

## Panel to fight Legionella bacteria blamed in deadly outbreak at local VA health system

By Tribune-Review

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The Allegheny County Health Department, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other health officials convened a regional panel this week to fight waterborne Legionella, the bacteria blamed in a deadly outbreak of Legionnaires' disease in the Pittsburgh VA Healthcare System in 2011 and 2012.

The panel will focus on educating health care workers about Legionella issues, including when to test patients and how to kill the bacteria, said Dr. Karen Wolk Feinstein, president of the Jewish Healthcare Foundation, who participated in the panel meeting Thursday. The panel also expects to update the county guidelines and standards for Legionella control in medical facilities, according to Dr. Ronald Voorhees, the acting county health director. He said the county published those guidelines in 1997.

Feinstein said the panel plans to offer an educational session for the public and news media. Panel members include Pittsburgh VA and state health officials.