



Spotlight on Health and Human Services

Governor Sandoval each week recognizes exceptional achievements, successful programs and initiatives, and a standard of excellence in the work that is being done every day in state government in Nevada. This week, Governor Sandoval applauds the outstanding efforts of the Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health and the Division of Health Sciences at the University of Nevada, Reno in helping to eliminate Nevada's reliance on out-of-state medical service providers, and improving and expanding newborn screening diagnostic and medical follow-up services within the Silver State.

The Nevada Newborn Screening Program improves the lives of Nevada's children and their families by overseeing statewide efforts to detect serious, sometimes fatal conditions and diseases present in newborn infants. It is vital that newborn infants be screened for such conditions at birth, because many disorders that lead to adverse physical and mental conditions and death may be difficult to detect. The cost of delaying early detection and treatment of these conditions can be immense, both in terms of human suffering as well as financial costs. The Nevada Newborn Screening Program screens infants for over 30 conditions, including metabolic disorders, endocrinal disorders, hematological disorders, and cystic fibrosis.

In the past, Nevada relied on out-of-state providers to provide newborn screening services. As a direct result of the passage of Senate Bill 131, which Governor Sandoval signed into law during the 76th Legislative Session, priority for newborn screening laboratory services was afforded to in-state laboratories, including the Nevada State Public Health Laboratory, dramatically reducing the state's reliance on out-of-state providers. A collaborative was developed between the Division of Public and Behavioral Health, the Nevada State Public Health Laboratory, and the Division of Health Sciences at the University of Nevada to begin the process of bringing all newborn screening activities into Nevada. These critical efforts to bring newborn screening services into Nevada were made possible largely due to the leadership of Dr. Trudy Larson, Department Director for the University's School of Community Health Sciences, Stephanie Vanhooser, Administrative Director of the Nevada State Lab, and Christine Mackie, Bureau Chief for the Division of Public and Behavioral Health.

The critical shift in providing in-state newborn screening services will benefit the State, not only in terms of enhanced medical care and disease prevention, but also in terms of economic diversity and future growth of a medical sub-specialist workforce for Nevada. Because Nevada now conducts its own screening services, in-state diagnostic and medical follow-up services will expand Nevada's workforce in these areas, which will lead to enhanced detection services to Nevadans regardless of age.

Governor Sandoval is proud to shine the spotlight on the Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health, as well as the many community partners who are working with the division to create a healthier and safer Nevada, and to promote a robust and vibrant medical specialist workforce that will further diversify and strengthen Nevada's economy for years to come.

Message from the Office of the Governor - 2014

This communication, including any attachments, may contain confidential information and is intended only for the individual or entity to which it is addressed. Any review, dissemination or copying of this communication by anyone other than the intended recipient is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender by reply e-mail and delete all copies of the original message.