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OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS

St. Clair County Health Department

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TO: St. Clair County Providers,
Hospital ICPs, Emergency
Departments, ED Physicians Walk-in
Clinics LTC Facilities

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LEGIONELLOSIS AWARENESS

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and the St. Clair County Health Department are investigating three cases of Legionnaires' disease who have a common exposure history in St. Clair County. Illness onset for the first case was late October 2018 with the most recent case onset in August 2019. In general, most individuals who develop Legionnaires' disease were exposed to water containing the *Legionella* bacteria sometime during the 10 days before illness onset. *Legionella* bacteria causes two forms of legionellosis respiratory infections. Legionnaires' disease is the more severe infection that includes symptoms of fever, cough, and radiologic findings consistent with pneumonia. A milder form of legionellosis, Pontiac fever, is an influenza-like illness without pneumonia that resolves on its own. Individuals at higher risk for Legionnaires' disease include those who are older than 50 years of age; have a current or past smoking history; or have an underlying illness or condition such as chronic lung disease, kidney or liver failure, diabetes, systemic malignancies, or immune system disorders due to medications or disease. Recent travel and overnight stays can increase an individual's risk for Legionnaires' disease.

St. Clair County Health Department (SCCHD) is sharing information about these investigations with the healthcare community to facilitate clinical awareness, to enable providers to assess possible healthcare exposures, and to rule in/out Legionnaires' disease (LD) when evaluating patients presenting with pneumonia.

Key items to remember:

- Clinicians are reminded to test patients with suspected pneumonia for LD.
- Recommended diagnostic tests are culture of lower respiratory secretions (e.g., sputum, bronchoalveolar lavage) on selective media and Legionella urinary antigen test.
- Tests should be conducted concurrently and prior to antibiotic administration.
- Legionella isolates (or clinical respiratory specimens from urinary antigen positive patients) should be submitted to the MDHHS Bureau of Laboratories (guidance attached).
- Report suspected or confirmed cases of LD to SCCHD.

Call SCCHD with questions or to report suspect or confirmed cases (810) 987-5300 during regular business hours. Refer to the "After Hours Emergency Contact List" or www.scchealth.co for after-hours contact.