



Intermountain Healthcare Partners with Public Health to Combat Hepatitis A

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, USA, December 21, 2017 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Intermountain Healthcare today announced a \$248,000 grant to the Utah Department of Health to support the ongoing response to a hepatitis A outbreak in the state. The donation will be used to purchase nearly 9,000 doses of hepatitis A vaccine that will be administered to at-risk populations.

Utah is experiencing one of the nation's largest hepatitis A outbreaks. Since May, 110 outbreak-associated cases have been reported in the state. Utah's cases are also linked to outbreaks occurring in California and Michigan. In a typical year, Utah would experience fewer than five hepatitis A cases. The majority of the cases have occurred in people who live along the Wasatch Front and use illicit drugs and/or are experiencing homelessness.

"Hepatitis A is one of the few foodborne illnesses that can be prevented through vaccination," said Salt Lake County Health Department executive director Gary Edwards. "We are working hard to keep this outbreak from spreading to the general population, and vaccination is a critical part of our efforts."

To date, public health agencies in Utah have administered more than 10,500 doses of hepatitis A vaccine to at-risk populations. However, many more individuals still need to be vaccinated and public health agencies are struggling to identify funding to purchase the additional vaccine.

"The state is extraordinarily lucky to have a partner like Intermountain Healthcare that is willing to step in and contribute to this effort," said UDOH executive director Dr. Joe Miner. "Keeping a community healthy requires a community effort, and we're very fortunate to have Intermountain Healthcare as a member of our community."

The grant from Intermountain will be coordinated with community non-profit agencies, government entities, and healthcare providers to improve the health of the uninsured and underserved.

"There is remarkable teamwork underway in Utah to address the Hepatitis A outbreak and many great organizations working to improve the health of underserved populations," said Mikelle Moore, senior vice president of Community Health at Intermountain Healthcare. "By providing preventive care to those most at risk of getting sick, before there is a problem, Intermountain can help people live the healthiest lives possible."

For more information on hepatitis A, visit health.utah.gov/hepatitisa, and for more information on Intermountain Healthcare, visit intermountainhealthcare.org.

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