

# News Release



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## **Health department conducts emergency exercise at high school**

Throughout the year, the Knox County Health Department conducts exercises to test its emergency response operations. Last Thursday, Mount Vernon High School was the site of one such exercise in which the agency tested its preparedness to distribute vaccine to a large group of people in a timely manner.

Working from the premise of a possible communicable disease in the community, health department staff set up a point of distribution (POD) which included various stations for intake, triage, vaccine dispensing and follow up verification. Parents visiting the high school on Thursday for parent-teacher conferences got a glimpse of the operation which was setup in the main hallway outside the gymnasium. School was not in session on Thursday due to parent-teacher conferences.



RN Sherri Rine of the Knox County Health Department dispenses medication to a student from the Knox County Career Center during last Thursday's emergency exercise staged at Mount Vernon High School. Students in the medical technologies class helped to portray the public during exercise.

Students from Kenyon College, Mount Vernon Nazarene College, the health technologies class at the Knox County Career Center and members of the local Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) portrayed the public for the exercise.

According to Zach Green, emergency preparedness coordinator for the health department, 120 people were processed during the POD simulation which surpassed expectations. "All in all, we felt the process worked well. We identified a few areas for improvement which is why we conduct the exercises," said Green.

The Knox County Health Department works closely with Homeland Security, Emergency Management Agency, local healthcare providers and law enforcement officials to create response plans and take part in emergency response activities. For information on becoming involved with CERT, contact Green at 740-392-2200, ext. 2230, or zgreen@knoxhealth.com

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