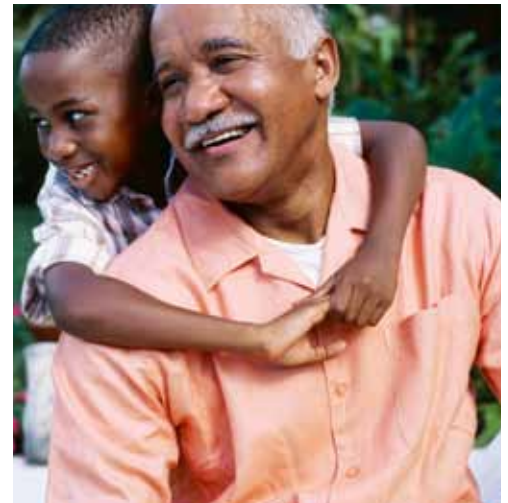


2010 Annual Report

Knox County Health Department



Prevent | Promote | Protect

Knox County
Health Department
 Every Person, A Healthy Person

INTRODUCTION



On behalf of the public health professionals of Knox County Health Department (KCHD), I am pleased to present the 2010 Annual Report. It contains a selection of familiar information on basic services but also a look at new programs and groundbreaking advances in the community.

The most widely used definition of public health is the Institute of Medicine statement highlighted below. Knox County Health Department has embraced the concept that public health can't be mandated by one authority, but is the responsibility of the entire community, working together.

That's why you'll see sections in this report called Creating Healthy Places, Building Partnerships and Improving Health in addition to more traditional public health initiatives such as immunizations and investigating infectious diseases.

KCHD had many significant and high profile projects in 2010, including the H1N1 pandemic, the in-school flu vaccinations, mosquito control program and the grant-funded active-8 diabetes prevention initiative. This report highlights a different selection of best practices, new programs and innovative approaches. Please take a few minutes to browse the information. You are welcome to call me directly with feedback at 215-5273.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Martha Buchanan'.

Martha Buchanan, MD
Director

“Public health is what we, as a society, do collectively to assure the conditions for people to be healthy.”

From The Institute of Medicine (IOM) report on the
Future of Public Health, (1988, 19)

Knox County Health Department served a population of 435,725 with an operating budget of \$21.5 million and \$5.7 million in federal, state and private grant funding for fiscal year 2010.

PROTECTING OUR COMMUNITY

The Immunization Project

Vaccinations are what come to mind for most people when they hear the words public health. And it's no wonder why. Vaccines are among the most successful and cost-effective public health tools available for preventing disease and death. Infants and young children are particularly vulnerable to infectious diseases. That's why KCHD's Immunization Project maintains surveillance of immunizations for children in Knox County by tracking reports from local doctors.

Department highlights for 2010

- In April, the Immunization Project began participating in the Tennessee Department of Health's (TDOH) statewide registry called Tennessee Web Immunization System, or TWIS, to aid in the effort to track and maintain immunizations. Through Immunization Project staff efforts, Knox County now has five of the state's top 25 private providers utilizing TWIS.
- More than 100 Knox County child care facilities were audited to ensure the children in their care were up-to-date on immunizations. TDOH recommends counties maintain at least a 90 percent child immunization compliance rate. With the assistance of KCHD's Immunization Project, Knox County has achieved an average compliance rate of 96.9 percent over the past two and a half years.
- TDOH also issued new school immunization certificates and additional vaccination requirements. Immunization Project staff ensured there were enough vaccines and supplies to help more than 700 rising seventh grade students meet the new guidelines. They also issued new state certificates and provided guidance for private providers and school nurses through the new process.



Why are immunizations tracked?

Studies show that families are more mobile than in the past, and approximately 20 percent of all children visit more than one provider by two years of age, making it difficult to accurately assess immunization needs.

Did you know?

Immunizations should begin at two months of age and the initial series should be completed by two years or 24 months of age. Some children may begin later than others but there are schedules for 'catching up' the series. The goal is to complete immunizations by twenty-four months of age.





Investigating Disease Outbreaks

Outbreak investigations, while not as glamorous as those portrayed on TV or in films, are a dynamic and important part of public health. An outbreak is defined as two or more cases of similar illness that have a common exposure, and are suspected to be related to food and/or a certain type of infectious agent.

In 2010, KCHD investigated eight separate outbreaks of infectious illness. The outbreaks occurred in a variety of settings including a public swimming pool, restaurants, child care facilities, schools, assisted living facilities and private households. The infectious agents included *E. coli*, *B. cereus*, and Norovirus, each having unique transmission characteristics and illness severity. Affected groups ranged in size from three people to more than 100. KCHD also had a total of 117 confirmed individual cases of food-borne illness. Many more cases go unreported because the affected person doesn't seek medical care.

All reported cases are investigated to help prevent the spread of illness. When KCHD staff receives a report of a potential disease outbreak, immediate steps are taken to protect the public and decrease the risk of further transmission of illness to others. Depending on the number of people affected, an investigation may consist of one epidemiology nurse or activating a special team of public health professionals. Very specific protocols are followed to ensure a rapid and effective response.

Outbreaks can happen anywhere. The variation in settings and source of infection has an important message to our community: good hygiene and safe food handling practices are significant measures for reducing the occurrence of illness.

KCHD's Food Division inspects more than 17,000 food establishments, grocery and convenience stores, produce markets, swimming pools, temporary events, and other programs annually. Environmental specialists investigate nearly 800 community complaints and conduct 100 training classes and site reviews. KCHD's Food Division also collaborated with law enforcement agencies on ridding the county of businesses which are considered a public nuisance.

CREATING HEALTHY PLACES

Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities Supporting Community Action to Prevent Childhood Obesity

In January, KCHD was one of only 41 U.S. sites awarded a \$360,000 Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities (HKHC) grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to improve opportunities for physical activity, and access to affordable, healthy foods for children and families in Knox County.

The HKHC Knox County initiative is working in three distinct communities: Lonsdale, Mascot and Inskip. Lonsdale is urban with more than half of its elementary-aged children overweight or obese and thus at risk for health problems such as diabetes and high blood pressure. Mascot is a rural area and a former mining community with limited options for healthy eating and physical activity. Inskip, children often find themselves cut off from local playgrounds by busy streets.

HKHC activities

- Bringing healthy food into neighborhoods by increasing community garden locations and usage.
- Expanding neighborhood Safe Routes to School options, an especially critical goal given the scarcity of sidewalks in the targeted communities.

During its first year, HKHC staff has made great strides toward organizing each community for action by:

- Actively mentoring community leaders and neighbors interested in making improvements to the overall health outcomes around the places they live.
- Facilitating the formation of neighborhood action teams to increase civic engagement.
- Getting to know the communities - literally walking the streets, asking questions - to help the action teams envision what they want their community to look like and how they want their children to grow up.
- Helping build partnerships for lasting results.
- Working with the Youth Health Board (see page 12) on ways students can improve public spaces most important to them. This type of collaboration is often the first connection high school-age children make between civic responsibility, public space and health.
- Building its database of partners who contribute to health in Knox County. An online newsletter of "all things health," linking organizations, businesses and individuals working toward better health, is in the planning stages.

HKHC is a partnership of nutrition, physical activity and public health experts at the University of Tennessee, the Knox County Schools Coordinated Health Program, the local Transportation Planning Organization and others.



Amy Smotherman Burgess/ Knoxville News Sentinel

Studies continue to show clear evidence

that links health outcomes with a person's sense of empowerment and value. Communities that lack neighborhood associations or other groups tend to have fewer amenities, less civic engagement and poorer overall health. The overarching mission of the HKHC staff is to help communities learn to help themselves by working together as neighbors with a common goal.



Amy Smotherman Burgess/ Knoxville News Sentinel

HKHC staff worked in partnership with the Knoxville-Knox County Food Policy Council

to convene a coalition of more than 40 community members interested in expanding efforts in Knox County. So far, the coalition has identified 33 existing community gardens and is finalizing a toolkit for starting new ones. Through this effort, fresh, affordable and healthy food will be available to more people.



The Knoxville Regional Medication Collection Program

A task force was created to develop a solution to medication disposal problems. Participating agencies include the Knoxville Police Department, the City of Knoxville, city and county Solid Waste departments, Knox County Health Department, Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, University of Tennessee's Academy of Student Pharmacists, Knox County Sheriff's Office, the Hallsdale-Powell Utility District, Knoxville Utility Board, Volunteer Emergency Rescue Squad and Earth Fare.

Since its inception, the program has:

- Focused on the environmental concerns of proper disposal, as well as public safety – helping keep medication out of waters and off the streets.
- Included both over-the-counter pharmaceuticals and prescription medications.
- Collected more than 2,200 pounds of medication, not including the packaging, which was also recycled, and established a permanent, secure 24-hour medication drop-off box.
- Collected mercury thermometers (trading for new digital versions) with an equivalent of 13.8 pounds of mercury – enough to pollute a body of water seven times the size of Fort Loudon Lake.
- Become a model for nine other similar programs across the state.

The Knoxville Regional Medication Collection Program received the Governor's Environmental Stewardship Award for Excellence in Solid Waste Reduction and The National Association of County Information Officers Award of Excellence for a citizen education program.

Air Quality Management

Knox County achieved the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone and PM 2.5 (particulate matter). Knox County's Air Quality Management Department received the official U.S.E.P.A. reclassification of Knox County as in attainment for the federal ozone standards in March 2011.

PROMOTING HEALTHY PEOPLE

The Communicable Disease Clinic

Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) cause significant health problems and even death if untreated. That's why the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and local health departments across the country regularly track STD cases and aggressively treat them.

In Knox County, syphilis and gonorrhea outbreaks have persisted in spite of dedicated public health efforts to reach affected individuals. But, in 2010, innovative internal and external collaborations resulted in KCHD's CDC staff bringing the syphilis rate below 100 cases - to 69 total cases - for the first time in five years. Gonorrhea rates fell below the average of 850 cases - to 331 total cases - for the second consecutive year. Reaching these milestones involved a multi-pronged approach to the problem:

- Clinic staff regularly reviewed syphilis data with KCHD epidemiologists to identify high risk areas in the community for education and testing.
- Specially trained Disease Investigation Specialists (DIS) visited affected communities to disseminate material explaining symptoms and dangers of syphilis.
- DIS worked closely with Knoxville Police Department during illicit sex trade enforcement and developed testing protocols (for syphilis, HIV and TB) for patrons detained in the Knox County Detention Facility. Incarcerated individuals testing positive for syphilis were given treatment before their release.
- KCHD's Computer Operations Department helped develop a tickler system to remind patients of appointments to ensure adequate treatment.
- Media coverage about the consequences of syphilis and KCHD's effort to control its spread helped expose the recurring problem and raise public awareness.





The Women, Infants and Children Nutrition Program

One of the busiest clinics at KCHD is WIC, which stands for Women, Infants and Children. WIC is the federal Department of Agriculture (USDA) supplemental nutrition program that provides healthy foods, nutrition education, and health care referrals for low-income women and children up to age five. Participants must meet income and residency eligibility requirements. In Knox County, there are approximately 7,200 women and children currently enrolled and receiving monthly benefits.

WIC appointments are scheduled approximately every three months. At each visit, clients receive nutrition guidance from staff trained to address their individual needs, and vouchers for the foods WIC provides through approved grocery stores. Mothers also learn the value of making healthy choices during their prenatal period and teaching their infants healthy habits from birth. WIC staff promotes breast-feeding as “baby’s best start.”

New for 2010

- Foods were added to the WIC program for the first time in 30 years, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains and culturally diverse food
- Spanish language group education classes
- “Fit WIC” classes promoted physical activity along with healthy eating
- Home visits for breastfeeding moms
- Availability of text messaging for immediate client support
- Online nutrition education called “Fast Pass” to expedite clinic visits
- An automated appointment reminder system that sends messages via phone, text or e-mail

Research has shown

that for every dollar spent to provide WIC services, more than three dollars are saved in health care costs.



The impact of the WIC program extends beyond the services provided in the clinic. Monthly food packages for women and children provide about \$50 to \$60 of food every month, for every person in the family receiving benefits. Infant food packages range from \$90 to \$450 per month for costly therapeutic formulas for medically fragile infants. More than \$5 million in WIC food expenditures are made in Knox County each year.

The Senior Safety Task Force

In Knox County, more than 4,200 people aged 65 and older sought hospital care for falls in 2008 (the most current data), and approximately 20 people die each year from their injuries. Falls or fear of falling can rob a person of his or her independence and adversely impact quality of life.

That's why KCHD convened the Senior Safety Task Force in March of 2008. The group includes agencies, organizations, hospitals and individuals concerned about falls in the older population. The task force meets monthly and has hosted a senior fall prevention seminar in Knoxville for the past three years.

Task Force Projects

- For the first time, a professional track with continuing education units (CEUs) for nurses and LPNs was offered at the annual Senior Falls Prevention Seminar with presentations by a neurologist, physical therapist and pharmacist. More than 140 seniors and health care professionals gathered for the half-day event which included sessions on exercise, balance and medication management.
- The task force also partnered with the Knox County Medication Collection Program (see page 5) to offer an Ask-A-Pharmacist Day in October. Seniors could bring old medications for safe disposal and sit down with a pharmacist to ask questions about medication interaction, side effects or other related matters.
- In 2009, the task force also selected a senior fall prevention-based exercise and education program called SAIL (Stay Active and Independent for Life) — the first of its kind in Tennessee. SAIL has been implemented in five locations in Knox County. For 2011, plans are being made to offer the third SAIL instructor training and to add at least five more class sites.



Falls are the second leading cause of accidental death in the United States and 75 percent of these falls occur in the older adult population. The total direct cost nationally for falls in this age group is more than \$27 billion annually. By 2020, it is expected to reach \$43.8 billion.



“Together! Healthy Knox aims to involve the whole Knox County community in a long-term process of health improvement. As 2011 begins, we have just finished gathering information about our community’s capacity to provide essential public health services, and the trends and factors that may affect health in the County in the coming years. We will begin identifying strategic issues in February, and the initiative’s priorities will be announced in a community meeting in the summer.”

— Dr. Warren Sayre, Chair of the Together! Healthy Knox Executive Team and Physician Clinical Director of Integrated Health Services at Summit Medical Group.

Behind the scenes:

KCHD staff completed two health assessments as part of Together! Healthy Knox prior to forming the community partnership: one to provide a comprehensive snapshot of the health status of Knox County residents, and a second to find out what community members think about Knox County’s health and quality of life. In order to complete these assessments, nine community focus groups were held, more than 3,200 surveys were completed and 27 key leaders were interviewed.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS AND IMPROVING HEALTH

Together! Healthy Knox Initiative Moving Forward Community Partnership and Leadership Team Take Shape

After months of preparatory work by KCHD staff, the Together! Healthy Knox initiative became a community group with a leadership team last June. The group, comprised of business people, community and faith leaders, government officials and others, has been meeting regularly to take a community approach to better health.

KCHD launched Together! Healthy Knox in April 2009 to provide a framework for bringing together the individuals, groups and organizations involved in health and quality of life issues in the county, and to provide guidance for identifying and taking action on priority health issues. The initiative used MAPP (Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships), a strategic planning model developed by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO).

Below are other developments from the Together! Healthy Knox Leadership Team:

- The Local Public Health System Assessment, an evaluation of Knox County’s capacity to provide both individual and population-based health services, was completed at a retreat in December. More than 70 community leaders and representatives from the public and private sectors attended. The report is available online at www.healthyknox.org.
- The Forces of Change Assessment was completed. Its purpose is to look ahead and identify the forces that will help shape Knox County’s health and quality of life in the next three to five years. It also is available online at <http://www.healthyknox.org>.
- Next, the Together! Healthy Knox Leadership Team members will review assessment data and identify strategic health issues in the community.
- A community meeting will convene in May 2011 to present the top strategic issues and recruit work team participants to address them.
- By summer, action plans will be in place for the top strategic issues, along with work teams to implement them.



Nutrition Education Activity Training is a NEAT way to help kids

In 2006, KCHD formed a partnership with Knoxville City Parks and Recreation Department (KPRD) and Tennessee Nutrition Consumer Education Program (TNCEP) to implement a program targeting youth who are at high-risk for developing unhealthy lifestyles and eating behaviors. NEAT, which stands for Nutrition Education Activity Training, is an after-school program which uses nationally proven curriculums to teach nutrition, kitchen skills and safety, hand washing and how to prevent food-borne illness. Until last year, the program operated through Knoxville Parks and Recreation Department's 12 recreation centers. NEAT doubled its program locations last year when the Knox County YMCA joined the partnership, and began hosting the program in their 12 locations.

More about NEAT:

- NEAT now serves approximately 500 children throughout Knox County with a weekly curriculum from Kids in the Kitchen and Recharge! Energizing After-School.
- More than 30 nutrition students from the University of Tennessee Department of Nutrition volunteer their time to teach the children once a week when school is in session.
- Regular exposure to fruits and vegetables is a top priority and samples are served weekly or monthly, when funding is available.
- Almost 60 percent of the NEAT kids are meeting their daily recommendations for vegetables and fruits.
- Over the past two years, 24 percent of the children who participated in NEAT reported eating less high fat foods (such as candy, cookies, and cake) per day.
- Fifty percent of children reported drinking less than or equal to one serving of sugar-sweetened beverage per day, an improvement of 28 percent since the 08/09 school year.
- There also was an 11 percent increase in children who identified whole wheat bread as a healthier choice than white bread.

KCHD is a key partner on the Sustainable Communities Consortium.

The consortium, which has received \$4.3 million from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Transportation, is charged with creating a five county sustainability plan that incorporates the issues of transportation, housing, economic development and health.



An important, if unlikely, NEAT partner was the Knoxville Fire Department (KFD). The Knoxville City Parks and Recreation Department coordinated with the various KFD fire halls in an "Adopt-a-Center" program. The KFD fire station crew closest to each city recreation center met with their kids monthly to teach hands-on meal or snack preparation. This was in addition to their weekly sessions with the UT nutrition students. Between one and three firefighters participated every month, depending on the demands of their engine company.



DEVELOPING LEADERS

Public Health Workforce Development Series

One of KCHD's goals, as stated in its strategic plan, is to assure appropriate programs, services, staffing, resources and organizational structure to be at the forefront of public health. This includes providing a learning environment which fosters leadership in its employees.

Preparing the public health leaders of tomorrow is one goal of KCHD's Public Health Workforce Development Series (PHWDS), which was developed by employees for employees as an opportunity to increase knowledge and expand skills essential for the practice of public health. Originally piloted in spring 2009, the series has been offered department-wide each year. To date, 53 employees have completed the series of courses.

Course topics address the Core Competencies of Public Health, a set of skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary for the broad practice of public health. Expert guest speakers present on topics that include data analysis and assessment, communication, policy development, financial planning and management, leadership and much more.

The PHWDS committee has begun making plans to add another tier of training in 2011 for those who successfully completed the initial series.

Enrollment is limited to 20 people

but is open to all employees – without regard to training, education or experience – who have completed at least one year of employment. Classes are held once a week and commitment to the entire 10-week course is required. The courses are free of charge and class time is considered work time, with assigned reading and online modules done on the participant's own time.

Behind the scenes

In May, the PHWDS was selected as a Promising Practice by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO).





Youth Health Board

KCHD's strong partnership with Knox County Schools and the number of health programs targeted to children and young adults has prompted a groundbreaking collaborative effort called the Youth Health Board. This youth-driven group provides a unique perspective and new opportunities to partner with public health professionals and other community groups to explore and take action on a variety of health issues.

The board is made up of two representatives from each Knox County high school. To be selected, students must complete an application process and demonstrate strong leadership skills, a commitment to the community, and an interest in health-related issues. Members are responsible for serving a one year term (August - April) and attending monthly meetings. They also are expected to actively participate in various community efforts designated by the membership.

Activities included:

- Reviewing proposed changes and additions to the Knox County Schools Food Program and providing face-to-face feedback to the director of Food and Nutrition of Food for Knox County Schools.
- Working with the KCHD staff to develop and host Healthy You 101, a conference for teens.
- Visiting three HKHC (see page 4) sites to assess the built environment and propose changes to improve use of the public space using Photovoice, a technique that allows community residents to use photographs to identify problem areas and work for solutions. They also surveyed residents to identify a public space where improvements could enable community use.
- Collecting 175 winter coats at Knox Area schools as a service project for Coats for the Cold.

For 2011, the Youth Health Board plans to continue its Photovoice project with the goal of expanding students' knowledge of assessment and planning related to the built environment. Other public health areas they are interested in exploring include distracted driving, healthy relationships, and youth substance abuse.



Knox County Health Department

provides numerous opportunities for students interested in expanding their experience in public health. More than 300 students from area colleges and universities interned or completed a clinical rotation at KCHD in 2010. Fields of study included nursing, dentistry, nutrition and kinesiology.



ASSESSING COMMUNITY STRENGTHS AND NEEDS

LEADING HEALTH INDICATORS: The most current data available.

	Knox	Knox	Tennessee	Nation	Healthy People 2010
Physical Activity	2005	2008			
Percentage of persons who met the recommendations for physical activity	44.1%	N/A	38.8%	49.2%	60%
Overweight and Obesity	2005	2008			
Percentage of adults who reported being overweight or obese	60.7%	61.7%	68%	63.2%	40%
Tobacco Use	2007	2009			
Percentage of teens who reported cigarette smoking in past 30 days (grades 9-12)	18.9%	20.4%	20.9%	20%	16%
Percentage of adults who reported being current smokers (ages 18+)	2005 22.1%	2008 21.5%	23.1%	18.3%	12%
Percentage of mothers who smoked during pregnancy	2004 19.7%	2006 20%	19.2% (2006)	13% (1998)	1%
Substance Abuse	2007	2009			
Percentage of teens who reported ever using marijuana	32.9%	38.4%	37.5%	36.8%	N/A
Responsible Sexual Behavior (rates reported per 100,000 population)	2008	2009			
Rate of Syphilis	33.5	35.7	21.2	14.7	.2 (primary and secondary only)
Rate of Gonorrhea	177.4	88.4	127.5	99.1	19
Rate of Chlamydia	396	402.9	478.1	409.2	N/A
Rate of HIV*	9.4 (2007)	16 (2008)	16.6	N/A	N/A
Adolescent pregnancy rate (pregnancies per 1,000 females age 15-17 years old)	31.8	N/A	33.6	44	43
Injury and Violence	2005	2009			
Percentage of teens who reported rarely or never using seat belts when riding in a car driven by someone else	8.9%	8.5%	9.6%	9.7%	8%
Percentage of adults who reported always using seat belts	N/A	84.2%	83%	82.4%	92%
Environmental Quality					
Percentage of children tested who had elevated blood lead levels	<1%	<1%	<1%	1.5%	0%

LEADING HEALTH INDICATORS: The most current data available.

	Knox	Knox	Tennessee	Nation	Healthy People 2010
Immunization	2005	2008			
Percentage of children who are current on recommended immunizations at age 2 years	N/A	79.5%	82.3%	76.1%	80%
Percentage of persons aged 65+ who received a flu shot in the past 12 months	71.4%	76.3%	70.8%	70.9%	90%
Percentage of persons aged 65+ who ever received a pneumococcal vaccination	76%	73.6%	64.3%	66.9%	90%
Access to Health Care	2005	2008			
Percentage of persons who had healthcare coverage (65 and older)	88.8%	85.5%	80.4%	82.9%	100%
Percentage of persons who were unable to get needed health care due to cost	13.4%	15.4%	N/A	N/A	7%
Percentage of persons who visited a dentist in the past year	68.7%	66.8%	66.8%	71.2%	56%
Health Screening	2005	2008			
Percentage of women who had a mammogram in the past two years	84.4%	82.3%	74.3%	76%	70%
Percentage of women who had a pap test in the past three years	86.7%	84%	83.9%	82.8%	90%
Percentage of men 40+ who had a Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) test in the past two years	N/A	87.5%	48.1%	54.8%	N/A
Adults aged 50+ who ever had a sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy	63.6%	70.9%	59.5%	61.8%	50%
Health Outcomes	2005	2008			
Percentage of adults told by a physician that they have Diabetes	8.2%	9.5%	10.4%	8.3%	2.5%
Percentage of adults told by a physician that they have Asthma	13.7%	14.3%	12.6%	13.6%	N/A
Mortality		2006			
Infant Mortality (deaths per 1,000 live births)		6.5	8.7	6.7	4.5

VISION:

Every Person, A Healthy Person.

MISSION:

To encourage, promote and assure the development of an active, healthy community through innovative public health practices.

CORE VALUES:

- Responsiveness and commitment to our community
- Accountability and integrity in our operation
- Excellence through evidence-based and innovative practices
- Leading by example



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