Thanks to a mild winter mosquito activity is already at higher than normal levels.

As a result, nearly 400 healthcare professionals, environmental specialists, state and local community leaders, emergency managers, school officials and numerous service organizations from across the state gathered at the Lexington Center for the 2017 Zika Summit.

The group gathered to discuss the current state of the Zika virus threat and determine what strategies and policies will best mitigate the threat.

“It’s important that public health leaders gather to share strategies, compile feedback from our local communities and learn more about global response and communications efforts surrounding the Zika virus,” said CHFS Secretary Vickie Yates Brown Glisson, who provided an overview of what the state is doing to prepare for a possible Zika outbreak.

Several stations focused on various topics related to Zika prevention for summit attendees in the display area where subject matter experts provided information on: preventing travel-related transmission; Kentucky’s mosquito population; public mosquito control efforts; addressing standing water issues and removing mosquito breeding grounds around the home; and personal protective measures like insect repellent and appropriate clothing. The event also introduced “Marty Mosquito,” public health’s mascot for Zika prevention and awareness.

Zika has been identified by the World Health Organization as an international public health threat; ongoing local transmission is occurring in more than 60 countries. No locally transmitted cases of Zika virus have been reported in Kentucky. Zika virus is not known to be circulating in the mosquito population in Kentucky currently.

To date, 37 cases of Zika virus have been reported in Kentuckians with a travel exposure and/or sexual exposure to someone who traveled to a Zika-affected area.

There is no vaccine to prevent infection and no specific antiviral treatment for Zika. The most common symptoms of Zika are fever, rash, joint pain, and red/burning eyes.

Recent evidence reveals that Zika can cause microcephaly and other fetal birth defects in infants born to women who are infected during pregnancy.
Want to lower stress? Offer support to your coworkers

**Anya Armes Weber**

Here is a tip for reducing work stress that costs only a little bit of effort and time.

A recent study in “Psychosomatic Medicine: Journal of Biobehavioral Medicine,” says that one remedy to workplace stress could be supporting our colleagues more.

The study found that those who offer verbal encouragement to coworkers had lower levels of stress, and as a bonus, higher job satisfaction.

Researchers found that giving support was even more beneficial to workers receiving it.

Need more reasons to encourage others at work?

**It can make you healthier.** Multiple studies show that those who give of themselves are healthier physically and mentally and may live longer than those who don’t give.

**The encouragement comes back to you.** When you support coworkers, they are more likely to support you, too.

You’ll build team spirit and a calmer work environment.

**You will minimize your stressors.** When you give of yourself and have an investment in others’ success, you will be less likely to think about your own problems.

**You’re not discounting your own abilities by helping someone else build up theirs.** So if you see a colleague in need of advice and encouragement, give it to them, and feel your stress level diminish.

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**Make meetings healthier by walking**

Meetings are a necessity of work life, but they can be a real grind to sit through time after time. Lolly Daskal, founder of consulting firm Lead from Within, recommends you can boost your creativity and the effectiveness of meetings by taking them outside – for a walk.

**The average American sits an average of 9.3 hours a day – that’s even longer than we sleep!** So meetings on the move can add to your step count for the day.

Follow these tips for a successful walking meeting.

**Keep it small.** A walking meeting for 10 people just would not work. Walking is perfect for one-on-one meetings or for groups of up to three or four.

**Leave your phone at your desk.** Walking meetings have been found to be better for communication between coworkers. You can better avoid distractions by keeping your smartphone in your pocket to focus on the topic at hand.

**Agree to follow up.** Designate one walker to draft minutes of your meeting, and others can add to or change them. Just like any other meeting, you should have next steps and set a time to meet again.

**Include managers.** Staff – including managers – may feel more relaxed during a walking meeting, making it easier to get to the heart of a matter.

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We Want to Hear From You.

Readers of the Focus are encouraged to give feedback on each issue, from the articles they see to story ideas taking place in their offices. CHFS employees are encouraged to share agency news, recipes or any other material for a future issue of the Focus. Send all information and ideas to Elden May at elden.may@ky.gov.
The Newsletter of CHFS

If you or someone you love is dealing with a difficult situation, your Kentucky Employees' Health Plan offers resources to help. Whether it’s substance abuse, depression, or you just need a little extra support. Call the 24/7 resource center at 1-855-873-4931.

When you need a helping hand
Our behavioral health programs are here for you.

DID YOU KNOW?
Barbara Fox

Jefferson Memorial Forest, located in southwest Louisville, is the largest municipal urban forest in the entire United States?

The 6,500 acre woodland forest was established as a tribute to Kentucky’s veterans and designed as a National Audubon Society wildlife refuge. Referred to as JMF, it is located just 15 miles south of downtown Louisville.

The forest consists of steep slopes covered with mature, second growth hardwood trees. The forest spans nearly 10 miles from east to west and has over 35 miles of hiking trails, a fishing lake, outdoor recreational facilities, a campground and a conference center.

The Welcome Center offers visitors information, trail maps, hiking and fishing supplies, nature-related books and souvenirs.

The best part of visiting JMF? It is completely free of charge to visit.

Taking superior photos of office stories easier than you think

Here at CHFS Communications, our team post to social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc) seven days a week. We would love your photos and submissions to include in the Cabinet’s social media and monthly newsletter to allow the entire Commonwealth and beyond to know the great things being done in your community.

Here are a few tips to make it more efficient to have your story included.

In social media, an image is essential to viewer engagement.

Smart phones take amazing photos but knowing the type of photo to take will make your message stand out.

If you are submitting a photo of an individual, make sure the area is lit without shadows. Move your subject to a window if possible and allow the natural light to do the work.

Typically, from the waist up, shot vertically is more desirable unless what they are being recognized for requires more of them to be included.

Horizontal shots work well when the person is at work, such as their desk.

It is better to shoot images a bit wider than normal. In group shots, always make sure you can see everyone. If they can’t see you, then they won’t be in the image. Group shots taken outside should be done in the shade, like along a building wall to prevent hard shadows and squinting.

Action photos are great to submit such as at a community event that your office is participating in.

When sending images to us, please send the largest file size possible but remember to keep it under 10mb, the limit allowed through the Cabinet’s email server. That will allow us to crop with no image loss.

If you would like your photos critiqued or have questions, you may send them to our media specialist Dan Chesser (dan.chesser@ky.gov). We want to hear from you and feature your office success stories.
Coleman, Wilkerson named Employees of the Month

Marydale Coleman and Melissa Wilkerson are the CHFS Employees of the Month for June. Coleman is a nurse inspector/consultant for the Department for Medicaid Services (DMS).

According to her nominator, Judy Baker, a manager of the Managed Care Quality and Outcomes Branch in DMS, Coleman is a dedicated employee who seeks out additional professional development opportunities and assists other coworkers.

“Marydale is constantly trying to help the other nurses learn more computer skills and sharing knowledge with them on Excel and Power Point,” wrote Baker in Coleman’s nomination. “She volunteers to help all branches within our division, takes on extra training, and volunteers to do educational seminars for groups within the state.”

Wilkerson, who is a registered nurse, works at the Kentucky Correctional Psychiatric Complex (KCPC). Her nominator, Sara Bennett, describes her co-worker as a go-to employee.

“Melissa is hard-working, dedicated, and dependable at all times,” wrote Bennett. “She is the first nurse I think of when there are questions or difficulties on the unit. She goes above and beyond her job description and is very pleasant to work with.”

If you know an employee you would like to nominate for Employee of the Month, please submit the nomination form electronically to www.goo.gl/forms/1ifD0x4FTc.

Oral Health Summit important step in creating new strategic plan

The Department for Public Health held an oral health summit meeting in Lexington on May 31-June 1.

The objective of the stakeholder meeting was to discuss ideas that can be used in formulating a new strategic plan for Kentucky’s oral health. The last such plan was implemented in 2006.

The meeting attracted more than 130 participants, including dentists, health providers, educators and members of the general public.

Julie Watts McKee, State Dental Director, is hoping to take the information collected at the meeting and craft a new strategic plan for review by late 2017.

Time running out for LivingWell info; Farmers Market returns

Time is running out for employees to complete the LivingWell Promise as part of the Kentucky Employees Health Plan.

July 1 is the deadline to complete the Go365 Health Assessment or Go365 Biometric Screening.

First Onsite Clinics/LivingWell Health Clinics offer Biometric Screenings. For more information on locations, hours and to schedule an appointment, please visit https://livingwell.ky.gov/Pages/HealthClinics.aspx.

If you have questions, please email Shellie.Wingate@ky.gov.

The CHFS Farmers Market will be returning to the CHR Building in Frankfort for the third consecutive year. This year the market will be set up on Wednesdays from June 14 to July 26 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Weight Watchers @ Work – still meets every Tuesday at 11:30 a.m. Join at any time! Meetings are held in CHFS 4th Floor, 4C Conference Room. Questions? Email BethA.Morris@ky.gov.