

# Carroll County Health Department

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**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### PUBLIC HEALTH ALERT

Westminster, MD (September 16, 2016) – The Carroll County Health Department, The Maryland Department of Health and Hygiene, and the Carroll County Humane Society are working cooperatively to investigate a bird that tested positive for avian chlamydiosis (called psittacosis in humans), had been kept at the Ruffled Feathers Parrott Rescue and Sanctuary located at 1745 England Road in Hampstead, Maryland and has caused human illness.

Avian chlamydiosis is a bacterial disease of birds (most commonly parrots and other parrot-like birds) that can be treated with antibiotics. Birds that show signs of illness may be drowsy, feed poorly, may have discharge from eyes and nose, diarrhea, and may have ruffled feathers. Birds can also be infected and not show any signs of illness.

Humans get psittacosis by inhaling aerosolized fluids or stools from an infected bird or from bird bites, mouth to beak contact and handling feathers. The incubation period varies from 5 to 14 days. Infections in humans may be mild to severe and can be treated with antibiotics.

If anyone in your household was exposed to birds from Ruffled Feathers Parrott Rescue and becomes ill with fever, chills, headache, body aches and/or a dry cough within 14 days of exposure to the birds, contact your health care provider and inform him/her of your exposure.

For additional information on psittacosis, please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Psittacosis Website at <http://www.cdc.gov/pneumonia/atypical/psittacosis.html>

Residents who have health-related concerns or questions should contact the Carroll County Health Department's Communicable Disease Program at (410) 876-4936.

For media questions concerning this release, please call the Carroll County Health Department's Health Officer, Ed Singer, at 443-375-1243, or the Deputy Health Officer, Dr. Henry Taylor, at 304-610-1139.