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 The mission of Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department, in partnership with other entities, is to promote a healthy and secure quality of life for our communities.
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Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) has commenced work towards accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board. Within its 2004 *Futures Initiative*, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention identified accreditation as a key strategy for strengthening public health infrastructure. The following activities for accreditation were accomplished:

- Initiation of a Continuous Quality Improvement project to identify areas needing improvement in the clinical paperwork cycle. This process identified several areas of improvement and resulted in saving the health department several thousands of dollars.
- Work on Domains 8 & 11 of the accreditation process which included development of a workforce development plan, updating all job descriptions to include core public health competencies, updating the employee recognition and wellness plans, reviewing all policies and procedures for payroll and personnel, updating the employee handbook, and reviewing contracts and memorandums of understanding. This work was accomplished utilizing a grant from Nebraska DHHS Department of Public Health.

Accreditation also focuses on accountability to the public and increasing the visibility and public awareness of governmental public health. SWNPHD continually works with the public to build awareness of the public health tagline of Prevent, Promote, Protect. This includes publishing an annual report for the public and an additional report for state legislators, being visible on Facebook and Twitter with posts 2-4 times per week, and news releases that are sent out several times per month to local radio and newspapers. The health department website was recently upgraded to include mobile access and a modern format with easily accessible information. One on one relationships are cultivated with public health partners in the health district and throughout the state, and routine contacts are made with state legislators related to public health concerns.



Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department

PREVENT • PROMOTE • PROTECT

BOARD OF HEALTH

Chase County:
 Charles Vette
 Jordan Hammerlun

Dundy County:
 Scott Olson; Rita Jones

Frontier County:
 Kevin Owens
 Shelley Veldhuizen

Furnas County:
 Mike Sexton; John Kutnink

Hayes County:
 Barry Richards; Leon Kolbet

Hitchcock County:
 Scott McDonald; Lisa Lewis

Keith County:
 Joan Ervin; Mark Baldwin

Perkins County:
 Ron Hagan; Patsy Kroeker

Red Willow County:
 Earl McNutt; Terri Skolout

Physician:
 Shiuvaun Jaeger, MD

Dentist:
 Open

PREVENT DISEASE & INJURY

PROMOTE OPTIMAL HEALTH

PROTECT THE HEALTH OF ALL



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

35

Public Shot Clinics for
Children & Adults

1,451

Immunizations given

24

Respite Providers
Recruited

165

Lead Exposures
Investigated

674

Follow up Disease
Investigations

21

Walk-in Flu
Shot Clinics

120

Health Fair
Lab Draws

167

Radon Test Kits
Distributed

482

4th Grade Students
at NE Kids Fitness &
Nutrition Day

5

Environmental
Complaints
Investigated

25

Women Health
Coached

145

Families Connected
to Respite Care

50

FOBT Home Colon
Cancer Kits Given

110

Free Health
Screenings Given

120

Mosquito Traps Set
for West Nile Virus

480

Walk to Health
Participants



Free Health Screenings

The Health Hub program provided health coaching and navigation for cancer screenings to age specific populations. SWNPHD has a 71% rate of navigating women to get their cervical and breast cancer screenings done. The health department just recently started health coaching again due to changes being made at the state level. Since restarting, 63% of women referred by the Every Woman Matters program have been engaged in health coaching with a focus on either physical activity or “Check. Change. Control.” blood pressure monitoring. Health Coaching assists clients with lifestyle changes to control conditions such as high blood pressure, elevated cholesterol numbers, and improving overall fitness. Currently staff are working to establish partnerships with local hospitals to increase the number of women and men receiving preventive cancer screenings.



The Minority Health Initiative provides free health screenings to minority populations that include their health numbers for blood pressure, cholesterol and blood glucose. Program Managers and a Community Health Worker also provide one on one health education regarding healthy living through diet, exercise, and regular monitoring of their health numbers. This program served 107 individuals focusing on minorities in Chase, Dundy, Keith, and Red Willow counties.

Radon Education & Testing



Age 13-14 1st Place Dayami Ruiz Vazquez

Every home in Nebraska has radon gas, at different levels. 1 in 2 homes tested in Nebraska have radon levels over 4.0, which is the level that requires mitigation—installing a system to remove the radon gas from the home. Radon gas is a leading cause of lung cancer in the US, second only to smoking. Testing for radon and installing a mitigation system if the level is high is one way to prevent lung cancer, which is why the health department encourages testing of all homes in the health district for radon. DIY home radon test kits are sold for \$10 at SWNPHD offices, and are also available at many hardware stores. Average results for southwest Nebraska in 2018-2019 were:

Ages 9 to 10	Ages 11 to 12	Ages 13 to 14
1st – Riley Hagan, Hitchcock County	1st – Eden Lozano, Hitchcock County	1st – Dayami Ruiz Vazquez
2nd – (tie) Esperanza Bueno, Red Willow Co; Dylan Kollmorgen, Hitchcock County	2nd – Asa Long, Red Willow County	2nd – Kailee Potts
3rd – Lissy Sandall, Red Willow County	3rd – Hannah Huff, Red Willow County	3rd – Mallory McClenahan (All from Perkins County)

Chase County: 7.5	Dundy County: 4.0
Furnas County: 7.3	Hayes County: 6.9
Hitchcock: 5.6	Keith County: 5.0
Red Willow: 6.4	Frontier, Perkins: No Data

Radon Poster Contest 2018 Winners

Promote

Walk to Health Grows

Walk to Health is a free walking program run by SWNPHD to promote physical activity and reduce the risk of chronic diseases. Walking is one of the easiest ways to increase daily activity levels and see health benefits like lower blood pressure, improved cholesterol numbers, better mood, and more.

Through a partnership with Community Hospital of McCook's Wellness for Life program, walkers are able to use MoveSpring to track their steps. MoveSpring is a fitness challenge app that can be used on a smartphone or computer. Users can link to a step tracker (like Fitbit) or enter steps manually. The app gives users a fun way to participate in Walk to Health, with motivational content, a leaderboard for those who like competition, and the ability to chat with other users about their walking. New this year is the friend feature, that allows teams and individuals to stay in touch in between challenges.

Multiple walking challenges are held throughout the year. The Spring 2019 Challenge had 480 participants, and over 100 people made it into the Million Step Club at the end of the 12 weeks. Walk to Health now has summer and holiday challenges that have been well received; Community Hospital donated a gift for everyone who completed these challenges. This program has been an example in southwest Nebraska of what can be done through partnerships between public health and local hospitals and clinics.



Walk to Health Spring 2019 Winners, left to right: Daphne Tidyman, Myrah Brown, & Misti Raburn. Also pictured CH's Wellness Coordinator Tricia Wagner.



VetSET Program Manager Joy Trail and US Marine Corps veteran Robert Spry.

Connecting with VetSET

Over the past year the VetSET program at SWNPHD has made many new connections. Many of the program activities focused on the foundational elements of training, gathering resources and engaging with potential partners. All health department staff received orientation on the purpose of the program and training on military culture. Staff contacted each of the County Veteran Service Officers to let them know about the VetSET program and talk about the needs of veterans in their counties. Program Manager Joy Trail began compiling a local resource list of agencies and services available for veterans, service members and families because the program was receiving calls from community members looking for

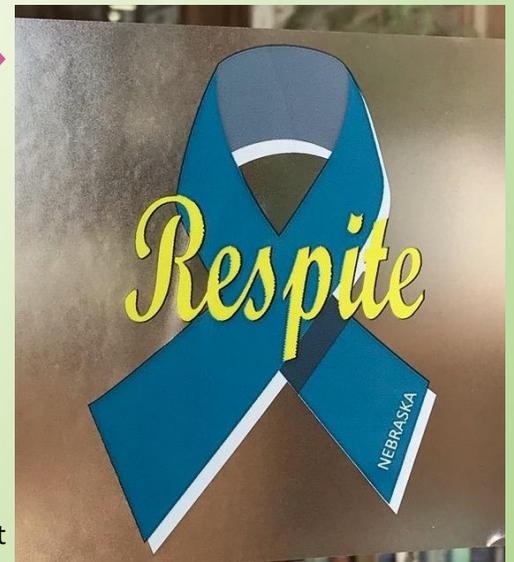
assistance. SWNPHD participated in two Project Connect events in Ogallala and North Platte, where VetSET staff were able to connect with veterans in need of services and with other agencies that serve them. SWNPHD also began attending the Putting Veterans First meeting organized by West Central District Health Department to develop contacts and partnerships for local efforts to support veterans, service members and families.

Living Well Workshops Begin

Health is soundness of body and mind, and a healthy life is one that seeks that soundness. Living Well with Chronic Conditions teaches individuals to work at overcoming the physical, mental, and emotional problems caused by conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, depression, liver disease, bipolar disorder, emphysema, or any one of a host of others. Family members of persons with chronic conditions are also welcome to attend and find strategies for coping with stress and improving quality of life for themselves and their loved ones. One SWNPHD staff member and 2 partners were trained in the spring of 2019 to be Living Well instructors and are available to teach this class: Melissa Propp, RN, Julia Maddux, Community Health Worker, and Jordan Hammerlun, RN. SWNPHD launched its first workshop in September for eight individuals in Imperial Nebraska. Living Well with Chronic Conditions workshops will be available to help residents get tips on reducing pain and fatigue, eating better, making exercise fun, talking with their doctors and more.

Lifespan Respite Network

The Nebraska Respite Network-Southwest Area served as a resource and referral service for 145 families needing a break from caregiving, across the lifespan. SWNPHD assisted families in locating providers, accessing information for respite funding, maintaining listings of independent care providers, and providing trainings and support for family caregivers, providers, agencies and community members. Recently there have been changes made to allow community-based organizations to provide respite services, like Maranatha Bible Camp and Therapeutic Choices Equine Therapy. These additions have allowed more individuals to access respite in areas where there were few options available, especially for youth with behavioral issues. Information about the services can be obtained by calling 1-866-RESPITE or visiting respite.ne.gov.



NE Kids Fitness & Nutrition Day



4th grade students participate in NKFND fitness stations.

The annual Nebraska Kids Fitness & Nutrition Day (NKFND) was held October 3, 2018 at the McCook Community College Peter and Dolores Graff Event Center. 298 fourth grade students from the central time zone schools of SWNPHD's nine-county health district participated in this one day fitness and nutrition event. Schools participating included Arapahoe, Cambridge, Eustis-Farnam, Hayes Center, Hitchcock County, Maywood, McCook Central Elementary, McCook St. Patrick's, Medicine Valley, Southern Valley, Southwest,

Stratton, and Wauneta/Palisade. Perkins County Schools was the second location of Nebraska Kids Fitness and Nutrition Day (NKFND) held for the mountain time zone schools located in the SWNPHD district on Wednesday, October 10th 2018. Perkins County School hosted 184 fourth grade students from Chase County, Dundy County, Keith County Elementary, St. Luke's Catholic, and Paxton. Students at both locations spent time learning how to make healthy choices at 6 nutrition stations and getting active at 15 fitness stations. The fitness stations included activities such as agility drills, dance, frisbee, the parachute, trash can basketball and obstacle courses.

Protect

Disease Investigations

One of the main public health activities is the investigation of diseases that could spread or otherwise pose a hazard to the public. Physicians, hospitals and laboratories are required by law to submit reports of communicable diseases. This information is submitted to SWNPHD and/or the Nebraska Health and Human Services System where it is tracked and monitored; follow-up is conducted by SWNPHD surveillance staff and then reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). When there is a need to notify the public of possible exposure to one of these diseases, SWNPHD sends out news releases and contacts specific individuals or organizations as needed. The Public Health Nurse works closely with schools to share information with parents and teachers about preventing the spread of infectious diseases when they have any positive cases.

Lead Education & Inspection

Protecting children from exposure to lead is important to lifelong good health. Even low levels of lead in blood have been shown to affect a child's IQ and their ability to pay attention. Children age 1 to 6 are screened for possible lead exposure during their well child checkups, and the screening results are reported to SWNPHD. Extreme lead exposure, called lead poisoning, can be a serious condition. Symptoms of lead poisoning include anemia, kidney damage, slow bone and muscle growth, lower IQ or learning issues, and behavior problems.

SWNPHD follows up with families when a lead level greater than 5.0 is reported and provide education about lead, how to find potential sources of lead in the home and how to remove it. When the screening results are 10 or higher SWNPHD works with physicians and state lead program officials to quickly identify and remove the source of lead from the home.

West Nile Virus Surveillance

In order to discover when the mosquito population in southwest Nebraska is carrying West Nile Virus, mosquito traps are set in Chase and Red Willow counties every week from May until October. Trapped mosquitoes are sent to a lab at the University of Nebraska for testing, and the results are tracked by SWNPHD surveillance staff. When a mosquito pool tests positive for West Nile Virus, the public is notified through standard and social media channels along with the recommendation for precautions to take to prevent mosquito bites.

This year there were many mosquitoes due to the extra moisture in the area; however, the majority of those were floodwater mosquitoes which do not carry West Nile. Surveillance staff followed up on 9 human cases of West Nile Virus, only 2 of which were positively confirmed.

Investigations 2018-19	
Adenovirus	3
Animal Bite	27
Astro	5
Campylobacter	32
Carbon Monoxide	1
C-diff	3
Chagas	1
Cocci	1
Crypto	17
E Coli	6
EAEC	3
EPEC	24
ETEC	1
Giardia	7
Group A Strep	6
Group B Strep	5
Hep A	1
Hep B	44
Hep C	82
Hep D	1
HIB	5
Histoplasmosis	9
Klebsiella	1
Lead exposure	165
Lead poisoning	10
Legionella	1
Lyme Disease	3
Measles	1
M. Arupense	1
Mycoplasma	6
Norovirus	18
P Shigella	5
Pertussis	30
Rabies follow up	35
Rotavirus	2
Salmonella	38
Sapovirus	2
Shigella	2
Staphylococcus	2
Staph Aureus	10
STEC	18
Strep Pneumonia	16
Strep Vig	1
TB follow up	11
Varicella	1
West Nile Virus	9
Yersiniosis	2
Total	674

SWNPHD Joins Tobacco Coalition



Tobacco Free Coalition Bibs Donated to Area Hospitals for Newborn Packages

As part of efforts to reduce cancers linked to tobacco use, in 2018 Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department joined the Tobacco Free Lincoln County Coalition sponsored by Community Connections of North Platte. Coalition members shared a template that was used to create baby bibs with the message “Tender Lungs at Work. Thank you for not smoking!” SWNPHD shared these bibs with six hospitals for them to include in gift packages given to parents of newborns.

SWNPHD completed a Tobacco Advertising Audit at selected tobacco outlets within the nine-county health district. Stores were surveyed for location of tobacco advertising, types of products sold, warning signs displayed, prices and promotions, etc. Several stores were found to be out of compliance with advertising regulations, with tobacco products near candy or youth items and advertising displays at child level. These regulations are meant to protect youth and prevent tobacco outlets from recruiting youth as new tobacco users.

The rates of youth who use e-cigarettes has increased at an alarming rate in the last 5 years. The developing brains of children and teens are seriously affected by the nicotine in tobacco products, including e-cigarettes and vaping products. SWNPHD sent information about e-cigarettes to all schools in the health district to make teachers and administrators aware of what to look for and how these products affect their students, allowing them to create well-informed policies to protect their students.



Public Health Nurse Melissa Propp, RN

Great Plains Leadership Graduate

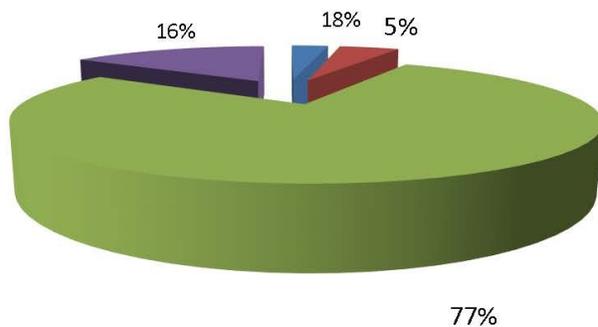
SWNPHD’s Public Health Nurse Melissa Propp, RN graduated from the Great Plains Leadership Institute (GPLI) in October 2018. Melissa is the fifth health department staff member to graduate from this year-long training program designed for emerging leaders in organizations in Nebraska and surrounding states whose primary mission is to improve the health and well-being of populations and communities. The course focuses on increasing knowledge, building skill, and applying new strategies in the workplace and community. Melissa is a leader in promoting immunizations for children, teens and adults, following up on reportable diseases and providing public health education. She will use the skills gained at GPLI to continue to provide quality leadership among public health partners to improve the health and wellbeing of communities in southwest Nebraska.

Financial Report

July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019 *Unaudited

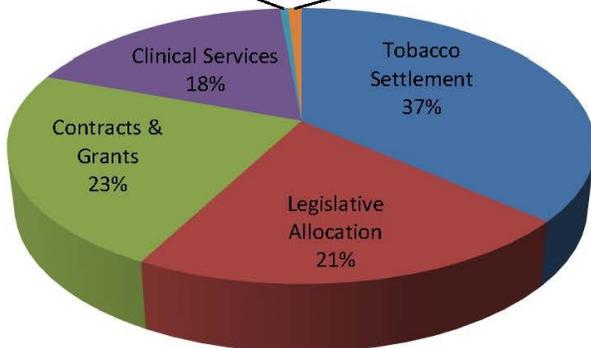
Expenditures

■ Equipment & Improvements ■ Vehicle
■ Program Expenses ■ Administrative Expenses



Revenues

■ Sales & Fees Income 1% ■ Donations & Interest...



MORE INFORMATION

County Health Rankings:

www.countyhealthrankings.org/rankings/data/ne

Healthy People 2020:

www.healthypeople.gov/

Public Health Association of Nebraska:

publichealthne.org

State Association of Local Boards of Health:

publichealthne.org/phan-sections/salboh/

Rural Health Info:

www.ruralhealthinfo.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

www.cdc.gov

Tobacco Free Nebraska:

dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Tobacco-Free-Nebraska



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