



Public Health Challenges & Successes in the Border Region

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California Conference of Local Health Officers
Fall Semiannual Conference
October 16, 2015

Imperial County Public Health Department



Objectives

- Provide an overview of the health challenges and successes in the border region
- Discuss binational collaborations of mutual benefit
- Discuss lessons learned



Overview

- Imperial County is physically & culturally closer to Baja California, Mexico, than to the rest of California
- 82% Latino/Hispanic vs. 38% statewide
- 74% of population >age 5 speaks Spanish at home



Major Health Challenges

- Imperial County has the highest rate of tuberculosis in California
 - About half of the cases are binational
- High rates of obesity and diabetes
- High rates of asthma exacerbations



Local Health Successes

- High immunization rates and few reported cases of vaccine-preventable diseases
- Low rates of deaths due to chronic lower respiratory disease and cancer
- Overall, moderately good health outcomes in terms of length of life



Local Public Health Challenges

- Addressing health issues of mutual concern in a population that straddles the border
 - Imperial County and Baja California residents cross the border daily to shop, work, visit family, and use services
 - Large portion of local work force for farm and field cultivation from Baja California
 - Investigating disease cases and outbreaks when contacts and partners reside across the border



Baja California Health Issues of Mutual Concern

- Highest rate of tuberculosis in Mexico
 - Directly observed therapy not available
- Rocky Mountain spotted fever outbreak in Mexicali
- Dengue and chikungunya virus
 - *Aedes Aegypti* mosquitoes detected on both sides of border
 - Locally acquired dengue cases in Mexicali, BC

Binational Collaborations

- Tuberculosis: Successful collaboration between Imperial, San Diego County, Baja California state health department, and Mexican non-profit organization to ensure diagnosis and treatment of binational TB cases
- Respiratory illness: Planned launch of binational Severe Acute Respiratory Infection project and data sharing
- RMSF: Serosurvey in dogs in Imperial and Baja CA



Binational Collaborations

- Imperial, California and Baja California vector control, and local and state epidemiologists meet to share information about detection, trapping, and surveillance for mosquitoes and diseases they transmit
- Collaboration will be expanded to include Quechan Indian reservation; Yuma, Arizona; and sister city of San Luis Rio Colorado in Sonora, MX



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Lessons Learned in Border Region

- Collaboration can provide assistance in investigating cases and outbreaks
 - Contacts and partners reside on both sides of border
- Need to respect and work with Mexican health system
- Be open to expertise and expansive work done in Baja CA and elsewhere in Mexico regarding disease detection and surveillance

