



Catherine E. Heigel, Director

*Promoting and protecting the health of the public and the environment*

July 15, 2015

Judy Monroe, MD

Deputy Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Director, Office for State, Tribal, Local, and Territorial Support (OSTLTS)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Department of Health and Human Services

Rima Khabbaz, MD

Deputy Director, Infectious Diseases

Director, Office of Infectious Diseases (OID)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Department of Health and Human Services

Re: Request for Assistance

Dear Drs. Monroe and Khabbaz:

Thank you for talking with the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (“DHEC”) regarding ways that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) can collaborate with DHEC to improve its public health efforts. As we discussed, DHEC is requesting that the CDC provide assistance in two areas.

First, DHEC has been investigating an *E. coli* outbreak at the Learning Vine, an area daycare facility in Greenwood County. This outbreak focused on the daycare facility, and involved children, their family members, and teachers. The index case is an employee of the daycare.

DHEC has nearly completed its investigation of this recent event and believes it is now appropriate to solicit the CDC’s assistance in reviewing the event in its entirety and assist DHEC in identifying any measures that may be taken to assist DHEC acute disease epidemiology program staff in responding to such events in the future. The goal of this review is to provide a written, after-action report, addressing remedial measures, to the extent any are recommended or necessary, with the goal of enhancing DHEC’s response preparedness for events that may occur in the future.

Second, since January 1, 2014, DHEC’s Division of Acute Disease Epidemiology and regional epidemiological staff have received and reviewed approximately 73,488 reports as per the South Carolina List of Reportable Conditions. Also during this same time period, DHEC has investigated more than 558 infectious disease outbreaks. In order to improve its performance in DHEC’s infectious disease programs, including investigations, we request the CDC’s assistance in conducting a comprehensive review of those programs. We are interested in an analysis focusing on identifying potential gaps in our investigative processes, review of protocols and practices, and assessing staffing and training needs. DHEC is fully vested in this comprehensive review to assist in identifying areas in which we can improve our public health functions and outcomes, implement

recommendations of the CDC's team, and achieve best practices across DHEC's infectious disease programs.

We look forward to working with the CDC on these important public health efforts. It is DHEC's intention to make the CDC's conclusions and recommendations public because the agency's role in protecting public health is so vital.

Sincerely,



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Catherine E. Heigel, Director



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Cheryl H. Bullard, Deputy General Counsel