

COVID Update

- Low community transmission level as a state
- CDC sees Bennington county as rather high levels, but the rest of the state is pretty green
- We're choosing to view the state as a whole entity and not regions
- Percent positivity rate is skyrocketing, but shouldn't be looked at anymore (means we're not doing enough testing)
- Hospitalizations have gone from the high 30s and are now in the 50s threshold
 - 1/3 of these are because of COVID (not people that come in for something else and then test for COVID)
- 8 or so deaths for month of September (lower than preceding months)
- Vaccine effort is going well – about 50,000 bivalent boosters provided
- Continue to be doing well in our age 5 and below vaccines
- Schools remain open with upbeat atmosphere
 - Schools have had a lot of respiratory illness
- Still seeing mostly BA.4 and BA.5 and haven't seen an unexpected true variant
- The state sites that EMS is staffing are providing flu vaccines to those 65 and under
 - Still about 50% of the bivalent boosters
 - Pharmacies are about 30%
 - Healthcare providers are in 10% to low teens

hMPXV

- Inactive in VT and we are working on decommissioning
- Nation is seeing downward trend and are hopeful that will continue
 - Combination of infection, vaccination, and behavior change in high risk populations
- VT still has 3 cases
- Have enough vaccines

Other Respiratory Viruses

- EnterovirusD68, Rhino Virus, etc. - These other viruses are causing other respiratory illnesses

Legionella

- A few clusters at a bed and Breakfast and then in St. Albans
 - No clusters in a few months
- Source hasn't been identified

Cannabis

- May be some individuals that have been using before, and now there may be more new users trying it for the first time
 - Most concerned about kids
- Watch emergency department visits contributed to cannabis use

Mental Health

- Preexisting mental health conditions as well as mental health issues from COVID

- Integrating Mental Health throughout health care system

Questions and Answers

With flu season upon us, are we ready to stand up hospitals and facilities if needed with resources?

The NE region is having not a crisis but reaching close to capacity with pediatric ICU and pediatric intake for respiratory illness. Hasn't happened to VT yet but are watching it closely. Going to see a much more robust flu season.

Has there been follow up or what have you been hearing regarding the colored fentanyl, especially with Halloween coming up?

There isn't a real update. The concern is that the product exists at all. Are people in VT going to be aware enough about it/the safety factors? Parents are regulating much more what their kids eat/where they go.

Any update on the updated booster for the pediatric population

Everyone is saying mid-October for actually putting it into kid's arms. Could be any day now to understanding when it will be available. We have pre-ordered from the government and will be sent the moment they can be.

How can people be involved in the Violence Prevention Council?

Reach out to Mark so he can be your voice.