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NEVADA STATE HEALTH DIVISION

NEWS RELEASE

NEVADA STATE HEALTH DIVISION RELEASES ANNUAL REPORT ON AMBULATORY SURGICAL CENTERS

Carson City – The Hepatitis C outbreak that occurred in January 2008 at two ambulatory surgical centers (ASCs) in Las Vegas was an unprecedented event that immediately raised the public's concern about the state of health care facilities in Nevada. The outbreak was ultimately traced by local health authorities to unsafe injection practices related to the administration of anesthesia at two ASCs in Las Vegas. Both facilities are now closed, and the Health Division has taken action to survey and correct deficiencies in all ASCs statewide.

In the wake of this truly regrettable incident, the Health Division took a systems approach to analyzing the factors that contributed to the failure in infection control practice at these two ASCs and also to determine where systemic issues at ASCs, and other health care facilities in general, might continue to place the public at risk. Today, the Health Division has released a product of this effort, the first annual report examining ambulatory surgical centers (ASCs) in Nevada. The intent of this report is to stimulate the health care industry to promote practices that put patient safety first, encourage health care facilities to strengthen their adherence to proven infection control protocols, communicate to the public in a transparent way the measures the Health Division has adopted to respond to deficiencies at Nevada's health care facilities, and suggest to members of the Legislature that they consider statutory and regulatory modifications that would lead to better health outcomes in Nevada.

A systems approach is needed to address systemic issues; therefore, the Health Division hopes that the method and content of this report help it and all of its partners safeguard the public by upholding safe medical practice in health care facilities, because every health-related group has a stake in the patient health and well-being.

The draft '2008 Ambulatory Surgical Centers Annual Report' is being released with an invitation to policy makers, the public, health care providers, and others to comment and give feedback. A 'feedback and information request' form is attached to the report. To obtain a copy of the report, please visit the website of the Nevada State Health Division at: <http://www.health.nv.gov/>.

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