SLCoHD Announces Most Prevalent Infectious Diseases of 2017
Sexually transmitted diseases continue to top the list; officials encourage STD testing

(Salt Lake County)—This week, Salt Lake County Health Department (SLCoHD) released its Infectious Diseases Morbidity Report 2017, which provides demographic data for the most commonly reported infectious diseases affecting Salt Lake County residents.

The top 5 reported diseases in Salt Lake County are:

- Chlamydia
- Gonorrhea
- Hepatitis C (both acute and chronic)
- Influenza (hospitalized cases)
- Tuberculosis (latent)

“Sexually transmitted diseases continue to be our most frequently reported diseases in the county,” said Dr. Dagmar Vitek, SLCoHD medical director. “Besides chlamydia and gonorrhea at the top of list, syphilis and new HIV infections also make the top 20. This is a big reminder that everyone who is sexually active should be tested for STDs.”

Because not every instance of a reportable disease is reported to the health department (though it is supposed to be), the number of cases reported for each infectious disease is very likely less than the actual number of cases circulating in the community.

Since the 2016 report, cryptosporidiosis and shigellosis have dropped off the top 20 list, with hepatitis A (#13) and viral and aseptic meningitis (#19 and #20, respectively) entering the top 20 for 2017.

Utah law requires that the diagnosis or identification of over 80 infectious diseases be reported to public health for ongoing surveillance and investigation. SLCoHD Epidemiology and Infectious Disease Bureaus collect reportable data from laboratories, hospitals, medical providers and outpatient clinics, then investigate each report through patient interview and/or chart abstraction and analyze the data. The health department uses the data to implement appropriate control and prevention measures; in 2017, the department investigated over 14,000 reports of disease in the county to determine the source of infection and interrupt transmission.
The full 2017 report is available at saltlakehealth.org, along with a weekly infectious disease surveillance report.

“These reports are a resource for healthcare providers, public health practitioners, community partners and the public at large,” said Vitek. “We must all work together to help control the spread of disease—and for the public, that primarily means getting tested.”