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DOH continues response to Maui wildfires – Aug. 31, 2023 update

HONOLULU – Through its Maui District Health Office and local partners, the Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) continues to prioritize listening to the community to better understand its needs, value and respect different cultural backgrounds, and continue to build trust with Maui residents and communities impacted by the August 2023 wildfires.

DOH believes that resiliency is through community, and DOH seeks to be a partner and support the community in a manner in which it desires to be supported. DOH is grateful for the outpouring of volunteers and community partnerships to support the Lāhainā wildfire survivors.

For DOH updates, visit <https://health.hawaii.gov/mauiwildfires/>

The health department also launched a call center to connect impacted residents with non-emergency medical services, mental health support, and other services. Call 833-833-3431 or 808-586-4468 Monday-Friday from 7:45 AM-4:30 PM.

DOH and Community Partners Collaborate to Address Behavioral Health Impact of Maui Wildfires

DOH is working with community partners to support initial behavioral health triage efforts and outline a strategy to provide mid to long-term behavioral health services on Maui. These efforts include launching additional programs to support the evolving behavioral health needs of the community. DOH is ensuring that behavioral health needs are met by hiring local behavioral health clinicians to provide support to Maui residents. These new staff members will be on-island to provide services for several months. In addition, DOH has established telepsychiatry capability should survivors prefer this option. The U.S. Department of Health and Human

Services has resourced four federal behavioral health providers on Maui to assist and has encouraged DOH to request more, which DOH is pursuing.

“We understand the behavioral health impacts from the Maui wildfires are severe and are likely to be long lasting,” said Marian Tsuji, Deputy Director of Behavioral Health. “We also know that the impacts may not be revealed for weeks or even months after the disaster. Working together with community partners, we want to ensure that Maui residents have access to comprehensive, responsive, and culturally sensitive behavioral health support.”

Teams from DOH are working alongside community health partners to launch a Wellness Navigator program for impacted residents currently residing at local hotels. The wellness navigators will go door-to-door with carts filled with snacks, drinks, toiletries, toys for children and other donated items for the displaced residents. While they are making their rounds, they will also offer information about available health services and connect individuals who may need a higher level of mental health support with community providers. The carts used for this program were donated by Hawaiian Airlines. These in-person wellness navigator visits began on Aug. 24 at hotels across Maui.

DOH is also working with community partners to offer crisis mental health services for Maui residents who may not be sheltering at local hotels. No appointment is necessary for clinic services and insurance is not required.

Locations for in-person behavioral health visits include:

Lāhainā Comprehensive Health Center

Location:

Ākoakoa Place
Below the Lāhainā Civic Center

Mobile visits are also available, covering neighborhoods from Leiali'i to Honokohau Valley.

Hours:

August 2023 – Every Day, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
September 2023 – Every Day, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Contact:

For information, call 833-833-3431 or 808-586-4468 Monday-Friday from 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Maui Community Mental Health Clinic

Location:

121 Mahalani St., Wailuku

Hours:

Monday-Friday from 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Contact:

For information, call 808-984-2150, via email at mauiwellness@doh.hawaii.gov.

The Hawaii CARES Crisis Line is also available 24/7 by calling or texting 988 or visiting hicares.hawaii.gov.

DOH is also committed to providing long-term support throughout the recovery and rebuilding process. Future initiatives may include creating Peer Support Groups, increasing access to

telehealth services as communications are restored, adding additional hotlines for crisis support, and more opportunities for group therapy.

Community partners include Hui No Ke Ola Pono, Malama I Ke Ola, Aloha House, FEMA, Hawai'i Pacific Health, Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i, The Queen's Health System, Hawaiian Airlines, the State Office of Wellness and Resilience, the American Red Cross, Federal Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR), the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the many volunteers who have generously given their time. All organizations are working to address the emergent mental health needs of the community in the aftermath of the Maui wildfires.

Lāhainā Comprehensive Health Center Continues to Provide Medical, Pharmacy Services

DOH's Lāhainā Comprehensive Health Center (LCHC) continues to provide services including general medical care, pharmacy services, behavioral health services, and eye care. All individuals are welcome to receive these free services, and no health insurance is required.

Lāhainā Comprehensive Health Center Location:

Ākoakoa Place
Below the Lāhainā Civic Center

Mobile visits are also available, covering neighborhoods from Leiali'i to Honokohau Valley.

Hours:

August 2023 – Every Day, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
September 2023 – Every Day, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Contact:

For information, call (833) 833-3431 or (808) 586-4468 Monday-Friday from 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Participating community partners include Mauiola Pharmacy, Mālama I Ke Ola Health Center the Hawaii Independent Physicians Association, Maui Optix and Hui No Ke Ola Pono.

[Click here to download a Lāhainā clinic flyer.](#)

Satellite Location: Ka'anapali Beach Resort (Outrigger) Satellite Clinic

Satellite clinic provided by DOH in partnership with The Queen's Medical Center, American Medical Response, and other partners.

Hours:

Daily 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. with after-hours on-call services available.

Contact:

For information, call (833) 833-3431 or (808) 586-4468 Monday-Friday from 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Emergency Prescription Assistance Program Available to Uninsured Maui Residents

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Emergency Prescription Assistance Program (EPAP) continues to be available to Maui residents impacted by the wildfires who do not have health insurance. EPAP helps these residents get the prescription drugs and medical equipment that they need to stay healthy.

Maui residents impacted by the wildfires who do not have any form of prescription insurance should call the EPAP toll-free hotline at 1 (855) 793-7470 to verify eligibility and register.

Following registration, individuals will need to obtain a valid prescription from a healthcare provider and fill their prescription at a pharmacy [that is enrolled in EPAP](#). Prescriptions for medications and medical supplies may be renewed every 30 days for as long as EPAP is active.

[Click here for more information.](#)

DOH, EPA Continue to Support Maui Department of Water Supply on Unsafe Water Advisories

DOH and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency continue to provide technical support to the Maui Department of Water Supply, which issued Unsafe Water Advisories for Lāhainā and Upper Kula.

The Department of Water Supply is advising Lāhainā and Upper Kula residents not to drink and not to boil the tap water as it may pose a health risk, even if it's boiled. Residents will not be able to treat the water in any way to make it safe for consumption.

Bottled water should be used for all drinking, brushing teeth, ice making and food preparation.

The County of Maui is posting updates on its Unsafe Water Advisories at <https://www.mauicounty.gov/water>.

Preventing Respiratory and Vector-Borne Diseases

COVID-19 cases have been steadily increasing statewide for the last few months, with early indications of a further increase in cases on Maui based on DOH's COVID-19 reporting data.

DOH recommends that all Hawai'i residents, including those on Maui, continue to stay up-to-date on COVID-19 vaccinations and take other precautions, such as wearing a mask and practicing good hand hygiene when possible. Find COVID-19 vaccines near you at <https://www.vaccines.gov/search/>. DOH and its partners are also making COVID-19 vaccines available at its Lāhainā Comprehensive Health Clinic.

DOH is also working to monitor for vector-borne diseases, which can increase in an area impacted by a disaster because of an accumulation of debris. While no confirmed cases of vector-borne diseases have been reported yet, DOH is working with other federal, state and county agencies to clear debris and other hazards that could lead to an increase in vector-borne diseases.

Murine typhus, a disease carried by rodents and spread to humans by fleas, is endemic in Hawai'i. A handful of cases are reported in Hawai'i each year. Murine typhus can be prevented by clearing brush and trash near your home and using insect repellent before exposure to fleas.

[Click here to learn more.](#)

Debris and standing water also have the potential to increase the risk of mosquito-borne diseases, such as dengue fever. Response efforts, including debris removal and vector control activities in the impacted areas, are underway to prevent emergence of these conditions.

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