



ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE
DENT COUNTY HEALTH CENTER

2021

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Dent County Health Center is to promote and protect the health of the citizens of Dent County through education, disease and injury prevention, regulation and delivery of public health services in order that all residents may achieve optimum health. We believe that Public Health Makes Life Better.

WHAT IS PUBLIC HEALTH?

The Institute of Medicine has defined public health as “an organized community effort aimed at the prevention of disease and promotion of health.” Unlike our health care system which provides medical services to individuals, our public health system focuses on the health of our city/population as a whole.

Public health affects us all, all of the time. Public health efforts have increased our life span by nearly 30 years in the past century. Simple actions we take for granted today such as drinking clean water and breathing clean air, eating fresh fruits and vegetables, wearing seatbelts and bike helmets, and using pedestrian cross-walks, are benefits that we owe to the efforts of a system that is dedicated to making good health available to every citizen.

Our public health system involves many players. The Health Department has legal responsibility for ensuring public health and employs professionals, such as disease investigators, environmental inspectors, social workers, and nurses. The Health Department also relies on medical professions in public and private practice to perform public health functions and help patients practice prevention. Police and fire departments play a crucial role in sustaining public safety and well-being, and even architects, housing developers, city planners and parks and recreation staff contribute through their everyday work to the safety and health of our community.

Neighborhood and nonprofit organizations are also part of the public health system. Our department has active partnerships with the American Red Cross, area health departments, the Salem Memorial District Hospital, Pathways Community Behavioral Healthcare, local pharmacies, physicians and veterinarians, the Division of Family Services, Dent County Fire Department, local law enforcement, and the Council for a Healthy Dent County.

The Main Functions of a Public Health System:

1. Preventing diseases and decreasing transmission of existing diseases
2. Protecting against environmental hazards
3. Preventing injuries
4. Promoting and encouraging healthy behaviors
5. Responding to disasters and assisting communities in recovery
6. Ensuring the quality and accessibility of health services
7. Ensuring every child has a healthy start

Public health is a vital function that requires broad public concern and support in order to fulfill society's interest in assuring the conditions in which people can be healthy. History teaches us that organized community effort to prevent disease and promote health is both valuable and effective. It is this philosophy of assuring a healthy environment, promoting healthy behaviors, and preventing disease that the staff of the Dent County Health Center is committed to practicing now and in the future.



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COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 Pandemic, which was officially declared by the WHO in March of 2020, continued throughout 2021. Dent County Health Center greatly expanded our services and offerings during 2021 in response.

Vaccines

In January, The Health Center worked with the State of Missouri, Salem Memorial District Hospital, Phelps Health, and the National Guard to bring COVID-19 Vaccines to Dent County residents who qualified. Mass vaccination events were held at the Commons and the Dent County Fire Station. Vaccine continued to be offered by appointment at the Health Center after the initial wave crested. In August of 2021, the Health Center purchased an ultracold freezer and became a distribution hub for the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine.

Testing

In August, the Health Center became the first and only place in the county to offer COVID-19 testing without a doctor's order. The Health Center tested 1069 people for COVID-19 from August to December of 2021.

Treatment

Toward the end of the year, the county saw a surge in COVID-19 cases, primarily due to the delta variant at the time. The Health Center became the only place in the county that people without insurance could receive monoclonal antibody treatments for COVID-19.

Case Investigation

Case investigations continued throughout 2021, though detailed contact tracing of all close contacts ceased before the year began. Health Center staff conducted over 1500 case investigations in 2021.

Effect on Other Services

Our COVID-19 response reduced demand for our other routine services, though demand was starting to return by the end of 2021. However, the workload associated with the pandemic response made it difficult to provide many of those services. Three new staff positions were added in 2021 to accommodate the changes.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

SURVEILLANCE, INVESTIGATION AND PREVENTION

Communicable Diseases: What Are They?

The purpose of communicable disease investigations are to identify the causes of the disease and decrease the incidence of new people becoming sick. Communicable diseases are those diseases that are a concern to public health. They are reported and tracked by the state or federal government. All states must collect information on the federally reportable list. In addition, they may choose to mandate the reporting of other diseases of interest to the state officials. Public health officials at state health departments and CDC continue to collaborate in determining which diseases should be nationally notifiable. A disease may be added to the list as a new pathogen emerges, or a disease may be deleted as its incidence declines.

As part of its activities in keeping the community informed, the Communicable Disease Prevention Program is responsible for the maintenance and operation of the Dent County node of the Missouri Department of Health’s Health Alert Network (HAN). This notification system targets physicians, hospitals, local health departments, veterinarians, ambulance services and other first responder agencies. Disease alerts, warnings, recommendations and other information can be transmitted through this system to all or selected recipients. The communicable disease department is critical in emergency planning for our community to identify and contain disease outbreaks.

The reporting of communicable diseases to the health department assists in identifying how many people are affected and who else is at risk. Another critical component is to protect those at risk. Individuals may qualify to receive confidential testing and treatment for a communicable disease by contacting our office.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE INVESTIGATIONS	
COVID-19 Case Investigations	1542
Other Communicable Diseases	52
Animal Bites	34

HIV and Sexually Transmitted Disease Services

1. Pregnancy Counseling, Testing and Referral
2. Sexually Transmitted Disease Testing and Counseling
3. Counseling and referrals provided as needed.

ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

Examples of Services Provided:

1. Enforcement of state ordinances governing food service, retail food sales and on-site wastewater disposal. Services provided for Dent County.
2. Inspection of food service establishments, retail food stores, schools, licensed daycares, lodging establishments, public swimming pools.
3. Construction permits issued for on-site sewage disposal systems through Department of Health and Senior Services.
4. Sampling of private water supplies.
5. Investigation of environmental complaints.
6. Investigation of all incidents involving distressed foods including vehicular accidents, fires, floods, etc.
7. Involved in emergency response planning in Dent County.

Food Protection

Food protection is a responsibility of the Environmental Public Health Program. The program handles inspections for all food establishments in Dent County.

Food protection is also responsible for the investigation of any and all truck wrecks (trucks carrying food, drugs or cosmetics) that occur in Dent County for proper disposal of damaged or contaminated products. Food protection responds 24 hours a day, seven days a week to all fire investigations and natural disasters that involve any food establishment.

Lodging Inspections

The Environmental Public Health Program partners with the Bureau of Environmental Health Services at the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services to inspect all lodging establishments within Dent County.

The licensing year is from October 1st through September 30th. Licenses may be obtained by completing an application that is mailed to each establishment on August 1st by the Bureau of Environmental Health Services. Establishments must include an approved inspection for the current year and payment of the appropriate licensing fee with their completed applications.

Inspections are unannounced and can take place anytime throughout the year. Establishments that meet the sanitation and safety standards outlined in the lodging rule, 19 CSR 20-3.050, will receive an approved inspection report. Re-inspections are conducted as needed on non-compliant establishments, and no license will be issued until the violations are corrected.

Child Care Inspections

The Health Center works with the Department of Health and Senior Services staff to assure that annual sanitation inspections are conducted in all licensed child care facilities. Inspections are conducted to protect children in and out of home care from environmental hazards such as exposure to disease, harmful chemicals, lead hazards, building safety and food safety hazards.

COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 Pandemic greatly reduce the number of inspections completed, in part due to a need to reduce contact with the public to reduce the risk of disease transmission, and partly because of environmental staff being utilized in the COVID-19 response.

ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES	
Food Inspections	40
Lodging Inspections	7
Food Complaints	8
Sewage Complaints	2
Food Safety Classes	1

PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Background

Any number of public health emergencies could occur in Dent County ranging from disease outbreaks, to food, environmental and health needs after a natural disaster.

The Health Center plans for and responds to such events. It is not enough to write plans to address public health concerns. The staff works with volunteers and community partners to develop and exercise these response capabilities.

In the event of a serious occurrence of a communicable disease, the counties must be prepared to execute functions not normally required during events normally planned for by other disciplines such as law enforcement and fire service. These include disease surveillance and investigation, mass prophylaxis, isolation and quarantine, mass patient care and even mass fatalities.

Over the last several years, the health department staff have deployed in response to prolonged power outages due to ice storms or tornados. We also assist the EMD and the American Red Cross by inspecting emergency shelters and/or mass feeding sites and providing food safety guidance to volunteers.

Shelters were opened by the staff as requested by EMD and the City of Salem during the power outage of 2005, the ice storm of 2007, the derecho winds of Spring 2009, and the straight-line winds Memorial Day Weekend 2017. The staff has made onsite visits to merchants during emergencies and disasters to assist them in the mitigation of product losses and provide education and assistance as to product viability.

Our Role

It is important to remember that many disciplines will have a role in events as serious as a natural disaster and that it may not be contained within the county limits of Dent County; nor will any communicable disease outbreak.

Dent County staff maintains ongoing working relationships with public health agencies in neighboring jurisdictions and other government agencies. They participate in several committees and subcommittees that meet to plan and coordinate responses to public health emergencies. The department has a Memorandum of Understanding with the American Red

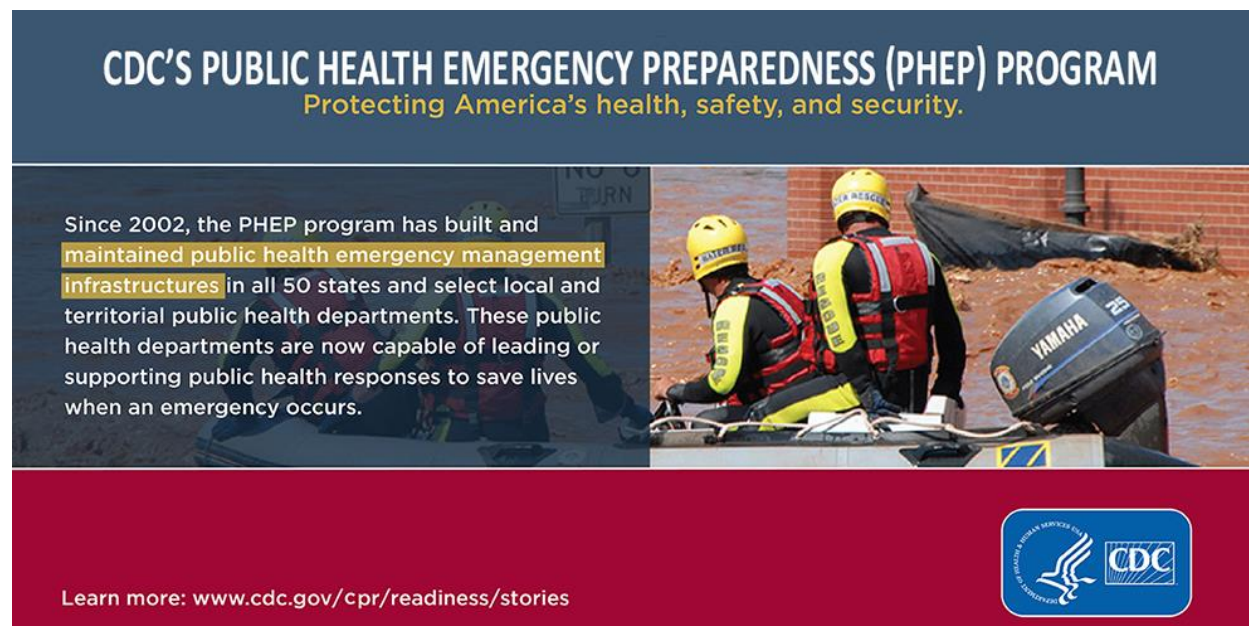
Cross to offer support for functional need clients in emergency shelters. The Dent County Health Center is actively involved in a regional partnership with Region I State Emergency Management and meets regularly to improve our ability to respond to various emergency events.

Community Partnerships

The Dent County Health Center partners with the Phelps County Medical Reserve Corps which works to recruit citizens to join the Health Departments to serve as volunteers. They are taught how to keep themselves safe and healthy and to impart this same information to people in their circle of influence, such as their family, friends, co-workers, neighbors and faith family. This effort supports the goal to keep the communities informed and engaged in the prevention of the development of chronic disease as well as responding appropriately to public health emergencies. These citizens will perform a critical role during public health outbreaks and crisis, as well as during health information campaigns designed to keep the community healthy.


Through these and countless other activities, the program strives to ensure the health and safety of the citizens and visitors of the counties. Plans evolve to meet the increasing challenges of these changing times.

Medical Reserve Corps maintain a trained, background checked list of volunteers to allow a surge of public health services in case of an emergency or disease outbreak




CDC'S PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS (PHEP) PROGRAM
Protecting America's health, safety, and security.

Since 2002, the PHEP program has built and maintained public health emergency management infrastructures in all 50 states and select local and territorial public health departments. These public health departments are now capable of leading or supporting public health responses to save lives when an emergency occurs.



Learn more: www.cdc.gov/cpr/readiness/stories



MATERNAL/CHILD HEALTH INITIATIVES

The Maternal/Child Health Program works to improve the health of women, children and families over their lifespan through community engagement, partnerships, education and advocacy. Our most recent focus in Dent County has been on substance use prevention and injury prevention. These programs have achieved positive, measurable outcomes with a strong community partnership with Healthy Dent County and the local school.

For the upcoming contract year, the Dent County Health Center will be working with several community partners in conjunction with Healthy Dent County Prevention Coalition to focus our efforts on Child and Adolescent Intentional and Unintentional Injuries, with an emphasis on Substance Abuse awareness and prevention.

CHILD ABUSE/INJURY PREVENTION

The health works closely with new mothers to promote and educate parents on safe crib standards and infant bedding to prevent accidental suffocation and SIDS deaths. A Children's Trust Fund grant support personnel to provide education and safe cribs to program clients.

CHILDCARE HEALTH CONSULTATION

We have health professionals that are prepared to offer consultation and education to providers, parents and children in daycare settings. The consultation and education services provide credit hours to childcare providers to qualify for licensure. The education provided focuses on child safety, CPR, communicable disease prevention and emergency response.

CARE COORDINATION FOR PRENATALS

Care Coordination is a program funded by Medicaid for pregnant women that have been identified as having high-risk pregnancies. This program's goal is to reduce the incidence of premature births and adverse events due to lack of prenatal care and health prevention during pregnancy. Registered Nurses counsel program participants monthly and provide education and guidance regarding pregnancy, healthcare, labor and delivery, and infant care education.

In 2021, there was only one Medicaid plan that covered care coordination, and no local providers accepted this plan. As a result, care coordination visits dropped to zero. Alternative funding mechanisms are under investigation to ensure delivery of this important service.

Show-Me Healthy Women

The Show-Me Healthy Women program offers free breast and cervical cancer screenings to women ages 35-64, or older if they do not receive Medicare part B. To qualify, women must have a household income at or below 200 percent of the Federal poverty level and have no insurance to cover the services or be unable to pay the deductible for the insurance. The Health Center partners with Salem Memorial District Hospital to offer mammogram screenings and sends a healthcare provider to facilitate the program.

Maternal/Child Health Services 2021	
Safe Cribs Distributed	1
Childcare Nurse Consultation	3
Care Coordination	0
Show-Me Healthy Women Exams	9
Pregnancy Tests	15
Presumptive Eligibility Cases	9

IMMUNIZATIONS

We provide all immunizations for children and adults.

Off-site clinics at SMDH, area schools, and places of employment are offered regularly and can be scheduled by request.

Immunizations are available by appointment, Monday thru Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

We offer free vaccines for those who qualify.

Immunization Appointments 2021	
COVID-19 Vaccines	2166
Influenza Vaccines	438
Total Visits	3518

DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

Outpatient lab services are provided at greatly reduced rate to clients with an order from a medical provider. We offer any test currently conducted by Labcorp. In addition, we have a variety of rapid testing available for results in an hour or less

Diagnostic Services 2021	
Outpatient Lab Appointments	1210
COVID tests	1069

WIC (WOMEN, INFANTS AND CHILDREN)

What is WIC?

WIC is a supplemental nutrition program for women, infants and children. WIC helps to prevent health problems and improve the health status of participants through good nutrition. The WIC Program supplements the diets of qualified participants with nutritious food items by issuing a food "prescription." WIC promotes breastfeeding as the optimal feeding for infants and provides education and support.

Who qualifies for WIC?

1. Women who are pregnant, breastfeeding (nursing a baby up to one year old), and postpartum (up to 6 months after a pregnancy has ended)
2. Infants (a child under one year old)
3. Children (from 1 year old up to age 5)

All women, infants, and children must meet income guidelines and medical criteria to qualify for WIC.

WIC will not provide all of the foods needed. WIC foods are intended to supplement the diet. The food packages approved for use in the Missouri WIC program are designed to help meet infants' developmental needs and current pediatric feeding recommendations, and to complement the eating patterns of preschool children. WIC foods also supplement the special requirements of pregnant and breastfeeding women and help to re-supply the nutrient stores women use during pregnancy.

Women, Infants, and Children	
Total Visits in 2021	3645

VITAL RECORDS

1. Birth records for state of Missouri from 1920 to present.
2. Death certificates from 1980 to present. (Natural causes only due to confidentiality.)
3. Copies of death certificates filed by funeral homes. Certificates are held for 24 hours.
4. All death certificates for Dent County are registered and filed through our office. Death certificates are now e-filed by funeral directors and coroners as of April 1, 2012 as mandated by law.

Vital Records 2021	
Birth and Death Certificates Issued	2595


HEALTH EDUCATION AND PROMOTION

In response to the growing obesity epidemic, the Health Center works with other community partners on a number of healthy eating and active living initiatives. These include The Salem Fitness Center, health fairs, and community gardens, walking programs, workplace health planning and support for healthy foods in schools.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Public Health Information is provided to the community in the Your World Today, local newspaper, local radio, and the Health Center Facebook page as well as the website, www.dentcountyhealthcenter.com.

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