

## **News Release**

### **For Immediate Release**

March 7, 2012

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Public Health Department 308-345-4223

### **Clinic Services Expanded**

**McCook-** Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department has expanded their services to include adult vaccinations, fecal occult blood screenings for colon cancer and Tuberculosis (TB) skin testing at their office located at 404 West 10<sup>th</sup> (1 block north of Arby's) in McCook. Adult vaccinations include: pneumonia, influenza, hepatitis B, hepatitis A, tetanus, MMR (measles, mumps and rubella), and Tdap (Tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis).

***Vaccine-preventable disease has declined by over 99% since the introduction of vaccines.*** Outbreaks can occur when vaccination levels decrease. Immunizations are one of the most effective and cost efficient ways to prevent disease. For every dollar spent on immunizations, it saves as much as \$29.00 in direct and indirect health costs.

"Financial times are tough and not being able to afford healthcare is a barrier to accessing prevention and treatment measures. You should not have to choose to put your health on hold," states Jamey Keen, Public Health Nurse. "To help break the barrier, we are now offering immunizations to qualifying adults at no charge."

#### **To qualify for free adult immunizations, applicants must:**

- Reside in the United States and be 19 years of age or older
- Have no health insurance coverage
- Have an annual household income that is less than:
  - \$43,320 for individuals
  - \$58,280 for couples or
  - \$88,200 for a family of four

"Individuals who do not meet the insurance coverage criteria may still qualify for the vaccine program if the patient has financial or medical hardship. Protect yourself and others from vaccine preventable disease and take advantage of this program. Those who do not qualify for the patient assistance program may get their immunizations for a small fee."

Colon cancer is the third leading cause of cancer deaths in Nebraska. Fecal occult blood tests are the most affordable and least invasive screening tool for colorectal cancer. Results are typically reported within the same day of completing the screening.

Tuberculosis (TB) is a disease caused by mycobacterium tuberculosis germs that are spread from person to person through the air when the infected person coughs, sneezes, laughs or sings. TB usually affects the lungs, but it can also affect other parts of the body. Symptoms include feelings of sickness or weakness, weight loss, fever, and night sweats and if infection is in the lungs, coughing, chest pain, and the coughing up of blood.

A TB skin test is a simple and affordable screening tool. It does not provide a patient with a

diagnosis and a positive result does not mean you have TB, however, you may require additional follow up with your doctor.

For more information on pricing, availability or to schedule time, contact Jamey Keen, Public Health Nurse at Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department at 308-345-4223. Walk-ins are also welcome. More information is also available at [www.swhealth.ne.gov](http://www.swhealth.ne.gov) or on Facebook and Twitter. Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (1 block north of Arby's) serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Perkins and Red Willow counties.

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