



REPORTABLE DISEASE SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM (RDSS)

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State Web Site:

<http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/epi/reportablediseases.htm>

National Web Site:

<http://wwwn.cdc.gov/nndss/>

Sources of Information for the Database

Information in the system is based on demographic, clinical, laboratory, and risk factor information on each occurrence of any one of sixty-eight reportable diseases. The data are taken from the EPID 200 Reportable Disease Form, the Kentucky-National Electronic Disease Surveillance System (K-NEDSS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) disease supplemental forms, and from clinical laboratory reports. Disease reporting is a required activity by health care providers, hospitals, clinics, and laboratories and is mandated and regulated by the State of Kentucky through the Kentucky Disease Surveillance Administrative Regulation 902 KAR 2:020, Disease Surveillance. This activity is supported by a combination of federal and state funds.

Description of the Data Collected

The Reportable Disease Surveillance System collects data on demographics, clinical symptoms, risk factors, and outbreak associations. Demographic data collected include gender, age, race, ethnicity, and place of residence. Information from supplemental forms for some diseases is also entered into the system. This information is sent from hospitals, clinics, local health departments, private practice physicians, and commercial laboratories electronically through a web-based system (K-NEDSS) Disease Surveillance Module as well as by mail or by fax.

Strengths of the Data

The major strength of this data comes from the fact that certain diseases are required, by law, to be reported to the Department for Public Health. However, the level of compliance in the state of Kentucky varies widely depending on the disease.

Specific Uses of Information

- Monitor disease trends in the state
- Provide data to create and evaluate prevention and treatment initiatives
- Provide data to CDC for national reportable disease statistics
- Provide data for grant applications related to reportable diseases in Kentucky
- To monitor and evaluate geographic and or spatial characteristics of disease
- To monitor and evaluate outbreaks of disease

System Evaluation

The data collection is routinely monitored utilizing quality control standards developed by CDC. Yearly checks are done before the CDC data files are closed.

Data Limitations

- Data on the EPID200 form and K-NEDSS are often incomplete.
- Follow-up is difficult and may not result in obtaining the needed information.
- Data are often sent to the local health department or state, weeks and sometimes months after the reportable event. This makes follow-up even more difficult.
- Data are not readily available to all. Data must be transferred to another program such as Epi-Info. Gleaning the data wanted can be cumbersome and is usually done by reportable disease employees. It is then sent out electronically to the requestor.
- Data collection is dependent on health care providers reporting the data to the state.

Data Set Availability

The fully identified data set is not available to the public. Portions of the data set can be shared and identified data can be made available to research organizations providing that the requestor has signed a confidentiality/security agreement with the Department for Public Health. Occasionally approval by the Institutional Review Board is necessary. Most data will be released as an Excel file although other formats may be available.

Data Release Policy

Any data released to the public will be de-identified data. Data requests are taken by phone and by e-mail.

Data Publications

The Reportable Disease Program produces a yearly statewide summary. Yearly summaries can be found on the Data Warehouse web site <http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/surv.htm>.

Suggested Data Citation

Kentucky Department for Public Health (KDPH) Reportable Disease File. Frankfort, Kentucky. Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Department for Public Health [data year].

Contributing Author

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