



**Director's Report  
September-October 2023**

**Upcoming Events:**

- Halloween Activities:
  - Halchita, Blanding, Monticello, Montezuma Creek (USU & UNHS)
- Monticello WIC Day - Wednesday, November 15, 2023
- Blanding Breastfeeding Class - 1st Wednesday of the month at Noon
- Leadership Institute, Week 2 of 2, November 6-10, 2023
- Local Health Officer Meeting in St. George, November 16-17, 2023

**Recent Activities:**

- Emergency Preparedness
  - The Health Department staff has been working to complete Incident Command Structure courses (levels 100, 200, 700 & 800) to help develop situational readiness.
    - 46% of staff have completed all courses, and 69% have completed courses 100 & 200.
  - The Southeast Utah Healthcare Preparedness Coalition (SEUHPC) of 26 partners conducted a functional radiation and chemical, medical response and surge exercise (MRSE) on 9/27/2023. The exercise spanned Carbon, Emery, Grand, and San Juan Counties. (A large, sparsely populated area with 55,000 residents and over 18,000 square miles of territory). This exercise addressed the operational elements of the coalition's response plan for a radiological and chemical surge for the receipt, triage, and care of radiation/chemical injury and casualties following existing healthcare coalition and individual county, hospital, EMS, and medical center plans.
  - The "San Juan Ring of Fire" event took place on October 14th with representatives from the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) and partner agencies set up at four different posts and on the highways around Valley of the Gods to be ready to mitigate and respond to any emergencies that may arise. The event was a success with regard to the fact that it was uneventful from an emergency response perspective.
- Environmental Health (EH) activities
  - Southeast Utah Health Department staff have been filling in while our EH capacity is low. The San Juan Public Health Officer has asked them to track their

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time. Once an intergovernmental agreement is in place, San Juan Public Health can compensate them for their time.

- Next step is to contract with a part time EH Scientist to address needs over the next phase of time.
- Monticello Cancer Screening Program:
  - Monthly meetings with Monticello community advisory committee
  - Materials and process for screening vouchers have been presented to San Juan Health and Utah Navajo Health System primary care providers for feedback and edits.
  - Final steps before launch are confirming and streamlining the payment process for clinics.
- Epidemiology - September
  - **Total Disease Investigations** - 7 Cases in San Juan County (UNHS & SJC): 1 Gonorrhea, 2 Chlamydia, 2 Syphilis, 1 Chicken Pox and 1 Tuberculosis Gateway
  - **Environmental duties** - 1 possible rabies case was investigated this past two months.
  - **Completed the CEDIS “Coaching for Enhanced Disease Intervention Skills” program**
    - Build skills in interviewing, rapport-building, problem-solving, and cultural humility
    - Mentor: Experienced Disease Intervention (DI) professionals (Celine Coleman from Oregon Linn County Public Health Department)
  - September – Updated COVID-19 Vaccine Recommendations and Support
    - *Who's eligible for the new COVID-19 vaccine? Regardless of whether they previously completed their (monovalent) primary series.*
      - Everyone over 6 months old is eligible for an updated Covid-19 vaccine this fall. It protects against the latest omicron variant and new strains as well.
      - *Recommendations for COVID-19 vaccine:*
        - Unvaccinated:
          - Ages ≤6 months - 4 years old
          - Will get 2 doses of Moderna OR 3 doses of Pfizer-BioNTech
          - Ages ≥ 5years old
          - Will get 1 dose of Moderna OR 1 dose of Pfizer-BioNTech
        - Previously Vaccinated:
          - Ages ≤6 months & older
      - *When should I get the updated COVID-19 Vaccine?*

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- Previously vaccinated: Wait at least 2 months
- Previous infection: Wait 3 months from when your symptoms started or if you had no symptoms when you first received a positive test.
- *Insurance Costs: How much will it cost?*
  - The government no longer covers the costs of COVID-19 vaccine shots.
  - The vaccines are covered by insurance, including private insurance, Medicare plans, and Medicaid plans. Uninsured children and uninsured adults also have access through the Vaccine for Children Program and Bridge Access Program, respectively.
    - Pfizer/Moderna - \$120.00 per dose (FDA Approved)
    - Novavax - \$75.00 per dose (Not FDA Approved yet)
- *Can I still get a bivalent shot before the new updated vaccine shot becomes available?*
  - Unfortunately no, it is not recommended as a booster anymore as of Sept. 12th, therefore, the previous bivalent shot is longer available for administration from our public health department. However, more information will be available regarding the new updated Fall COVID-19 vaccines and UNHS, pharmacies, and private providers will be the ones who are available to administer the new vaccines from now on once they become available to the public.
- *What we do know:*
  - Everyone over 6 months old is eligible for an updated Covid-19 vaccine this fall.
  - COVID-19 and Flu vaccine are safe together.
  - RSV is safe two weeks before or after the combined COVID-19/Flu vaccine.
- San Juan County COVID-19 Bi-Weekly Report - We have seen an increase in COVID-19 cases within the past few weeks:
  - 61 active COVID-19 cases on Sept. 12th
  - 55 active COVID-19 cases on Sept. 26th
  - Blue Mountain Hospital thanked San Juan Public Health for continuing these bi-weekly COVID-19 updates and posted our report on their social media page.
- **San Juan County Epidemiology Meeting** - September 28th from 12-1 PM

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- We discussed Updated COVID-19, RSV, and Flu vaccine information for the Fall/Winter season.
    - Nikki Baer from DHHS and HEART Program provided training education on Syphilis for all healthcare providers, clinicians, and nurses in San Juan County.
    - Good feedback from those who attended the epi meeting and planned to get together with health providers and clinics to plan and coordinate the new updated COVID-19, RSV, Flu vaccines, treatments, etc.
- Health Promotion
  - September, 2023: Health Promotion Director-Rebecca Benally attended the Fall Conference in St. George, along with members of San Juan County Prevention Action Collaboration Coalition. There were many excellent presentations, but the presentations on the SHARP Survey and Grandparenting is Prevention were two that stood out. Because of that presentation, we are planning on partnering with the Navajo Nation Foster Grandparents program to be implemented in our schools. Health Promotion attended and presented on Vaping and Suicide prevention at the San Juan School District Youth Heritage Language Conference, 138 students attended. Health Promotion Director participates in the Town of Bluff Active Transportation Advisory Committee, it's been a year, we finally completed the plan, it will be presented to the Town Council of Bluff.
  - October, 2023: Health Promotion Director attended the Utah Trail Network Workshop provided by the Utah Department of Transportation and presented the Town of Bluff Active Transportation plan. We are in the process of finding a funding source for the proposed multi-use trail. The Health Promotion Director attended the quarterly ULACHES meeting. SJPH Health Promotion has several five-year contract/grants end, which means some with reduced funding. We've had several contracts/grants beginning October 1, 2023. The best news of the month, we are advertising for a new Health Educator ([link](#)).
- Nursing
  - Maternal Mental Health Resources
    - University of Utah Health offers anytime, anywhere [education for expectant mothers](#) through YoMingo®, a program designed to give you convenient access to valuable information. It includes the tools and support you need at every stage of your health care journey and beyond.
    - <https://healthcare.utah.edu/womens-health/pregnancy-birth/yomingo>
    - Call 801-213-2995
    - Telephone wait time: Approximately 1 minute(s).
    - [Request a Call Back](#)

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- WIC Participant Report

<b>Year &amp; Month</b>	<b># of WIC Participants</b>
2020 October	242
2021 September	227
2022 September	206
2023 September	229
<b>Current By Zip Code</b>	
Monument Valley	21
Monticello	43
Montezuma Creek	25
Mexican Hat	13
Bluff	12
Aneth	5
Blanding	102

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