Maryland prepares for enterovirus cases

Unusual strain has been confirmed in neighboring states; local officials on alert

By Meredith Cohn

An unusual strain of virus continues its march across the country — showing up most recently in Pennsylvania and Virginia — health officials in Maryland are warning doctors to be on the lookout and advising parents to prepare. Expecting families, with millions in the United States sickened every year, may need to seek out a different kind of doctor visits.

"We’ve had our eyes on this one," said Gregory Round, a program manager with the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. "It’s circling around the country, so we’re going to identify it and manage it if it pops up."

This virus might already have moved into Maryland, officials said. Doctors are not required to test for enteroviruses, but this particular strain is "in the pipeline,"

Elizabeth Rhodes reads to her son, William. When she went on maternity leave last year, her employer, M&T Bank, covered the difference between her short-term disability insurance benefit and her full salary for four weeks. "It was nice and a great benefit," she says.

More voices join call for universal access to maternity, family leave, but some business groups warn of the cost

Making time for the baby

By Dan Kane and Colin Campbell

Shelby Smith took 12 weeks off for the births of each of her two children — and got paid for it.

Smith, a 32-year-old customer service and sales specialist at the Bank of America, calls her employer’s policy of granting 12 weeks of paid maternity leave from what she didn’t have to think about work or worry about any job being there when I get back.

A growing movement of workers — and their supporters in Annapolis and Washington — wants to make the benefits universal.

Democrat in Congress have proposed a bill that would pay a worker up to two-thirds of his or her monthly wages for 12 weeks to care for a new child or an elderly family member. California, New Jersey and Rhode Island have expanded their state disability insurance programs to cover family leave. The Clinton administration has offered grants for other states to study how they might offer also the benefit.

In Maryland, Del. Heather Mizeur proposed a paid family leave program modeled on California’s during her unsuccessful campaign for Congress.

The virus appears to sicken mainly adults. Some children are infected, but most cases are brief and mild, resembling a common cold. But the relatively rare strain called EV-D68 can cause severe respiratory illnesses, and doctors in several states have issued an alert, said Gregory Round, a program manager with the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. "It’s circling around the country, so we’re going to identify it and manage it if it pops up."

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Evacuations continue as mandatory evacuees reach the shore

The massive former Bethlehem Steel mill was shut down two years ago and auctioned off to a bankruptcy-liquidation process.

The land has now been sold for an undecided price to a developer who will develop a private marina at Sparrows Point Terminal, an offshore of the Hanover-based investment firm Redwood Capital的投资基金管理公司.

Under terms of an agreement Redwood Capital, a company that bills itself as a capital management firm for "small group of private investors in Baltimore," Redwood Capital plans to develop a clean-up pact "a crucial step toward making this site an economic force and a source of jobs for years to come."

The land was sold to a new owner who also took two giant strides forward Thursday as the squirrel has bounced back from the brink of extinction and is no longer in need of legal protection.

The land has now been sold for an undisclosed amount to Sparrows Point Restoration, a company that bills itself as a capital management firm for "small group of private investors in Baltimore."

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