healthcare system to get ahead of vulnerabilities. Raising awareness of cyber risk is essential to strengthening hospital's cybersecurity preparedness efforts.

The [New Jersey Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Cell](#) and the [National Healthcare Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) are now partnering to enhance cybersecurity information sharing on behalf of New Jersey's healthcare providers.

This agreement was formally executed on Jan. 26 at the New Jersey Regional Operations Intelligence Center among hospital executives from across the state. Information will be shared and analyzed on behalf of New Jersey's healthcare and public health institutions to strengthen their ability to prepare for and respond to threats.

"The healthcare system is doing a great job now, but as digital communications evolve and technology shifts, we all need to adapt," Acting Commissioner Cathleen Bennett said. "Being part of this initiative gives hospitals another tool to be better prepared for the challenges they may face in the future."

The consequences of cyber attacks can be expensive to mitigate, and the Department is aware of the challenge to keep data safe. As the Department builds the NJ Health Information Network (NJHIN)—which allows regional health information organizations to share data across the state—DOH is putting in data safeguards that monitor and protect communications.

"New Jersey's healthcare sector is critical to the livelihood of our citizens and the prosperity of our local economy," said Chris Rodriguez, Director of the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, the parent agency of the NJCCIC. "Partnering with NH-ISAC to fuse our cyber intelligence sources will contribute to a far greater understanding of the threats impacting our healthcare providers."

### Commissioner's Message, *continued from page 1*



the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is closely monitoring to determine how effectively this mosquito "cousin" can carry and transmit Zika.

While most infected people do not become seriously ill or die, evidence suggests some women infected during pregnancy may deliver a baby with microcephaly, a condition resulting in a baby's head being much smaller than expected. CDC is also working with health authorities in Brazil to investigate whether there is a link between Zika infection and increases in reports of Guillain-Barre syndrome, a rare neurologic disorder in which a person's own immune system damages nerve cells, sometime causing paralysis.

The CDC has also cautioned that sexual transmission of Zika has been reported after travel to the impacted countries. The Red Cross has recommended that blood donors who have traveled to Mexico, the Caribbean, or Central or South America postpone donations until 28 days after returning to the U.S.

With the recent outbreaks in Latin America, CDC estimates the number of Zika cases among travelers visiting or returning to this country will likely increase. But outbreaks would likely be small and limited in scope, based on the United States' experiences with chikungunya and dengue. Mosquito control and monitoring in New Jersey is robust, and other lifestyle practices, including widespread use of air conditioning, help limit the spread of mosquito-borne diseases.

CDC recommends that all recent travelers to an area with ongoing Zika transmission who experience two or more Zika-related symptoms (fever, rash, joint pain or red eyes) be tested in consultation with state and local health departments. In addition, pregnant women who have recently traveled to any of these areas should talk to a healthcare provider about their travel, even if they don't feel sick. CDC recommends that all pregnant women with a history of travel to an area with Zika virus be tested. For pregnant women not experiencing symptoms, testing can be offered 2-12 weeks after pregnant women return from travel.

A woman who is planning or thinking about getting pregnant and has recently traveled to an area where Zika is spreading should discuss this with her healthcare provider after returning. She should also consult her healthcare provider if her male sex partner recently traveled to an area with Zika.

We ask that all of our partners stay up-to-date on the latest developments as this public health emergency evolves. Zika is reportable to the Department, and we encourage our local partners to consult with our Communicable Disease Service team, which can be reached at 609-826-5964. It is important to check the [Department's Zika website](#) daily, as well as the [CDC's Zika webpage](#).

Let's Zap Zika together as we increase our preparedness and protect New Jersey residents from this virus and its associated health consequences for pregnant women and their children.



## NJ State Cancer Registry Staff Examine Disparities in Invasive Cervical Cancer



Cervical cancer has declined greatly over the past several decades due to Papanicolaou (Pap) testing. Invasive cervical cancer, which is caused by persistent infection with sexually transmitted human papillomavirus (HPV), can now be prevented by a combination of Pap testing and HPV vaccination. However, disparities continue both nationally and in New Jersey. The Department's Cancer Registry staff, with assistance from Temple University, studied populations with highest risk in the state.

The study, entitled *[Invasive Cervical Cancer Incidence Disparities in New Jersey—a Spatial Analysis in a High Incidence State](#)*, found three geographic areas around Newark, Trenton, and Camden with significantly higher incidence of invasive cervical cancer than the rest of the state.

The women with invasive cervical cancer in these geographic areas were more likely to be Black (all 3 areas), Hispanic (Newark, Camden areas), and uninsured or Medicaid-insured (Trenton area) compared with woman with invasive cervical cancer in the rest of the state. These areas also had higher percentages of minority and lower socioeconomic status populations.

The Department's Office of Cancer Control and Prevention, [New Jersey Cancer Education and Early Detection \(NJCEED\) program](#) and Immunization Program are using the results of this study to emphasize cervical cancer prevention throughout the state, particularly in the areas where higher incidence was found. Education on prevention, screenings and HPV vaccination will be targeted in the population identified in this study.

The Department's NJCEED program currently provides cancer screening including cervical cancer testing, education and outreach for low-income uninsured and underinsured residents across the state. More information on the Department's cancer initiatives can be found [here](#).

## March is National Nutrition Month

**N**[ational Nutrition Month](#) is an annual nutrition education campaign led by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. The awareness effort focuses attention on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits.

The theme for 2016 is "Savor the Flavor of Eating Right," encouraging everyone to enjoy their own food traditions and appreciate pleasures in moderation. How, when, why and where we eat are just as important as what we eat. A healthy lifestyle involves choosing a balanced diet and establishing a healthy eating plan. Making radical changes to eating habits can lead to short term weight loss, but these sudden changes are not healthy and will not be successful in the long run. Permanently improving your eating habits requires determination to achieve your goals.

Initiated in March 1973 as a week-long event, "National Nutrition Week" became a month-long observance in 1980 in response to growing public interest in nutrition.

For more information, check out [CDC's healthy eating tips](#).



'Cancer Matters'  
Brought To You By:

**RUTGERS**

Cancer Institute  
of New Jersey

## Cervical Health Awareness

By Darlene G. Gibbon, MD

In response to low vaccination rates, Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey has joined the nation's top cancer centers in [calling for increased human papillomavirus \(HPV\) vaccination](#) to prevent HPV-related cancers, which includes cervical cancer. In terms of cervical health awareness in general, one resolution a woman can make this new year is to see a healthcare provider and undergo a pelvic examination and Pap smear to help prevent cervical cancer.

According to the American Cancer Society, 12,900 women were diagnosed with cervical cancer in 2015, with approximately 4,100 deaths. Unfortunately, many of these deaths could have been prevented through screening with Pap smears or vaccination with the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine.

HPV is the major cause of genital warts, precancerous cervical changes and cervical cancer. HPV is a common virus that is sexually transmitted. Fortunately, our immune system usually clears an HPV infection. If the virus is not cleared, precancerous changes and perhaps a cancer can occur.

Pap smears detect precancerous changes that occur in cells. Treatment can prevent precancerous changes from becoming cervical cancer. The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommends that women begin annual screening for cervical cancer at age 21. Pap smear screening should be done every three years. If HPV testing is performed in addition to the Pap smear, testing may be able to be extended to every five years. HPV testing should not be performed in women younger than 30. Women who are 65 years or older with a history of adequate screening, no abnormal findings and no risk factors for cervical cancer no longer require screening. A woman should consult with her doctor about the frequency of screening, as it depends on age, results from prior testing, family history and other health factors.

Vaccination with the HPV vaccine can prevent an HPV infection in young women and men. Studies have shown that the vaccine is safe and effective but needs to be given before infection with HPV has occurred. Vaccinations are given in three doses over a six-month period. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends that HPV vaccination for girls begin routinely at ages 11 or 12 or given to females aged 13 to 26 who have not yet been vaccinated. Vaccination for males can be given between the ages of 9 and 26.

A woman should also know the warning signs of cervical cancer, which can include abnormal vaginal bleeding, discharge and bleeding after intercourse. Along with seeking care for any of these symptoms, a woman should discuss and maintain routine and appropriate screenings with her doctor, as cervical cancer, when detected early can be treated and cured.



Darlene G. Gibbon, MD, is the Chief of Gynecologic Oncology at Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey; and an Associate Professor of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Sciences at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School.