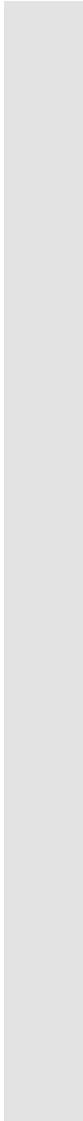


Social Media & Rumor Control

Chera Sevcik, M.S.

CHS Administrator

Faribault & Martin Counties CHB



Situation 1: The Practice Run

The CDC Comes to Town?



Lori Anderson Kamolz



Dec 13, 2018 at 4:40 PM •

Have any other Fairmont high school parents had their child tell them they've seen the CDC at the school?



Nicole Worlds

18 Comments



Like



Comment

The CDC comes to town?

- 12/11/18 - Received notice from MDH regarding increase of Norovirus cases in Martin County Schools
- 4:45PM - 12/13/18 – CHS Administrator notified of FB post regarding CDC investigating disease outbreak at school
- 4:50PM – 12/13/18 – CHS Administrator contacted MDH Epidemiologist to confirm/deny reports of MDH/CDC investigating known Norovirus outbreak
- By 7:00PM – Social media was buzzing....
 - Reports of CDC investigating locker room and gymnasium
 - Reports teachers told students CDC was investigating because of so many sick kids
 - School food service was to blame for so many sick kids

The CDC comes to town?

- 7-9PM – CHB Staff:
 - Contacted school nurse and school administration to learn the details:
 - School nurse reported increased absences to MDH per standard reporting process
 - School already seeing decreased absenteeism
 - School confirmed NO visit to school by CDC or MDH
 - School shared that an outside vendor company was demonstrating a UV sanitization product made for large spaces (gyms and locker rooms) during the school day

The CDC comes to town?

- 9PM – CHS Administrator and PIO crafted social media post to respond to rumors
- Linked to CDC Norovirus information directly in post
- Shared the post in a direct message with all agency staff on friend list and asked them to share



Community Health Services in Faribault & Martin Counties

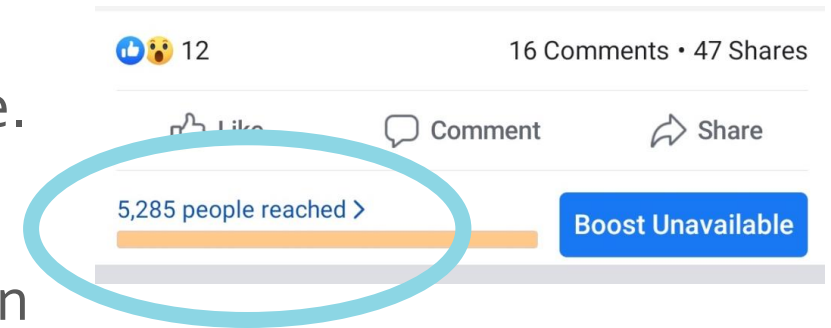
Dec 13, 2018 at 9:57 PM • 🌐

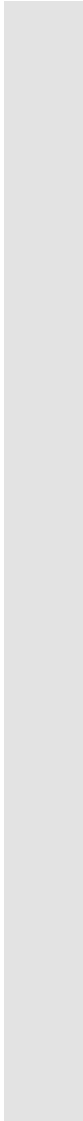
Community Health Services of Faribault & Martin Counties received notice from the Minnesota Department of Health on Tuesday, December 11, 2018 that they were investigating a possible norovirus outbreak at the Fairmont High School and Martin Luther High School in Northrop. We can confirm that neither the Minnesota Department of Health, nor the Centers for Disease Control have been on site to investigate. However, the Minnesota Department of Health continues to monitor the number of absences due to illness through normal surveillance. We did learn that the school had an outside company vendor demonstrating a sanitization product in the locker rooms and gymnasium. We have no evidence that the current illness is related to school food service.

Norovirus is a virus that causes nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea and stomach pain. Norovirus

Lessons Learned

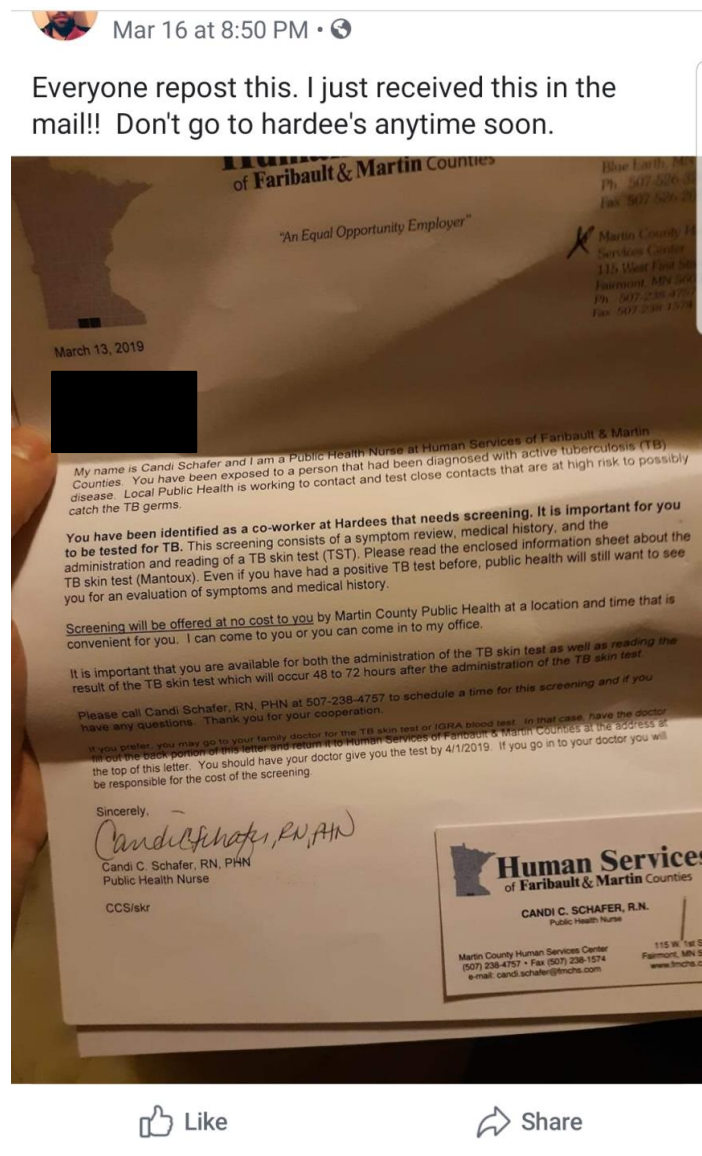
- Social media was the fastest way to get accurate information out and dispel rumors. Within 24 hours, post had been shared 47 times, had 16 comments, often with tags of other people, and had reached 5,285 people.
- There was an issue with sharing the post – as people shared, the written content was not reposting, only the norovirus link, in future would post link to norovirus information as first comment in post





Situation 2: The Main Event

Active TB Spreading At Restaurant



👍 🗨️ 😬 38

Active TB Spreading At Restaurant

- Saturday, 3/16/19 8:50PM – An individual who is part of active TB disease contact investigation posts contact letter to social media in a **public post** asking people to share
- Sunday, 3/17/19 8:30AM – Staff become alerted to the post, which has gone viral overnight, triggering alarm among patrons of food establishment
- 3/17/19 – 10:30 AM – Call between staff, CHS Administrator, Agency PH PIO, South Central Health Care Coalition, MDH PHEP Consultant and MDH Regional Epidemiologist
- 3/17/19 – 4:09PM – Agency PIO, CHS Manager and Coalition PIO developed official statement and posted to Community Health Facebook page
- Used lessons learned from 'practice run' when posting

Active TB Spreading At Restaurant

- Shared the post in a direct message with all agency staff and local residents on CHS Administrator friend list asking them to:
 - Share post to their wall,
 - Share post on any friends FB posts discussing the situation
- CHS Administrator took ICS role of spokesperson and managed CH Facebook Page direct messages and monitored comments throughout the evening.



Community Health Services in Faribault & Martin Counties

Mar 17 at 4:09 PM •

STATEMENT REGARDING TB SITUATION- PLEASE SHARE!

Community Health Services of Faribault and Martin Counties is currently monitoring and following up on an active case of Tuberculosis (TB) in our area. TB is a disease caused by a bacterium called *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* that usually attacks the lungs, but it can affect other parts of the body inc... [See More](#)

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Active TB Spreading At Restaurant

- 3/17/19 – 9PM - Regional TV Station (KEYC) picked up on CHS FB Page Post and shared post to their FB page
- 3/18/19 – 9 AM – Call from local newspaper requesting interview – scheduled interview at 2PM.
- 3/18/19 – 2nd FB post – sharable infographic developed: What you should know about TB



Active TB Spreading At Restaurant

- 3/18/19 – 3/20/19
- Received multiple calls/messages from general public regarding TB risk exposure from eating at establishment
- Worked with food establishment management and corporate office to do 'damage control' – providing information for use by establishment / crafting response from restaurant
- Food establishment received multiple threatening calls
- 2nd FB post – sharable infographic developed: What you should know about TB

**Community Health Services in
Faribault & Martin Counties**

Mar 18 at 4:12 PM • 

What You Should Know About Tuberculosis (TB)

TB is caused by a bacteria that spreads through the air when someone with active TB in their lungs coughs, sings, sneezes, or talks and persons close to them breathe in the same air.

TB is not spread through incidental contact, or through food.

There is no risk to the general public. It normally takes prolonged contact with an infectious person over a period of time for TB to spread to another person.

The likelihood of transmission of TB depends on the person's degree of infectiousness and the duration and intensity of exposure to others. Transmission is most likely when the sick person is highly infectious or when the exposure is significant or occurs in a poorly ventilated area.

Persons under the age of 5 and all persons with weakened immune systems (e.g., HIV positive, immunosuppression, etc.) are at higher risk for becoming infected with latent (inactive) TB infection and developing active TB disease.

Contact investigations are routine and involve identifying persons and places of exposure (e.g., household, work place, school, congregate settings, etc.).

Contact investigations are conducted by local public health departments (with guidance from state and national guidelines).

People who are identified as close contacts are evaluated for symptoms of TB and offered treatment with TB antibiotics if indicated.

Such investigations are not unusual. It is standard public health practice to conduct such investigations whenever a potentially infectious case of TB is reported to public health.



 10

2 Comments • 38 Shares

 Like Comment Share

Lessons Learned

- As PH sees more and more TB investigations, we need to be proactive in sharing information.
- Do not include location of where exposure may have occurred in contact investigation letters.
- Understand that in 2019, all information is easily shared via social media.
- Utilize partners to help with communication efforts.
- Get to a social media PIO training- this saved us!
- Social media was an excellent way to respond to rumors – information was shared fast (results within 24 hours) →

parts of the body inc... [See More](#)

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

👍😮❤️ 39

70 Comments • 596 Shares

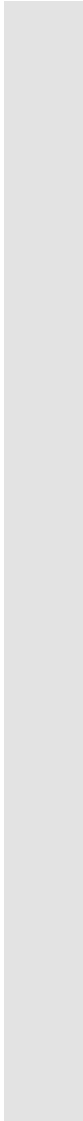
👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share

36,468 people reached >

Boost Post



Thank you! Any questions?

Find us on Facebook: Community Health Services in Faribault
& Martin Counties 😊