



Frequently Asked Questions about the Bayshore High School Health Investigation

Why is this study being conducted?

- It has been brought to the attention of the Florida Department of Health in Manatee County that there is a community concern from former students of the old Bayshore High School.
- At a joint meeting between the Manatee County Board of County Commissioners and School Board in May, DOH-Manatee was asked to help in conducting a study of those who worked at or attended the school.

Who should submit information for the study?

- Students who attended Bayshore High School who have been diagnosed with cancer of any kind.
- Faculty or staff who worked in Bayshore High School who have been diagnosed with cancer of any kind.

What will need to be submitted to participate in the study?

- Study participants must provide:
 - A completed Patient Listing Form.
 - A photo ID or a notarized copy of the Patient Listing Form, if a photo ID is not available.
 - The signature of the diagnosed or individual authorized to release the patient's information.

Where can people find the Patient Listing Form?

- Forms can be found online at [Manatee.floridahealth.gov](http://manatee.floridahealth.gov) (<http://manatee.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/infectious-disease-services/epidemiology/index.html>) and printed out for completion and submission.
- Printed copies are available at DOH-Manatee County's main office, 410 – 6th Avenue East in Bradenton.
- A mobile data collection event has been scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 17, from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. at the 34th Street parking lot at the State College of Florida's campus.
- Patient listing forms are available in English and Spanish.

How can people submit their Patient Listing Forms?

- All forms must be either mailed or hand-delivered to:
The Florida Department of Health in Manatee County
Division of Disease Control and Health Protection
410 – 6th Avenue East
Bradenton, FL 34208
- At designated mobile unit sites and dates to be determined. Mobile sites will be published online and promoted on Twitter at @HealthyManatee.
- No forms will be accepted via e-mail or online.

How long will the data collection process last?

- The data collection period will begin December 1, 2017 **and has been extended to March 30, 2018.**

Who will conduct the study?

- Review of cancer records and statistical analyses will be conducted by cancer registry staff, epidemiologists, and statisticians of the Florida Department of Health's Florida Cancer Data System.

How will the study be conducted?

- In order to be included in this study, the completed Patient Listing Form will be verified to ensure:
 - First, the person was indeed a student, faculty or staff at Bayshore High School.
 - Second, a cancer record of the person was found within the state cancer registry, the Florida Cancer Data System (FCDS).
 - Statistical analyses will be performed to determine if the observed rate of specified cancer(s) during a specified timeframe were higher than expected.

What criteria will be used to determine if there is a health concern?

- The Florida Department of Health will be working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines and definitions of cancer clusters, which can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/clusters/>

When will the study's findings be made public?

- It should take approximately six months for the data to be properly analyzed and prepared for release. So, we anticipate results being available fall 2018.

Why is this study happening now?

- DOH-Manatee has been responsive to concerns and provided health education, environmental findings and guidance from federal partners since 2007. The concerns have been raised again and we are responding to the request by the county and school district to conduct the study.

How do I know my personal medical information will be kept safe?

- DOH-Manatee follows HIPAA guidelines as a health care agency, the federal law ensuring medical records are maintained as confidential. Additionally, DOH-Manatee conducts epidemiological investigations daily, handling medical records for many different diseases and conditions. All investigations and records are protected and exempt from public record requests.

If a health concern is determined by the study what will happen next?

- DOH will follow the cancer cluster guidelines established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. If a statistically significant cluster is identified, DOH will work in coordination with community and environmental partners to determine if exposure to a specific risk factor might be associated with the cluster.

What will DOH do for the families who have been affected by the cancer and other diseases from Bayshore High School?

- At this time, DOH is working to conduct the study to determine if a cancer cluster exists. Upon the conclusion of this study, we will determine the most appropriate next steps.

You're only looking at cancer. What about ALS, lupus and other conditions we've heard about linked to Bayshore High School?

- DOH-Manatee understands there are a variety of health concerns from students and faculty from Bayshore High School. Of those conditions, cancer is the only one that is mandated by Florida Statute to be reportable to the Florida Department of Health. These are the data that will be used to calculate cancer rates and will be used to conduct the study to determine if the cases identified in Bayshore students and faculty represent a cluster.

It seems as if the Department of Health is asking for a great deal of personally-identifying information in this data collection process. Is all of this data required to participate in the study?

- To be certain that we are pulling the accurate, correct record, the Florida Cancer Data System confirms against five data items: first name, last name, date of birth, social security number and gender. This is a standard process done when confirming or authenticating a medical record. Again, all submitted personally identifying medical information is protected by law under the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA).

I attended or worked at Bayshore High School, moved out of Florida, and was later diagnosed with cancer. What do I need to provide in order to participate in this study?

- The individual would need to provide an electronic copy or hard copy of his/her medical record from a private physician or hospital OR a cancer abstract from the respective state cancer registry. The medical record or cancer abstract must contain at a minimum patient demographics (including address at diagnosis), age at diagnosis, diagnosis confirmation method, cancer type (including histology, morphology, stage) and diagnosis date.