



OLAKINO MAIKA'I

To Improve Your Health and Well-Being



Caregiving with Aloha

Meet Lehua of Kailua, whose 24-year journey of caring for loved ones reminds us that compassion and resilience are at the heart of caregiving.



Vaccination Records, Just a Click Away

Access your official immunization record anytime through the new, secure immunization system online portal.



Keep Your Holiday Feast Safe and 'Ono

Simple food safety tips to help you enjoy a healthy, happy Thanksgiving with family and friends.

A Labor of Love: Honoring Hawai'i's Family Caregivers



For more than 24 years, Lehua from Kailua has devoted her life to caring for loved ones. Her journey began when her mother suffered a stroke in 2000, leaving her partially paralyzed. Over the years, she also cared for her father and oldest brother until their passing.

“Caregiving isn’t just about helping someone bathe or eat,” Lehua said. “It’s about making them feel like they’re not a burden, helping them keep their dignity.”

The days were often long, filled with medication, meals, and moments of laughter or quiet reflection.

“There were times I was exhausted or lost patience,” Lehua admitted. “But I learned to give myself grace, to ask for help, and to remember why I was doing it.”

Through it all, Lehua found strength in her family, community, and the values her parents instilled in her: kindness, humility, and perseverance.

This November, as we observe National Family Caregivers Month, we honor Lehua and all caregivers across Hawai‘i. Whether caring for parents, spouses, children, or neighbors, they embody aloha through service, compassion, and love – reminding us that caregiving truly is “the best job in the world.”

If you need help, call the Hawai‘i Aging and Disability Resource Center at **808-643-2372**.

MO‘OLELO OLAKINO

History of Health



Nov. 8, 1883: Saint Marianne and the Healing Legacy of Kalaupapa

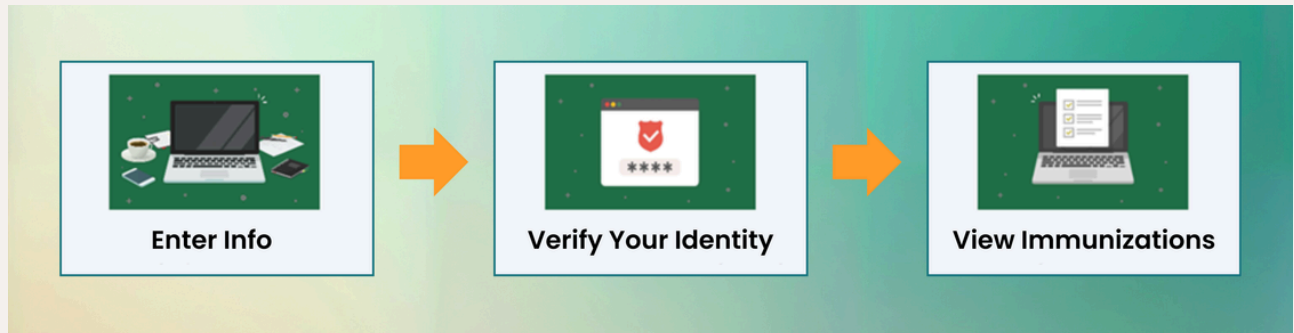


On Nov. 8, 1883, Saint Marianne Cope stepped off a ship at Kalaupapa, ready to care for people living with Hansen’s disease (then called leprosy). What she found there changed her life, and Hawai‘i’s public health history, forever. With compassion and courage, she and her fellow Franciscan sisters provided health care and built homes and a school, but most importantly, they helped restore dignity and hope to those who had been cast aside.

More than 140 years later, Saint Marianne’s legacy lives on. Public tours have now resumed at Kalaupapa National Historical Park, giving visitors the chance to walk the same paths and hear the stories of those who lived there. It’s a powerful reminder that good health is about more than medicine – it’s about compassion, connection, and caring for one another.

PLAN YOUR VISIT

DOH Launches Online Public Portal for Immunization Records



Need an official copy of your immunization record?

The Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) Immunization Branch now offers a free, secure online public portal where individuals, parents, and legal guardians can access, print, or download official immunization records. These official records can be used for school, daycare, work, or travel.

The public portal is part of the new Hawai'i State Immunization System (HiSIS), launched in June. HiSIS is a confidential, cloud-based registry where healthcare providers submit immunization data for children and adults across the state.

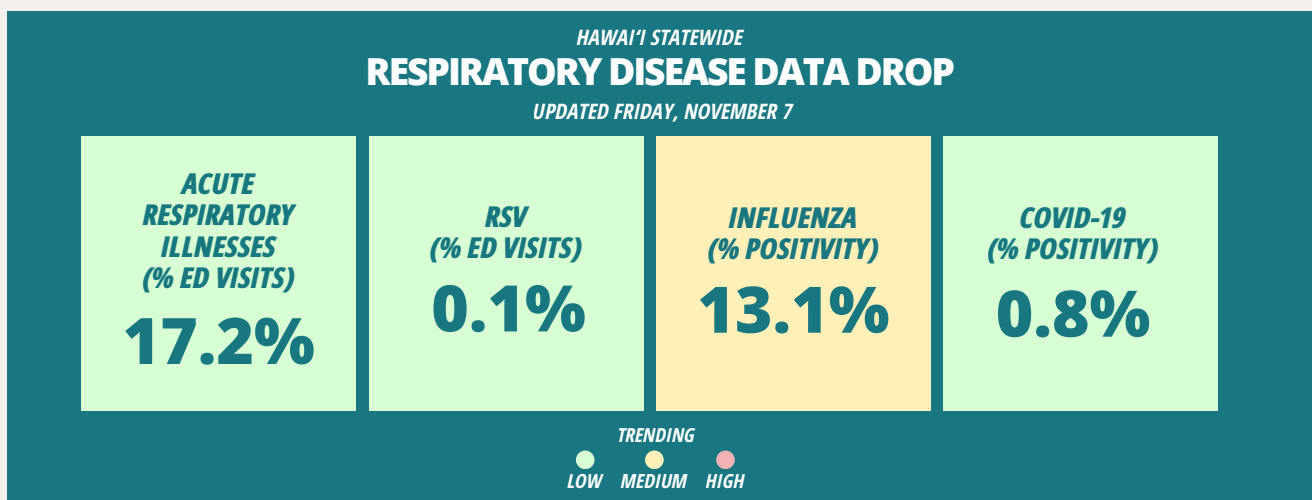
Immunization information systems like HiSIS help providers keep patients up to date on immunizations and help monitor community immunization rates.

To request your record, visit the HiSIS Public Portal and enter your name, birthdate, gender, and email or mobile number which match the contact information in your HiSIS profile. If your information doesn't match, contact your healthcare provider to review and verify that your record matches HiSIS information. For further information contact the DOH HiSIS Help Desk at DOH.HiSIShelp@doh.hawaii.gov or 808-808-9805.

There is no cost to sign up or download your record.

HiSIS PORTAL

This Week's RSV and COVID-19 Data



This week's data shows low activity levels for acute respiratory illnesses (17.2% ED visits) and RSV (0.1% ED visits). Influenza (13.1% positivity) activity level is medium, and COVID-19 (0.8% positivity) activity level remains low.

VACCINE INFORMATION

RESPIRATORY DISEASE DASHBOARD

Prepared Together: Practicing for the Unexpected



At the Department of Health, preparedness is part of our everyday work. In September, our Emergency Medical Services and Injury Prevention System Branch joined partner agencies for the FAA-required triennial emergency exercise at Hilo International Airport. Supported by the Office of Public Health Preparedness (OPHP), DOH tested two key technologies: the Hospital Bed Capacity System and the Pulsara communication platform.

Originally developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Hospital Bed Capacity System now provides near real-time data on hospital resources statewide, which improves coordination and decision-making during emergencies. Pulsara, already used to streamline stroke response, was tested during the Hilo drill to triage and track patients in a simulated mass casualty event using barcoded wristbands, demonstrating its potential to improve outcomes and communication.

More recently, our Office of Public Health Preparedness conducted a Point of Dispensing (POD) Exercise at the DOH's Kinau Hale building, where staff practiced distributing simulated medication during a mock novel influenza outbreak. These exercises help us identify what works well and where we can improve, so we're ready when it counts.

Families can take a cue from these efforts: Create an emergency plan, stock up on essential supplies, and talk about what to do if disaster strikes. Preparation isn't just for agencies; it's for everyone. Because when we all plan ahead, Hawai'i stays safer together.



ABOUT THE TRIENNIAL

GET PREPARED TODAY

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH



November 17 is National Hiking Day, a great reminder that spending time outdoors is good for both body and mind. Hiking is an easy, affordable way to stay active, boost mood, and lower stress. Research from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shows that regular physical activity can reduce anxiety and depression while improving sleep and overall well-being.

Nature adds another layer of benefit. Studies highlighted by the National Park Service show that time in green spaces helps calm the mind, improve focus, and reduce mental fatigue. Even a short walk outside can lift your mood and clear your thoughts.

In Hawai'i, we're surrounded by natural beauty: mountain trails, coastal paths, and neighborhood parks that invite us to move, breathe, and reconnect. This National Hiking Day, take a moment to step outdoors. A few mindful minutes in nature can make a big difference for your mental health.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH



Thanksgiving in Hawai'i means 'ono food, big gatherings, and plenty of leftovers to share. Whether your table features turkey, kalua pig, poke, or pumpkin pie, a few simple steps can help keep everyone healthy this holiday season.

Plan ahead and keep foods cool.

Shop smart and store perishables with ice or a cooler if you'll be out long. Keep raw meats sealed and separate from ready-to-eat foods.

Thaw your turkey safely.

Always thaw your turkey in the refrigerator, in cold water (change water every 30 minutes), or in the microwave – never on the counter.

Keep it clean.

Wash hands often with soap and water and use separate cutting boards for meats and veggies. Wipe down counters before and after food prep.

Cook to the right temperature.

Use a food thermometer. Turkey and stuffing should reach 165°F.

Store leftovers quickly.

Cool and refrigerate within two hours, or one hour if it's hot outside. Divide big pans into shallow containers so they chill faster.

Good food and good health go hand in hand. Let's keep this Thanksgiving safe, delicious, and full of aloha.

[MORE FOOD SAFETY TIPS](#)

PUBLIC HEALTH



While many of us spend Thanksgiving week gathered with family and friends, thousands of public health professionals across Hawai'i and the nation remain on call – protecting our communities, often behind the scenes.

Public Health Thank You Day, observed on Nov. 25, is a chance to recognize those who safeguard our well-being every day. From disease investigators and laboratory scientists to food inspectors, nurses and emergency responders, public health workers ensure that our communities stay healthy, safe and prepared.

Their work doesn't pause for the holidays. Whether responding to outbreaks, monitoring drinking water or supporting behavioral health services, they are always ready to serve.

This Thanksgiving, let's mahalo the people who make public health in Hawai'i possible. Their dedication and care help us all enjoy our holidays – and every day – in good health.

[JOIN THE PUBLIC HEALTH WORKFORCE](#)

SHORT TAKES

National Diabetes Awareness Month



Diabetes affects more than 100,000 people in Hawai'i, but with early detection and treatment, type 2 diabetes can be managed and even prevented. Many individuals with diabetes are able to prevent or delay the onset of diabetes-related complications by receiving the correct treatment and making healthy lifestyle changes.

Having diabetes increases your risk of serious health problems such as cardiovascular disease, chronic kidney disease, diabetes-related eye disease, foot and skin complications, stroke, and more.

The DOH encourages staying active, eating balanced meals and keeping up with regular checkups with your health care provider to stay healthy and help prevent type 2 diabetes. We encourage everyone to assess their risk for **prediabetes** and, if age 35-70 and are overweight or obese, to get screened for diabetes. Even a modest weight loss of 5-7% of body weight can lower the risk of type 2 diabetes by more than 50%. Together, we can reduce the impact of diabetes in our communities and help every individual in Hawai'i live longer, healthier lives.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Take Care of Your Lungs



Lung cancer remains the leading cause of cancer death for both men and women in Hawai'i, and individuals who smoke tobacco have 20 times higher risk of developing lung cancer compared to non-smokers. People who use tobacco products are encouraged to consider quitting to reduce their lung cancer risk.

During Lung Cancer Awareness Month in November, the DOH reminds residents that early screening for lung cancer can save lives. People ages 50 to 80 with a 20 pack-year* smoking history who currently smoke or have quit within the past 15 years should talk to their health care provider about low-dose computed tomography screening.

People who use tobacco products are also encouraged to consider quitting to reduce their lung cancer risk. This month is a time to come together to fight lung cancer.

**A pack-year is smoking an average of one pack of cigarettes per day for one year. For example, a person could have a 20 pack-year history by smoking one pack a day for 20 years or two packs a day for 10 years.*

[GET HELP TO QUIT NOW](#)

EXTRA

Free Medical Cannabis CME/CE for Hawai'i Providers

The DOH Office of Medical Cannabis Control and Regulation is offering free continuing education for Hawai'i healthcare providers. The bundle includes two fully accredited CME/CE courses plus a module on Hawai'i's medical cannabis rules and regulations. Once the free offer ends, the full course bundle will still be available at a reduced rate of \$150, a savings of nearly 20%. Don't miss this opportunity to expand your knowledge and stay up to date!

[SIGN UP HERE](#)

***Please note that our DOH Punchbowl offices will be closed on Tuesday, Nov. 11, in observance of Veterans Day, and on Thursday, Nov. 27, in observance of Thanksgiving.**

INFORMATION HOTLINES

[DOCD Disease Reporting Line](#)

Assistance with an outbreak of cases
O'ahu (808) 586-4586
Maui (808) 984-8213
Kaua'i (808) 241-3563
Hilo (808) 933-0912
Kona (808) 322-4877

[DOH Hotline](#)

Get information & resources
Call (808) 586-4400

[Hawai'i CARES 988 Hotline](#)

Local crisis counselors are available to help 24/7
Call or Text 9-8-8
or Call (808) 832-3100
or Call 1-800-753-6879

[Senior Medicare Patrol \(SMP\) Hawaii](#)

The go-to source for Medicare Fraud Prevention
Education and referral assistance for related
scams.
Toll Free: 1-800-296-9422
info@smphawaii.org

Big mahalo to everyone who shared story ideas with us. We love to hear from you! If there's a topic you'd like us to cover, please let us know at doh.comm@doh.hawaii.gov.

In Hawaiian, the word olakino refers to the state of health and well-being. The word "ola" means life and health, and the word "kino" means body. Olakino is generally considered to be the greatest wealth and great health that one can attain, not just of the body but holistically. Maika'i in Hawaiian means good or wellbeing.

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