In June 2011, Santa Barbara County Public Health Dept. Disease Control Program launched efforts to enroll local providers in the CalREDIE Provider Internet Portal. To date, we have enrolled over 150 provider groups and individuals who are successfully using the portal to report communicable diseases. The CalREDIE Provider Portal allows healthcare providers to electronically submit Confidential Morbidity Reports directly to the health department via HTTPS secure, web-based interface. California law (CCR, title 17, Section 2500) mandates providers to report diseases and conditions within specified timeframes. Because timely communicable disease reporting ensures the public’s health and safety of our community and enables prompt public health response, effective January 2014, communicable disease reporting via the CalREDIE Provider Portal will be required. If you are interested in learning more about mandated communicable diseases and enrollment in the CalREDIE Provider Portal, please visit our website at www.sbcphd.org/dcp.

Health Care Reform provisions related to employers have been postponed one year, however requirements for individuals to obtain health care remain effective beginning January 1, 2014. We urge you to become informed and inform your patients. It is estimated that approximately 30,000 to 40,000 residents will become Medi-Cal eligible and another 40,000 will be eligible for a Covered California health care plan with a subsidy. There are potential benefits to many in our community. In preparation for the January requirements, the following steps have been taken:

♦ County agencies are preparing to assist residents begin pre-enrollment application assistance beginning in October 2013.

♦ Covered California, the new health insurance exchange, has selected providers for our three county regions of Ventura, San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties (Blue Shield, Anthem, Kaiser Permanente, and Ventura County Health Plan).

♦ Education and outreach activities have begun to inform residents and encourage those who are currently eligible for Medi-Cal to apply now.

Test of Infectious Disease Emergency Response Plan

The Public Health Department and its healthcare partners will test their response to a widespread foodborne outbreak on November 21st as part of the annual Statewide Medical and Health Exercise. This year’s scenario will give the health department and their disaster health care partners (including outpatient providers, hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, home care, dialysis providers, EMS, and others) the opportunity to practice large scale disease investigation, disease reporting, and patient surge in response to a foodborne outbreak. Training for the exercise and presentations focusing on local and state actions during an outbreak will take place in Santa Maria on October 22 and Santa Barbara on October 24. For more information call Jan Koegler at 805-681-4913 or jan.koegler@sbcphd.org.
Each year, the Maternal Child and Adolescent Health (MCAH) Program submits an Annual Report on the state of Santa Barbara County’s (SBC) women and children, health disparities and details of how the MCAH scope of work has been met. Please see: www.sbcphd.org/MCAH. In addition, specific data relating to the MCAH Field Nursing Program, the referral process, and community collaborative achievements are on this site.

The majority of SBC residents live in the cities of Santa Maria (23.5%), Santa Barbara (20.9%) and Lompoc (10.0%). The North (Santa Maria/Guadalupe) and Central (Lompoc/Valley) regions of the County have greater percentages of families that are young, Hispanic, and Spanish speaking. According to census 2010 data, 79.4% of Santa Maria City and 96.2% of Guadalupe residents identified as Hispanic. Compared to South County, the North and Central regions have higher rates of poverty, teen births, lack of health insurance and unemployment.

In 2011, the majority of births in Santa Barbara County were to Hispanic women (66.5% - 3858/5803). Births to non-Hispanic white women totaled 27.6% (1599/5803). In the North, 82.7% (2289/2767) of the total births were to women of Hispanic ethnicity. That year, 61.6% of county-wide births were to women on Medi-Cal. Further, 79.4% of all births in the North were to Medi-Cal recipients. Of total births, 9.6% - (557/5803) were to teen mothers (defined as age of mother under 20). The percentage of births to teens in the North region was higher than the rest of the county. Births to teenage mothers comprised 13.4% (516/3,858) of all Hispanic births county-wide.

Also in 2011, 73.3% of mothers received prenatal care in the first trimester in SBC compared to 83.5% for California. Eighty-six percent of non-Hispanic white women received prenatal care in the first trimester vs. 67.4% of Hispanic women. Santa Barbara County had a lower percentage of low and very low birth weight births as well as percentage of preterm births compared to the State. Our Hispanic population had a lower percentage of very low birth weight when compared to the white population in Santa Barbara County as well as the State. The percentage of births to mothers with an education level below GED in the North was 51.5% (1424/2767) as compared to 18.4% (362/1964) in the South. The MCAH program field nursing unit (FNU) focuses its services to these low-income pregnant and parenting mothers who experience barriers to care.