

The Contagion Courier

AUGUST 2026



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THIS QUARTER

NEW ACADEMIC YEAR

New fellows, new services, new events—and plenty of change under the hood at NIDS itself: new leadership, and a Society being rebuilt to be more useful to you. Our Q3 feature on mass gathering medicine in Nebraska looks at surveillance, communication, and the people who keep both running.

LETTER

From the President's Desk

KARI NEEMANN, MD, PHD OUTGOING PRESIDENT, NEBRASKA INFECTIOUS DISEASES SOCIETY

Dear NIDS Members,

As my term as President of the Nebraska Infectious Diseases Society comes to a close, I want to take a moment to thank all of you for your support, participation, and engagement with NIDS over the past year.

It has been rewarding to see the Society continue to grow and strengthen. Over the past year, we have expanded our educational and professional activities, including our **Ask the Expert series and joint NIDS-ASAP Annual Meeting**, while also strengthening the infrastructure of the Society through updates to our governance, finances, communications, and website. Importantly, NIDS has also continued to develop its role as a voice for the infectious diseases community, providing comments and position statements on issues affecting our field and the health of the communities we serve.

"NIDS has also continued to develop its role as a voice for the infectious diseases community"

As I transition to the role of Past-President, I am very pleased to welcome **Dr. Clayton Mowrer as**

our new NIDS President. I look forward to supporting Clayton and the new Governance Board as they continue to move the Society forward.

The continued success of NIDS ultimately depends on the involvement of its members. I encourage each of you to **renew your membership, participate in our educational activities, and consider becoming involved with one of our committees.** Whether through education, programming, communications, advocacy, or Society leadership, there are many ways to contribute. Broad participation helps ensure that NIDS represents the diverse infectious diseases community across Nebraska and strengthens our ability to advocate for our profession, our patients, and our communities.

It has been a privilege to serve as your President. Thank you for the opportunity and for everything you do to support NIDS. I look forward to remaining involved as Past-President and to seeing where the Society goes next.

Best,

Kari Neemann, MD, PhD
President, Nebraska Infectious Diseases Society

UPCOMING EVENTS

What's Brewing

[AUG]

[28]

[0830 CT]

CONFERENCE

2026 Annual Conference

NIDS and Nebraska ASAP co-sponsored conference

[REGISTER →](#)

[SEPT]

[21]

[1700 CT]

SEMINAR

RACHEL WERNER CENTER FOR HEALTH SCIENCES EDUCATION

A Dialogue with Former FDA Commissioner, Dr Margaret Hamburg

Hosted by Creighton University

School of Medicine and Institute for Population Health - Health Policy Seminary Series

1700-1800: Fireside chat and reception

1800-1900: Reception

Registration not necessary (unless CME credit desired). Just show up and be ready for an incredible discussion!

[RSVP →](#)

[OCT]

[20]

[1600-2000 ET]

ADVOCACY

MARRIOT MARQUIS, WASHINGTON, D.C.

IDWeek Advocacy Lab

Hosted by IDSA and HIVMA

Event during ID Week in Washington, D.C.

The session will provide practical training on communicating ID/HIV policy priorities, meeting with lawmakers and congressional staff, developing relationships with congressional offices, and using media to support advocacy efforts.

Space is limited, and a separate registration fee applies. **Students and residents may be eligible for a free sponsored ticket** by contacting the IDSA Advocacy team at advocacy@idsociety.org. Those unable to attend IDWeek can also complete IDSA and HIVMA's five-module **Become an ID/HIV Advocate Learning Series** through the IDSA Academy.

REGISTER →

[OCT]

[27]

[1200-1300 CT]

ASK THE EXPERT

Viral Hepatitis

Laura Martindale and Andy Dillehay
Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

Additional details and registration coming soon.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

COURIER / AUG-2026

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Notices & Nudges



DEADLINE

Annual dues are due

With the start of the new academic year, it is time for renewal of annual dues. Visit idnebraska.org and click "Become a Member."



CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Write or serve as guest editor for the Courier

Please contact us at newsletter@neidsociety.org



POLICY / ADVOCACY

Position Statement on Executive Order Addressing Vaccine Schedule Changes

Click [here](#) to read the position statement released by NIDS, in collaboration with NEAAP, NEACP, MOMS, and Nebraska Immunization Task Force.



VOLUNTEER / RECRUITING

Committee seats open

Please consider signing up for a committee, including nominating yourself or others for Committee Chairs. You can read more below about each committee (including newly proposed committees that still have yet to be voted on by the Society members) and sign up [here](#).



SURVEY

Help Us Improve!

We want to hear from you about future newsletters! Float ideas, brag about you or your colleagues, or volunteer to help. [Take the survey →](#)

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Committee Roundup

Advocacy & Outreach (proposed)

CHAIR: KARI NEEMANN, MD, PHD

Help with NIDS public outreach, external education, Society position statements, and advocacy related to public health and infectious diseases.

Finance Committee

CHAIR: JENNIFER ZWIENER, PHARMD, BCPS

Help oversee the Society's budget, financial records, assets, and financial reporting.

Nominating Committee

CHAIR: VACANT

Help identify candidates for NIDS leadership positions and annually review the Society's Constitution and Bylaws.

Education Committee (proposed)

CHAIR: VACANT

Help oversee the Annual Meeting Poster and Abstract Session and develop additional educational opportunities for members and learners.

Communications

CHAIR: CLAYTON MOWRER, DO, MBA, MPH

Help develop member communications and keep NIDS members informed about Society activities, educational opportunities, and other initiatives. Includes maintenance of the website and distribution of newsletter.

Program / Annual Meeting

CHAIR: JENNA PREUSKER, PHARMD; JENNIFER ZWIENER, PHARMD, BCPS

Help plan and organize the annual NIDS meeting, including program development, speakers, and meeting logistics.

Membership Committee

CHAIR: NICOLAS CORTES-PENFIELD, MD, FACP, FIDSA

Establish processes to screen and approve applicants for membership and is chaired by the Secretary of the Society. Obtain annual survey of Society members about their interest in committee and/or taskforce participation. Assist in assigning committee roles, except for that of a committee chair.

QUARTERLY FEATURE



Mass Gathering Medicine

EDITOR'S NOTE

With the World Cup having taken place this year in the US (and fairly close by, with one of the host cities being KC), we invited our epidemiology colleagues in the Division of Public Health at Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services to write about how we prepared at the state level.

Their account is an important reminder that mass gathering (or any) preparedness is mostly ordinary work done well in advance: syndromic feeds onboarded, dashboards monitored, cross-institutional collaborations, and standing check-ins with neighboring jurisdictions so an unusual signal in one state reaches the others quickly.

That groundwork is what makes everything else possible, and it only becomes more critical as we consider disease surveillance in Nebraska for whatever comes next.

CLAYTON MOWRER, DO, MBA, MPH · EDITOR IN CHIEF

GUEST ARTICLE

Nebraska syndromic surveillance and the NCAA College World Series and FIFA World Cup™ 2026

Strengthening public health surveillance during high-traffic events

Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health

Nebraska's participation in NSSP

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Division of Public Health takes part in the CDC's National Syndromic Surveillance Program (NSSP), which uses the Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community-based Epidemics (ESSENCE) platform to track early signs of potential health issues across our communities. DHHS receives automatic, secure HL7 syndromic surveillance messages from healthcare facilities in near real time through the CDC's Public Health Information Network Messaging System (PHINMS).

ESSENCE dashboard updates

The Syndromic Surveillance Program maintains an ESSENCE dashboard that tracks trends across all emergency department and urgent care visits using de-identified data. Some facilities additionally send de-identified data on inpatient admissions and outpatient visits. These submissions help ensure timely awareness of health activity statewide and at the local level.

Reducing data lag

We monitor data submissions daily to reduce reporting delays. Keeping the data current helps us spot unusual activity faster and improves decision-making during public health events.

Monitoring priority health concerns

Our team actively monitors key health issues such as respiratory illnesses, gastrointestinal illnesses, heat- and cold-related illness, and other infections and syndromes that may indicate shifting trends or early signs of an outbreak or public health emergency.

Early detection and rapid notification

If we identify an unexpected increase in cases, or patterns that may require action, we quickly notify local and state partners. This ensures that public health teams can investigate promptly and take the steps needed to protect their communities.

Strengthening collaboration

We continue to work closely with local health departments, healthcare providers, and other Region 7 (NE / IA / MO / KS) and national epidemiologists to maintain strong

communication and improve the timeliness and quality of the data we receive. DHHS staff have taken part in twice-weekly check-ins with jurisdictions across the United States hosting teams and games, for additional awareness of syndromic surveillance observations surrounding these large-scale events.

Commitment to community health

Our ongoing surveillance efforts play an important role in detecting health trends early and supporting a proactive public health response across Nebraska.

RESOURCES

1. [Information on Syndromic Surveillance](#)
2. [Syndromic Surveillance FAQs](#)
3. [Rules and regulations \(Neb. Rev. Stat. 71-552\)](#)
4. [SSEDON HL7 2.5.1 Implementation Guide v2.06](#)
5. [SSEDON DX Basics](#)
6. [CDC messaging guide — ED, urgent care, inpatient and ambulatory settings](#)

Facilities interested in participating are encouraged to complete the onboarding form or email DHHS.epi@nebraska.gov. After implementation, contact DHHS.SSEDONHelpdesk@nebraska.gov.

Want to write for the Courier?

Please contact us at newsletter@neidsociety.org