



Old West Balloon Fest, Scotts Bluff County
Photo Credit: Andrew Smith of Adventure Photography

Panhandle
Public Health District
Annual Report 2021



Kim Engel
Director

Public health professionals across the state and nation are committed to the communities they serve. As we enter our third year of COVID response in the Panhandle, we continue to plan and coordinate resources, partners, communication, and supplies. We are also working to return to key functions for the mental well-being of our staff and the residents we serve.

After all, keeping the residents of the Panhandle safe and healthy is our core function. The unified public health front of moving the threat of COVID from a pandemic state to an endemic state remains a priority and one that we all have a part in. What does this look like for the residents we serve? Hospitalizations, deaths, overburdened healthcare systems, access to vaccines and treatments, variants, and the virus's reproductive number are all factors. **Increasing our vaccination rate is critical.**

Governor Ricketts announced on December 21st, "9 or 10 Nebraskans hospitalized with COVID since the end of October have been unvaccinated." The toll this virus has taken is staggering, and every individual and family is impacted somehow. Sadly, many are still experiencing severe illness, hospitalization, or death.

We have prepared for pandemics with a plan in place and exercised elements of the plan with our partners. We knew that if a novel virus were present, people would need to modify their behaviors to physically distance or wear a mask, and hopefully, a solution through a vaccine would soon be developed. Unfortunately, we never prepared for the onslaught of misinformation and disinformation that has flooded social media and the airwaves. Some incorrect messages were mistakes, and others were deliberately broadcast to cause confusion, division, and destroy trust. Research has shown that much of the disinformation derives from outside the United States. Their goal is to divide us as a nation, community, and even friends and families. The messages are broadcast over social media and then replicated and amplified through bots to convince the reader that what is stated is factual.

Sadly, this war-tactic is working. Innocent people read the headline or the article and pass it on to their friends and networks. When individuals respond to a message, they receive more of those types of messages in their newsfeed, so the cycle continues. Please don't play into the hand of those who want to harm us. This is one of the biggest hurdles we face.

We live in an incredible country with many freedoms and choices to keep ourselves, our families, our communities, and our country healthy and safe. As we enter another year, please exercise your right to get vaccinated. If you've been vaccinated, get boosted. Please do it now.

Kim Engel
Director

Up-to-date on your vaccine?

Have you....

- Completed the primary series (2 doses) of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine at least 5 months ago AND received a booster dose? -OR
- Completed the primary (1) dose of Janssen (J&J) vaccine at least 2 months ago AND received a booster dose?

If you answered no to any of these questions for yourself or a family member over the age of 5; please consider vaccinating to protect yourself and your loved ones from COVID-19.

As I reflect on 2021, I think back to 2020 and how we worked through all those challenges and yet this past year has been just as challenging, trying to get back to normal and still dealing with the ongoing effects of Covid 19 and all the politics that surround it.

As you read through this report, and I hope you do, please take note of all the areas of our daily lives that Panhandle Public Health District works to help us improve our health and quality of life. I encourage you to visit our website www.pphd.org for more information on our community, who we are, and what we do, and please contact us if there is a way to help.



Bob Gifford

We are blessed with a wonderful and very competent staff that - from a board's perspective - make difficult tasks look easy. Our board is also made up of very caring and committed people from all 12 counties, who work to help make us become a healthier and safer community.

May God bless you and all of us this coming year.

Bob Gifford
Board President



Board of Health

Banner County

Bob Gifford
County Commissioner
Marie Parker
Community-Spirited Citizen

Box Butte County

Trish Johnston
County Commissioner
Carolyn Jones
Community-Spirited Citizen

Cheyenne County

Randy Miller
County Commissioner
Mandi Raffelson
Community-Spirited Citizen

Dawes County

Vic Rivera
County Commissioner
Karen Eisenbarth
Community-Spirited Citizen

Deuel County

Steve Fischer
County Commissioner
William Gray
Community-Spirited Citizen

Garden County

Dixann Krajewski
County Commissioner
TBD
Community-Spirited Citizen

Grant County

Brian Brennemann
County Commissioner
Jon Werth
Community-Spirited Citizen

Kimball County

Carl Stander
County Commissioner
Kenneth Mars
Community-Spirited Citizen

Morrill County

Susanna Batterman
County Commissioner
Kay Anderson
Community-Spirited Citizen

Scotts Bluff County

Ken Meyer
County Commissioner
Jennifer Sibal
Community-Spirited Citizen

Sheridan County

Dan Kling
County Commissioner
Pat Wellnitz
Community-Spirited Citizen

Sioux County

Hal Downer
County Commissioner
Jackie Delatour
Community-Spirited Citizen

At Large

David Cornutt, MD, *Medical Doctor*
TBD, DDS, *Dentist*
Jon Werth, DVM, *Veterinarian*

Free COVID-19 VACCINE
ages 5 and older

Find a vaccination site near you at:
www.pphd.org.

Community Health Assessment (CHA)

The purpose of the CHA is to describe the current health status of the community, identify and prioritize health issues, better understand the range of factors that can impact health, and identify assets and resources that can be mobilized to improve the health of the community. This process is completed every 3 years to determine regional priority areas.

Behavioral Health



- Mental Well-Being
- Suicide Prevention & Support
- Substance Abuse Prevention

Housing and Homelessness



Underlying Priorities: Poverty & Access to Care

Early Childhood Care & Education



- Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect
- Improve Quality of Care

Chronic Disease Prevention

- Cancer Prevention
- Diabetes Prevention
- Heart Disease Prevention
- Address Risk Factors



How does Community Health Improvement happen?

Partners plan together and use strategies that have been proven to work. We track data and meet frequently to discuss progress and upcoming opportunities. An annual report is published each year to track our progress.

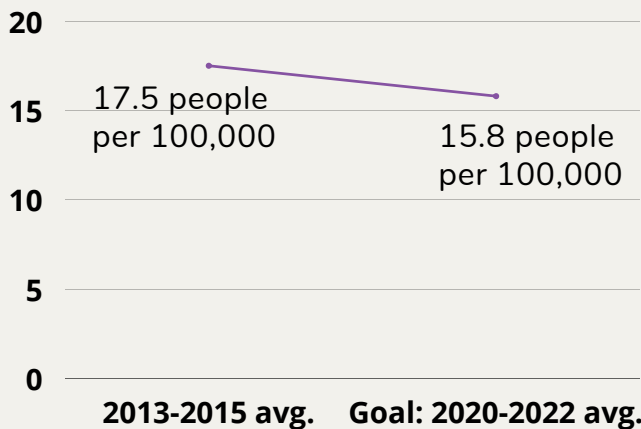
If you would like to read more about the regional health improvement goals you can find them on the PPHD website under Data and Publications and then under Agency Policies.

Community Health Improvement

Behavioral Health

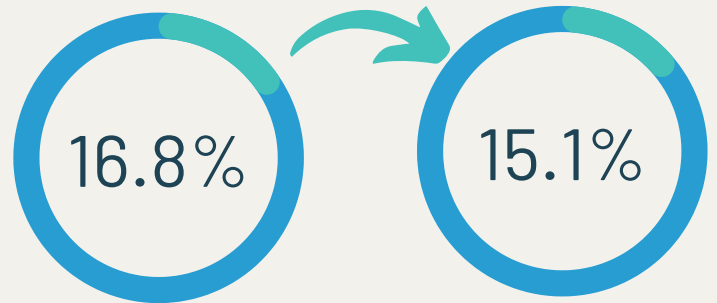
Mental Health services in the Panhandle are sparsely available, so it is an ongoing goal for the hospitals and the public health district to improve access to and acceptance of these services. Below are a few of the measures we will be tracking to determine success.

Decrease Suicide Death Rate (measured as individuals per 100,000)



Percent of population engaging in binge drinking (2018)

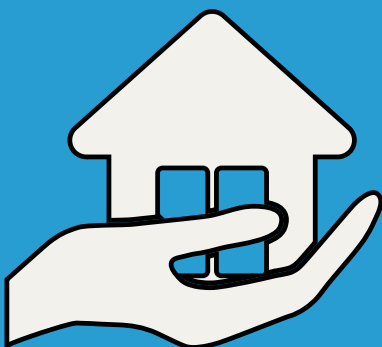
Percent of population engaging in binge drinking (Goal for 2023)



Decrease Substance Abuse (measured as percent of the population)

Housing and Homelessness

Housing in rural communities is also an ongoing challenge. Access to right-sized housing that meets the needs of those living in it is sparse, and dynamics surrounding COVID have further affected this dynamic. The Panhandle currently has no homeless shelters. Ongoing efforts to better housing in the Panhandle are tracked by the two measures below.



Measures in this area are hard to capture, but we will be tracking:

- # of homeless individuals in the Panhandle
- # of individuals in need connected to housing

Community Health Improvement

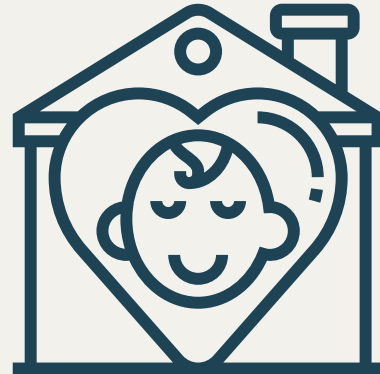
Early Childhood Care & Education

Providing quality care for our young people is critical for the future health of our population as well as for retention of young families. Two of the measures are below:



Increase number of children served by Rooted in Relationships

2018: 384
Goal 2023: 423

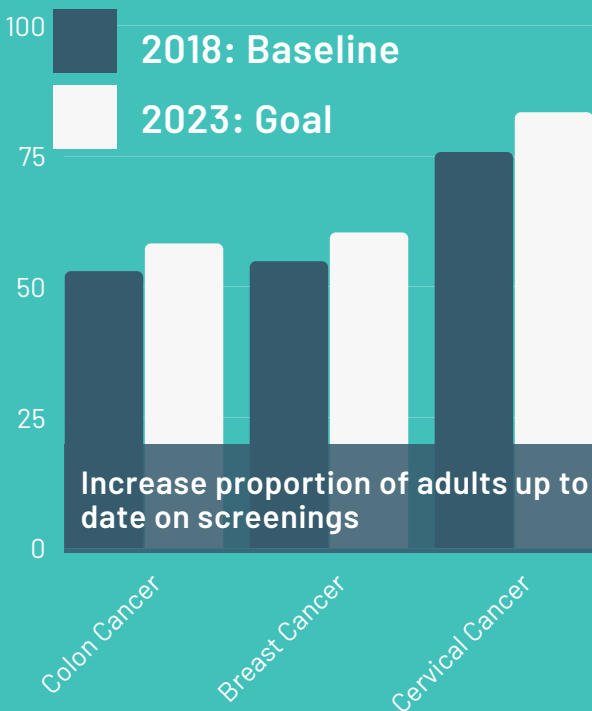


Increase Step up to Quality programs

2018: 24
Goal 2023: 27

Chronic Disease Prevention

An ongoing goal in public health is decreasing the number of people who experience chronic disease. This means affecting the problem before it begins and implementing critical prevention strategies like access to care, healthy habits for life, and other social determinants of health such as good housing, economic opportunity, and mental health. Below is one of the measures used to track progress.



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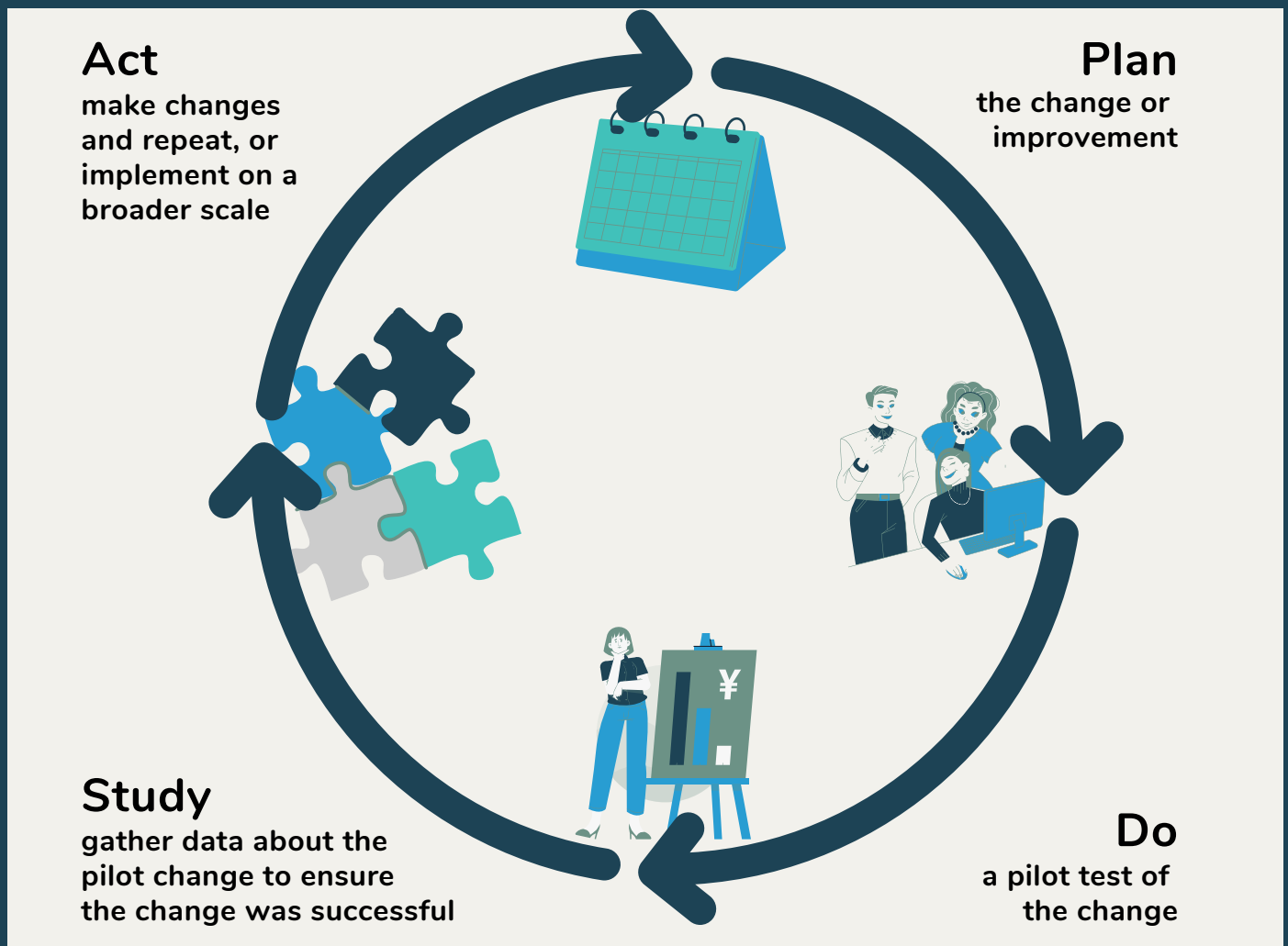
Quality Improvement

What is Quality Improvement? A continuous and ongoing effort to achieve measurable improvements in the efficiency, effectiveness, performance, accountability, outcomes, and other indicators of quality in services or processes which achieve equity and improve the health of the community.

Why? As stewards of public funds tasked with improving the health of the population, it is our responsibility to assure that we are using the funds as efficiently and effectively as possible. Quality improvement is a building block to assure we are always providing optimum public health.

PPHD uses the Roadmap to a Culture of Quality Improvement, developed by NACCHO, to guide our culture of quality.

“When a quality culture is achieved, all employees, from senior leadership to frontline staff, have infused QI into the way they do business daily. Employees continuously consider how processes can be improved, and QI is no longer seen as an additional task but a frame of mind in which the application of QI is second nature.”



PPHD is committed to improving our processes on an ongoing basis. We do this by using the Plan, Do, Study, Act cycle.

Minority Health Assessment



Bridging the Gap

The Minority Health Initiative seeks to pinpoint areas of need in our under or un-served populations in the Panhandle.

We are using a multi-tiered approach:

- developing an advisory group
- surveys
- focus groups
- a photo project with area youth
- enhanced and new partnerships
- key informant interviews

Our hope is to bridge the gap and create a more equitably healthy Panhandle, where members of all backgrounds, beliefs, and social groups are confident in their ability and capability to access the resources they need to lead a healthy lifestyle.



Vaccinations...

...are one of the greatest success stories in public health!



Vianey Zitterkopf RN
Public Health Nurse

Because of vaccines, smallpox has been eradicated and polio has been nearly eliminated. People who suffer the devastating effects of preventable infectious diseases like measles, diphtheria, and whooping cough are at an all-time low. Vaccines have increased our average life expectancy.

The health district was proud to bring two bilingual nurses on staff to work with local vaccine providers and support area worksites, organizations, schools, and communities to increase vaccine access. They have been traveling around the area providing COVID shots, boosters, and flu shots. We look forward to continuing to expand vaccine access! Contact us today to set up an onsite vaccine event.



Janet Felix LPN
Public Health Nurse

If you are homebound or have a condition that makes it hard for you to access COVID-19 vaccine, please call Vianey Zitterkopf, RN at 308-430-8390 or Janet Felix, LPN at 308-672-4653.

Thank you to all of our Partners involved in giving vaccinations!

Panhandle Vaccination Sites

Box Butte/Grant: Walk-ins welcome

Box Butte General Hospital – community clinics prearranged
Dave's Pharmacy Hemingford & Alliance
Alliance Community Pharmacy

Cheyenne/Deuel: Sidney Regional Medical Clinic

Dawes/Sioux: Walk-ins welcome

Western Community Health Resources, M-F, 12:30-1:30 PM
or call 308-432-8979 to schedule an appointment

Garden: To schedule an appointment, call (308) 772-3283

Kimball: Walk-ins welcome at Kimball Health Services

Morrill:

Morrill County Hospital Clinic (Bridgeport) call 308-262-1755
Chimney Rock Medical Center (Bayard) call 308-586-1717

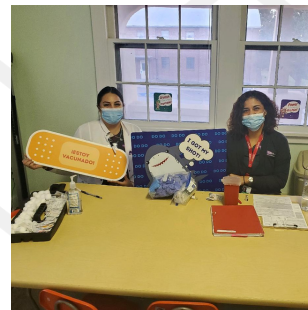
Sheridan: Walk-ins welcome

Gordon Rural Health Clinic, M-F, 8:30-11:30 AM & 1-4 PM

Scotts Bluff/Banner: Walk-ins welcome

CAPWN Health Center, M-F, 9 AM-12 PM & 1-4 PM (12+)
Scotts Bluff County Immunization Clinic, M-F, 9:30-5:30 PM
313 West 38th Street, Scottsbluff

Across the Panhandle: Safeway & Walmart



Ensuring equal access to vaccines is available to every race/ethnicity and socioeconomic groups.

Vaccine clinics directly on site to accommodate busy work schedules.



Up-to-date on your vaccine?

- Been boosted
- Completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine within the last 6 months
- Completed the primary series of J&J vaccine within the last 2 months

If you answered no to any of these questions for yourself or a family member please consider vaccinating to protect yourself and your loved ones from COVID-19.

Your organization's greatest resource for employee health and well-being.



Jessica Davies, MPH
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Director
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Nicole Berosek, MS
Organizational Wellness
Coordinator
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We recognize that many employers support a diverse and remote workforce and offer innovative ways to overcome the challenge of working with a virtual team.

We understand that many area employers do not have full-time wellness personnel and strive to provide resources and training to make running a worksite wellness program as easy as possible.

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEMBERS**

Dan Newhoff, Chair
Box Butte General
Hospital

Kiersten Richards
Beans & Steams
Coffee House

Diana Lecher
Chadron Community
Hospital


Kendra Dean
Cirrus House, Inc.

Jennifer Sorenson
Northwest Community
Action Partnership

Susan Wiedeman
Panhandle Coop

Amy Doll
Platte Valley Bank

Terri Allen
Western Nebraska
Community College



The Health Risk Assessment (HRA) and Interest Survey is now available!

Available in English and Spanish!

The HRA is the first step for helping employees live a healthy lifestyle!

panhandle
Public Health District

**QUARTERLY
WELLNESS CHATS**
Virtual and In-Person

Join us!!




Panhandle Worksite Wellness Council provides technical assistance, education, resources, and support at no cost to Panhandle worksites, organizations, schools, & hospitals.

2021 Panhandle Business & Employer Safety and Wellness Conference

In October, attendees from around the Panhandle participated in-person (with COVID precautions) for a day of interactive, educational sessions along with honoring the Leading Light Award recipient. Keynote speaker "Dr. Jo", JoAnne Owens-Nauslar, kicked off the day with laughter and learning how important it is for each of us to take care of ourselves. The day offered wellness-focused tracks on mental health and improving employee well-being along with safety-focused tracks on OSHA updates, grain engulfment, and driver's safety. We were grateful and honored to offer this in-person conference and already looking forward to 2022!



Dr. Jo, Keynote Speaker



My first conference was last year (virtual), so I am very impressed with this year's conference! Great sessions! The topics were relevant to what is happening around us!
2021 Participant

Leading Light Award!



Lisa Peden
2021 Leading Light Recipient

Lisa Peden, Client Advocate with The DOVES Program and wellness team member, was nominated by her peers for this distinction for being a true leading light. Lisa was recognized with a surprise video showcasing her health and wellness efforts during the Leading Light Luncheon.

"Lisa has been on our Wellness Committee for many years. She's enthusiastically worked on wellness challenges for our team. She's always kept us up-to-date on what challenges were available and encouraged people to participate. She's worked hard on her own wellness, inspired by Panhandle Worksite Wellness's health coaching. She's brought veggies and fruit water for meetings and made suggestions that have helped all of us think more healthfully. I really appreciate her as a coworker and a friend who has helped me make better choices for my health. She's an awesome human!"

Jennifer Ponce, DOVES Client Advocate

Governor's Wellness Award



THANK YOU!

Governor Pete Ricketts for offering the Governor's Award to all Nebraska organizations and schools. Employees are healthier and happier because of these efforts!

"We are proud to coordinate the Governor's Wellness Award and work with organizations and schools to cultivate a healthier and happier workplace. We are seeing huge strides, not only in healthier employees but increased productivity and presenteeism. We couldn't be happier with the progress these organizations and schools are making."
Nicole Berosek, Organizational Wellness Coordinator



PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Public Health Emergency Preparedness works to advance six main areas of preparedness so state and local public health systems are better prepared for emergencies that impact the public's health.

- 
Community Resilience
 Preparing for and recovering from emergencies
- 
Countermeasures and Mitigation
 Getting medicines and supplies where they are needed
- 
Surge Management
 Expanding medical services to handle large events
- 
Information Management
 Making sure people have information to take action
- 
Incident Management
 Coordinating an effective response
- 
Biosurveillance
 Investigating and identifying health threats

YOUR HEALTH IS OUR PRIORITY

The Preparedness Team focused on the following in 2021: providing accurate and timely guidance, promoting and delivering vaccines, coordinating PPE, working with partners, preparing for and responding during surges, and monitoring disease outbreaks and transmission.

It's been another busy year in preparedness. We could not have done it without the fantastic team at PPHD, the incredible staff at Regional West Community Health, our fabulous partners, our Regional Emergency Managers' support, and contract case investigators and drivers! A special thank you to Mary Wernke and Sharon Wohlers, two contract case investigators assisting with disease investigation over the past year and a half. Thank you!



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 Preparedness and Community Health Educator
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2021 Disease Report

PPHD	2021	2020
Anaplasma phagocytophilum	2	0
Animal Exposure (bite or nonbite)	8	12
Aseptic meningitis	0	2
Brucellosis	0	1
Campylobacteriosis	46	35
Cryptosporidiosis	11	4
Cyclosporiasis	1	7
Enteropathogenic Escherichia coli (EPEC)	22	0
Enteropathogenic E. coli (EPEC)	81	48
E. coli (STEC) gastroenteritis	17	14
Giardiasis	8	2
Group A Streptococcus, invasive	1	3
Group B Streptococcus, invasive	6	6
Haemophilus influenza, invasive	4	1
Hepatitis A, acute	1	1
Hepatitis B, chronic (probable and confirmed)	4	4
Hepatitis B, acute	0	2
Hepatitis C, chronic or resolved	40	39
Hepatitis C, acute	0	1
Hepatitis E, acute	1	0
Lead Poisoning (child/Adult)	14/0	14/1
Legionellosis	2	0
Lyme Disease (confirmed, probable)	1	1
Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome (MIS-C)	1	0
Noroviruses (outbreaks)	10	9
Pertussis (confirmed, probable, suspect)	1	6
Q fever, acute	1	0
Salmonellosis (confirmed, probable, suspect)	22	14
Shigellosis	4	1
Spotted Fever Rickettsiosis	2	0
Strep, other, invasive, beta-hem (nonA, nonB)	1	1
Streptococcus pneumonia, invasive disease (IPD)	5	5
Toxoplasmosis	1	0
Tuberculosis	0	1
Tularemia	1	2
Varicella (chickenpox)	3	12
Vibriosis (non-cholera Vibrio species infections)	2	0
West Nile virus disease, neuroinvasive	4	0
West Nile virus disease, nonneuroinvasive	5	0
Yersiniosis (non Plague)	5	1
Total confirmed, probable, and suspect cases	338	250



Panhandle Regional Medical Response System in Action

Plan

PRMRS has been busy modifying plans as we traverse through the pandemic.

- Surge plans
- Transportation plans
- Infectious disease plans
- Burn plans



Prepare

The healthcare coalition continues to prepare for other events and participate in trainings.

- Natural disasters
- Medical Surge
- Chemical disasters



Respond

Collectively coordinating response efforts.

- Consistent messaging
- Task force meetings
- Working together to meet the needs of the entire Panhandle through information sharing and best practices



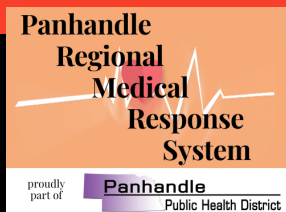
Highlights of the past year

- Burn exercise to review and modify the burn plan to prepare for a surge of burn patients
- Infectious disease plan modified to meet pandemic response
- After action report to determine areas of improvement in pandemic response
- Formed transportation committee to develop a region-wide plan
- First Responder Mental Health committee was created to help reduce stigma in seeking help
- Partnerships within the coalition continue to grow and strengthen
- Statewide involvement in the pandemic response
- The coordinator has presented at national conferences, highlighting the strengths of the coalition through the pandemic
- Critical Access Hospital Regional Triage Team concept developed and shared across the state



Michelle Hill

Emergency Preparedness Coordinator
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TOBACCO-FREE SUPPORT

The time to update your employee resources to support quitting tobacco or electronic cigarettes is now!

The Nebraska Tobacco Quitline is providing a two-week supply of over-the-counter nicotine replacement therapy at no cost (one of the following: gum, patch, or lozenges) while supplies last. To qualify, the caller must be a Nebraska resident over the age of 18 who is ready to quit tobacco, register with the Quitline, and complete one coaching session. Callers will be screened for medical eligibility to receive the free NRT.



JOIN THE MOVEMENT
QUIT TODAY

2020 DATA

NEBRASKA'S CURRENT
CIGARETTE SMOKERS **13.9%**

PANHANDLE'S CURRENT
CIGARETTE SMOKERS **19%**

QUITTING IS HARD WORK, BUT WE CAN
HELP! SELECT AN OPTION TO QUIT



1 Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW
Quit coaches are ready to help you at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669). Free Quitline services are available 24/7. For qualified callers, a free supply of nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) can be mailed directly to your home.

2 Don't want to call? That is ok, web-based options are available.

3 In-Person Cessation Classes
Looking for something in-person? Reach out! We can help find a group counseling session near you!

EACH YEAR, NEBRASKA
BUSINESSES LOSE **\$605**
MILLION

**\$692 PER
HOUSEHOLD**

Every year, Nebraska spends this for smoking related health care expenses and lost productivity

Contact us today at nberosek@pphd.org or 308-279-3496 for policy templates, resources for free quit tobacco medication, technical assistance, customized signage, and educational resources!

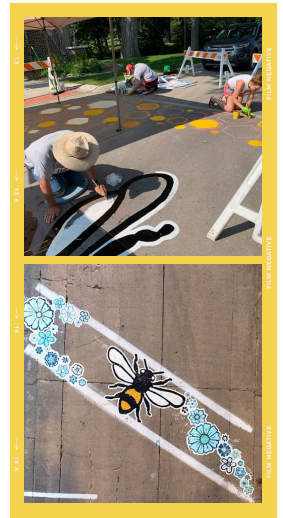
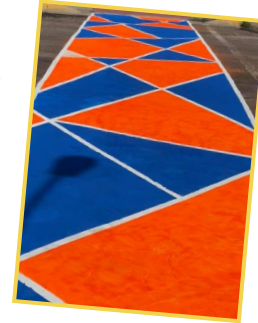
COMMUNITY ACTIVE LIVING

Active living advisory committees in Alliance and Gordon-Rushville were excited to affirm city council adoption through a resolution to support crosswalk beautification initiatives.

Creative crosswalks highlight marked pedestrian crossings and are a low-cost, traffic-calming mechanism to reduce traffic speeds and volume. In addition to being fun, they can raise awareness of pedestrian safety. Research shows drivers tend to notice patterns and bright colors more than the standard white paint on asphalt. Cities report that since upgrading crosswalks, vehicles slow down, and pedestrians feel that the street is not just for vehicles, it's for pedestrians as well.

For the Gordon & Rushville projects, school board members, school staff, high school students, and community members came together to paint a design selected from student submissions.

For the Alliance project, Carnegie Arts Center and Keep Alliance Beautiful took the lead in coordinating the design and crosswalk painting. Numerous volunteers came together for the painting!



The City of Gordon recently passed an ordinance to reduce the speed limit in the school zone at Gordon Elementary School during school hours, and the city is assessing other locations to slow traffic for safer streets to support active living. Slower vehicle speeds allow drivers the ability to stop in a shorter distance and reduce the chance of injuring students walking, biking, or rolling to and from school. Other communities around the area are prioritizing similar safety measures to keep kiddos safe!



ALLIANCE BIKE SHARE

Activate Alliance is excited to kick off a community bike share program at no charge to users. Gently used bikes have been tuned-up, painted bright green, and will each have a reflective sticker indicating it's part of the Alliance Community Bike program. They are available at various locations around the community.

How it works is simple, users are welcome to use a bright green bike in any of the designated racks and are asked to return it to any bike rack with an Alliance Community Bike rack sign when done. If the bike is placed on the left side, it means it's in use. If placed on the right side, it's not in use and free to use.

ALLIANCE POLICE DEPARTMENT CHIEF PHILIP LUKENS, "I BELIEVE THE BICYCLE SHARE PROGRAM IS A SIGNIFICANT STEP FOR OUR COMMUNITY MEMBERS BEING ABLE TO ENJOY OUR SAFE AND WONDERFUL COMMUNITY."



Committee members have been excited to bring this to fruition, donating countless volunteer hours and even personal financial donations because they believe in the cause.

Community members are reminded they are riding the bike at their own risk and are encouraged to wear a helmet and abide by all bicycling-specific laws and ordinances. Each bike has a locating device.

CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT



Your Health Matters!

Your Checklist for Staying Healthy at Any Age

- Make your health your priority
- Get regular check-ups & screenings from your healthcare provider
- Connect with your doctor if you have any questions about your health
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Keep your health numbers within a healthy range and work to improve them when needed
- Visit the dentist twice a year
- Avoid tobacco and nicotine products
- Eat a well-balanced diet
 - Increase vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and water
 - Decrease added sugars, including sweet beverages, trans fats, refined grains, and sodium
 - Limit or eliminate alcohol use
- Make time for being active
 - With your doctor's approval, get 150 minutes each week of physical activity plus two strength-training sessions
 - Find ways to walk safely, bike, or roll to work, school, or other community locations
 - Make plans to be active with family or friends regularly
- Make a plan to manage your stress using coping and relaxation strategies such as:
 - Yoga, meditation, walking, talking, humor, hobbies
- Reach out to a professional if you need support with mental health, addictions, or other personal or family issues
- Protect your skin from UV rays
- Wash your hands thoroughly and often
- Avoid close contact
- Stay home if you are ill
- Participate in healthy lifestyle support programs

NATIONAL
**DIABETES
PREVENTION
PROGRAM**

Nebraska Panhandle

PROUDLY PART OF
Panhandle
Public Health District



Since 2013, PPHD has supported over 1,100 participants in dropping over 10,000 pounds in the National DPP!

You'll get 16 weekly group coaching sessions with monthly follow up for the first year.

Living Well

Living Well Chronic Disease Self-Management 6 - week workshops teach creative ways to feel better, communicate better, and manage stress. It empowers people to take charge of their health

Health & Wellness Coaching

PPHD's national board certified health coach works with clients to find creative ways to meet your personal goals and live your best life.

Contact us to find out how you can join a program today!



CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT

Don't Be a Statistic Take Steps to Get Healthy Today



72% of Adults are overweight or have obesity



1 in 3 Deaths are caused by heart attack, stroke, diabetes, or other chronic diseases



34 Million Adults use tobacco

Take the First Step

As we've learned to live with Covid, we've been reminded that staying on top of our health behaviors reduces risk of severe infection and hospitalization. It hasn't been easy to keep up with regular activity levels for most of us during this time, but the good news is that today is a great day to start anew.

Let's start now by making healthy eating, physical activity, and stress management a priority. Our future selves will be glad we did! Make a plan today.



Stay Current On Health Screenings

Everyone, Every Year

- Flu vaccine
- Skin cancer screening (every 3 yrs btw ages 20 and 40, and every year for ages 40+)
- BMI and weight evaluation
- Depression screening

Other screenings:

- Blood pressure
- HIV testing
- Lipid/cholesterol
- TDAP vaccine
- Diabetes

Women

- Starting at 20+ pap smear cervical cancer screening
- Starting at 40+ mammogram

Men

- Starting at 50+ prostate cancer screening
- Starting at 60+ abdominal aortic aneurysm screening

Starting at 50+

- Colonoscopy (doctor may recommend 45+)
- Hepatitis C screenings
- Lung cancer screening
- Shingles vaccine

Starting at 65+

- Osteoporosis screening at 65+ if at risk
- Pneumococcal vaccine at 65+

*Please contact your doctor for your specific screening recommendations



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<http://pphd.org/>



Are you 45 - 74?

JOIN the FIGHT

Get Screened for Colon Cancer
Contact your healthcare provider or
Call PPHD to get your FREE at-home
test kit today

How To Get Your Test Kit:

- Call us at 308-220-8020 or
- Complete the form online
 - <https://tinyurl.com/3e2yunwd>

Promoting child well-being by helping families with the building blocks of attachment.



Dez Brandt
Program Manager
dbrandt@pphd.org

We have been partnering with families for a decade!



Myrna Hernandez
Program Supervisor
mhernandez@pphd.org

Parent Coaches - Intake Specialists



Amber Salazar
aduque@pphd.org



Jennifer Buxbaum
jbuxbaum@pphd.org



Alma Alarcon
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Linda Anslie
lainslie@pphd.org

Healthy Families is a family support service. Children do not come with an instruction manual, and every now and then parents need support with the challenges that come with parenthood. Healthy Families partners with families, giving parents the tools and knowledge to create healthy, nurturing environments. Home visits take place in the comfort of the family's home.

Healthy Families America Philosophy - Early nurturing relationships are the foundation for life-long healthy development.

“My parent coach listens to me; she helped me through a difficult pregnancy and taught me that I can support my family in a better way—both financially and emotionally.”

-Nebraska Panhandle Client



Healthy Families
Nebraska Panhandle™

Proudly part of

Panhandle

Public Health District

Healthy Families is serving Scotts Bluff, Morrill, Box Butte, Cheyenne, Kimball, Garden, Deuel, and Banner counties.

For more information or to make a referral, call us at 308-765-5249, email one of our staff, or complete the online form at

<https://tinyurl.com/2p8h55zr>.

Healthy Families is a FREE and VOLUNTARY Program!



Our Mission: To promote the well-being of children through home visitation services



→ Here are a few highlights of the focus during the home visits....

- Building Healthy Brains
- Reading the Cues of Children
- Parents Understanding Child Development
- Learning about Secure Attachment and Bonding
- Safe Sleep
- Breast Feeding
- Early Language and Literacy Activities
- Assistance with Resources to Improve Family Functioning
- Developmental Screenings
- Curriculum Supporting Positive Parent Child Interaction
- Primary Caregiver Education

2021

→ **849 Home Visits**

→ **61 Families Served**



→ Our parent coaches are trained facilitators of Circle of Security.

Circle of Security™-Parenting is an 8-week parenting program based on years of research on how to build strong relationships with your children. It is designed to help families learn how to respond to their child's needs in a way that enhances connections between parents and their children.

It helps parents give their children a feeling of security and confidence so they can explore, learn, grow and build positive relationships; all essential skills for life-long success.





PANHANDLE PREVENTION COALITION



After focusing on hospital preparedness for much of the pandemic, Chris Fankhauser joined the team in October. She jumped in full-force, reaching out to partners in an effort to re-engage. Chris has been able to participate in partner events in-person and is looking forward to getting out even more. One of these events was a Youth Leadership Day in Scottsbluff, sponsored by the Human Performance Project. Many area schools participated in this event that showcased the importance of youth prevention work.

COVID continues to affect prevention efforts in both positive and negative ways, but the most significant contribution has been creative thinking when it comes to prevention efforts. This includes taking advantage of several trainings offered online that would not have been possible prior to COVID. Participating in these trainings provides connections with experts across the United States that help strengthen prevention efforts in the Panhandle.

Some big accomplishments include the re-vamping of the PPC website and a new social media campaign focusing on positive prevention strategies. Recent compliance checks for tobacco and alcohol showed 100% compliance by the participating businesses! We sincerely appreciate these efforts proven to help keep youth in the Panhandle from beginning substance use.



Chris Fankhauser
Community Health Educator
cfankhauser@pphd.org

The Panhandle Prevention Coalition is composed of a group of organizations united to reduce the impact of substance misuse and abuse while promoting and supporting mental and emotional health for all in the Panhandle.

For more information or to join the PPC, reach out to Chris today!

VISION:

HEALTHY AND SAFE PEOPLE ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

MISSION:

ENHANCE AND SUSTAIN A COLLABORATIVE PREVENTION SYSTEM

OVERDOSE DATA TO ACTION

STRATEGIC PLANNING

PPHD focuses on ways to help residents learn about overdose, reduce stigma, provide training options, and offer hope! In training partners and residents to understand the epidemic and addiction to reduce opioid misuse and abuse, we are implementing several strategies under three objectives: Stigma Reduction, Expanded Access to Addiction Treatment, Reduce Access, Overdose, and Misuse following the proven prevention model as a guide with a focus on how to sustain our initiatives and make them culturally competent.

WHY

When the Panhandle was identified as one of the five high burden overdose areas in Nebraska, we knew we had to focus on preventing opioid overdose. Our WHY is to save lives and help people with addiction! The more we discuss and educate Panhandle residents about opioids, the more likely our friends and neighbors will seek help. Ultimately, we want to provide Panhandle residents with HOPE and access to resources to live a full and healthy life.

THE TEAM

The regional opioid collaboration began as a partnership between Region 1 Behavioral Health Authority, Community Action Health Center, and PPHD. The Panhandle is known for its culture of collaboration among healthcare and service agencies, and this rang true as we identified and expanded partners to work with on the opioid response.

ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLANNING

PPHD gathered information from assessments and key informant interviews to determine priorities and strategies. We strive to meet partners where they are and let their needs guide us in determining next steps in moving forward with focus and flexibility.

WHAT'S NEXT

We are excited to see the impact we all can make as we continue to move this work forward. We strive to use the available resources to make the most impact in our communities. To build a recovery-oriented system of care and supports across the Panhandle, we focus on behavioral health integration and reducing stigma.



Emily Timm

Community Health Educator
308-763-8042
etimm@pphd.org

2021 SUCCESSES

Narcan Distributed:

First responders, partnership with pharmacies, at-risk populations **204**

6

Pharmacies on board with Nebraska Pharmacy Program distributing Narcan

Lockboxes Distributed:

Increase safe storage of prescription drugs **272**

1387

Deterra Deactivation Pouches Distributed: Increase safe disposal of prescription drugs

Media Campaign:

Reduce stigma and increase awareness **FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM**

11

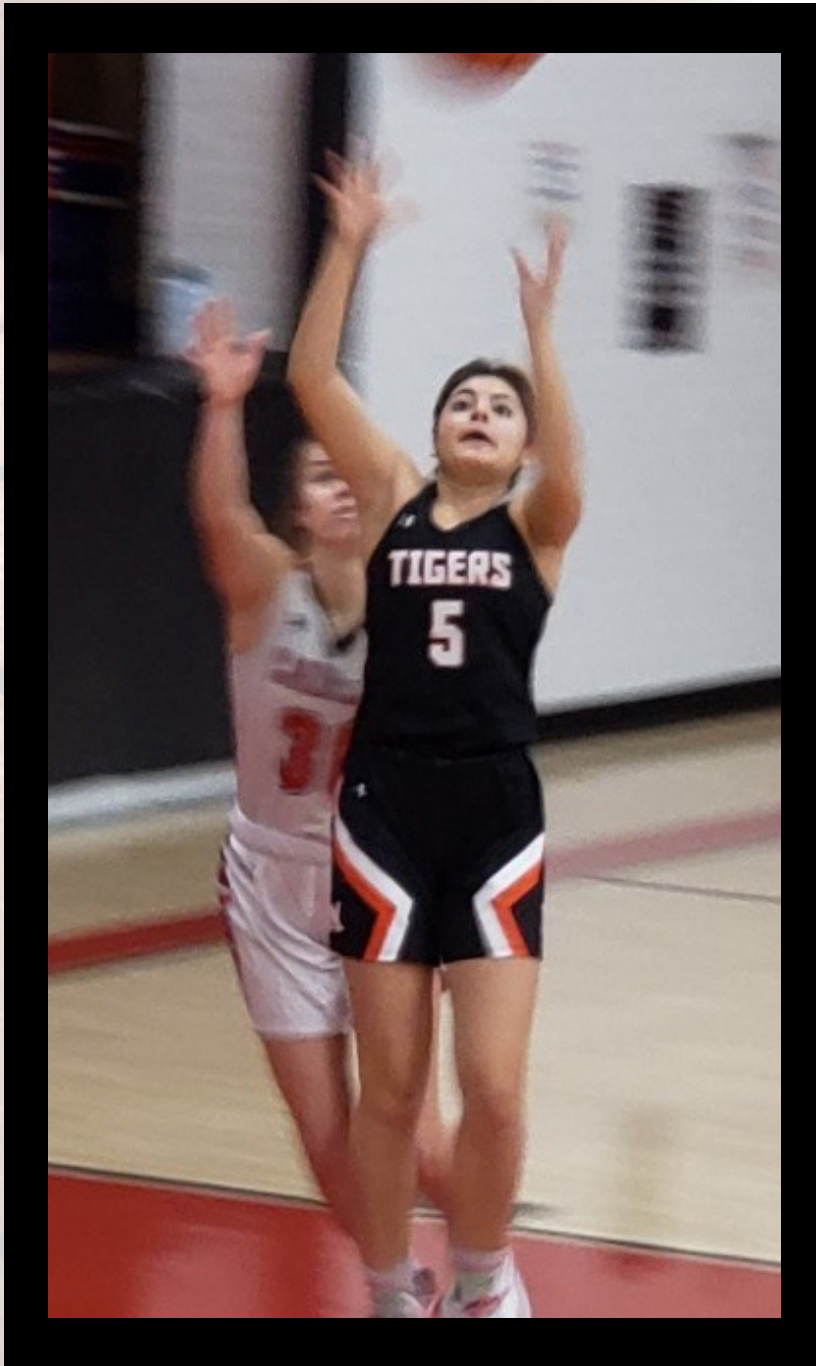
Trainings:

De-escalation, Medicated Assisted Treatment 101 & Waiver Training, Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), Narcan Training, Non-Opioid and Adjuvant Analgesics Role in Pain Treatment, Methamphetamine Use Disorder, Opioids, Advanced Methamphetamine

QI project spurring change to increase referrals!

"Not JUULING helps me learn and play to my full ability."

-Elena Guzman, Mitchell



FACT: E-cigarette or vaping products should never be used by youth or young adults.

FACT: Most e-cigarettes contain nicotine, which is highly addictive. It can harm brain development, impacting learning, memory, & attention.

FACT: JUUL always contains nicotine.

Keep developing lungs healthy & strong

The Panhandle Prevention Coalition, coordinated by Panhandle Public Health District, strives to enhance and sustain a collaborative prevention system to promote and encourage healthy and safe people across the lifespan.

www.humanperformanceprojectne.org | www.pphd.org





SUICIDE PREVENTION



SHARE LIGHT. SPREAD HOPE.

Question. Persuade. Refer.

Three Steps Anyone Can Learn to Help Prevent Suicide

QPR, like CPR, can be a lifesaver. QPR training helps participants recognize the warning signs and risk factors for suicide. QPR empowers people of all ages, stages, and backgrounds with the tools and skills to make a positive difference in the life of someone they know. It is an innovative, practical and proven suicide prevention training.

Join us today to help stop suicide. PPHD's team of QPR trainers offer Webinars And In-Person Trainings.

Hope Squad

Reduce youth suicide through education, training, and peer intervention.

Hope Squad is a peer-to-peer suicide prevention program. Hope Squad members are nominated by their classmates as trustworthy peers and trained by advisors. The program reduces youth suicide through education, training, and peer intervention.

Suicide Prevention Awareness Walks

Every September, during Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, communities across the Panhandle host suicide awareness walks.



To learn more about QPR Trainings contact Cheri Farris: cfarris@pphd.org
To learn more about becoming a Hope Squad school contact Nicole Berosek: nberosek@pphd.org



2021
25 QPR TRAININGS
227 PARTICIPANTS



SHARE LIGHT



SEVEN
HOPE SQUAD
PARTICIPATING
SCHOOLS



DRIVER SAFETY

While nearly 60% of Panhandle drivers wear their seatbelts, this is almost 16% lower than the state average and nearly 28% lower than the US average. Considering how far distances are between rural Panhandle communities, travel on country roads, and heavy agricultural traffic with trucks, this is concerning.

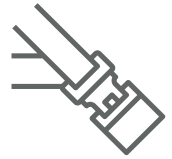
PLEASE BUCKLE UP TO HELP SAVE LIVES!

DRIVER SAFETY TIPS

01

Seatbelts

- Buckling up is the single most effective thing you can do to protect yourself in a crash.
- Air bags are designed to work with seatbelts, not replace them.



02

Distracted Driving

- There are three main types of distractions:
 - Taking your eyes off the road.
 - Taking your hands off the wheels.
 - Taking your mind off driving.



03

Speed

- Speed is one of the most prevalent factors contributing to traffic crashes.
- The total stopping distance for a vehicle traveling 60 mph is longer than a football field (100 yards); at 75 mph it takes one and a half football fields (150 yards).
- The chance of death or serious injury doubles for every 10 mph over 50 mph that a vehicle travels.

04

Weather Conditions

- Ice and snow, take it slow!
- Wet, muddy dirt or gravel roads increase risk, too. Please use extra caution on country roads.

05

Pedestrian/Bicyclist Safety

- Look for pedestrians everywhere and obey the posted speed limit.
- Always stop for pedestrians in the crosswalk or where pedestrian crosswalk signs are posted. Never pass vehicles stopped at a crosswalk.



GET HOME AT THE END OF THE DAY

TO THOSE THAT MATTER MOST.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH



Janelle Visser
Health Educator
jvisser@pphd.org

We provide several opportunities to promote health & wellness to area kiddos. Here are a few!

Pool Cool

We are always happy to partner with area pools to promote sun safe policies, provide sunscreen, mini-grants for shade structures, education, and signage to keep lifeguards and pool-goers safe!

Dental Day



KEEP HEALTHY WITH HANDWASHING

- 1 Wet your hands with warm water
- 2 Lather with a squirt of soap
- 3 Scrub tops, bottoms, in between fingers and fingernails
- 4 Rinse all the soap off
Dry your hands with a towel
- 5 Turn the faucet off with a paper towel

Kid's Fitness & Nutrition Day

We were thrilled to bring back an exciting day of interactive nutrition and physical activities for area 3rd graders. Area 4th graders will get a chance in Spring 2022 since they missed the previous year due to COVID!



West Nile Virus

The best way to stop the spread of West Nile is to prevent it.

West Nile is spread through the bite of an infected mosquito. Public Health departments across Nebraska trap for mosquitoes to detect when infected mosquitoes are present. This is how it is done.



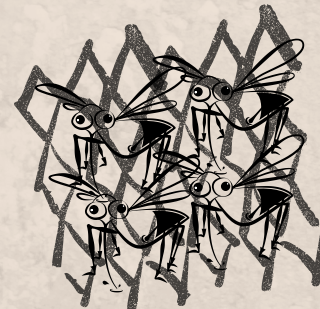
Mosquitoes are attracted to light and carbon dioxide.



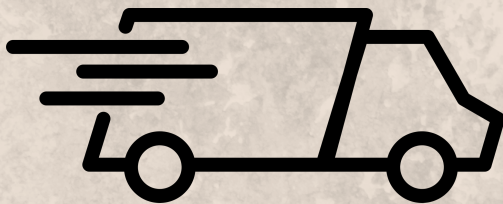
PPHD uses CDC light traps, which contain a cooler for dry ice (which sublimates carbon dioxide), a light and fan, collection net, and battery to charge.



Mosquitoes are drawn to the light from the trap and the carbon dioxide sublimates to mimic large mammal respiration.



Mosquitoes are pulled in by the fan on the trap then stay collected in the mesh collection container until retrieved the next day.



Mosquitoes are then shipped to the DHHS Mosquito ID Lab for species verification, counts, and testing.

Once infected mosquitoes are detected, PPHD informs the public to increase prevention to Fight the Bite.

Panhandle residents are urged to exercise caution when outdoors. To avoid mosquito bites, PPHD recommends:

- Apply mosquito repellent containing DEET
- Wear long-sleeved shirt, pants, and socks
- Avoid going out at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active
- Keep window screens in good repair
- Eliminate standing water
- Use larvicides in standing water that is not easily drainable

Radon

Protect your family from the second leading cause of lung cancer. Test for radon today.



Melissa Haas

Environmental Health Coordinator
mhaas@pphd.org

Testing your home for radon is the best way to detect it.

Testing can be done by using a short-term test kit (3-7 days).

The EPA recommends that any home tested at 4.0 picocuries per Liter (pCi/L) is a home that requires action.

If your home tests above 4.0 pCi/L, talk to PPHD about mitigation options in your area.

Radon is a naturally occurring invisible, tasteless, odorless gas. It is harmless when dispersed in outdoor air, but when trapped in buildings, can be harmful at elevated levels.

Houses next to each other can have very different radon levels. Elevated radon levels are found in new and old houses, well-sealed and drafty houses, houses with or without basements, and houses with every kind of furnace. The only way to know if your home has dangerous levels of radon is to test it.

The winter months are ideal for testing. While testing, it is important to remember to keep windows and outside doors closed as much as possible when the kit is out.

PPHD OFFERS FREE RADON TEST KITS FOR PANHANDLE RESIDENTS

To receive a test kit, please mail in the coupon below or complete the request at this link: <https://tinyurl.com/2p9d97pn>



Mail this coupon to PPHD, PO Box 337, Hemingford, NE 69348, call (308) 487-3600 ext. 108, or email mhaas@pphd.org to get your free kit.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone #: _____ Age: _____

By accepting this free kit, I give my permission for results to be reported to myself and PPHD.

Signature: _____

Why Dental Health??

Dental Health Program
Keeping Teeth Strong
Proudly part of
Panhandle
Public Health District

PPHD leads a school-based preventive dental health program throughout the 12 county area.

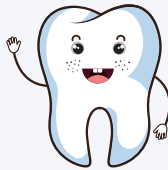
We strive to prevent dental disease in children. Untreated tooth decay can lead to pain, infection, and ultimately problems with speaking, eating, working, and playing.

Oral health is essential to overall health and is one of the most preventable of all health problems.



Kendra Lauruhn
Public Health Registered
Dental Hygienist
klauruhn@pphd.org

Dental screenings are used to detect signs of dental disease.

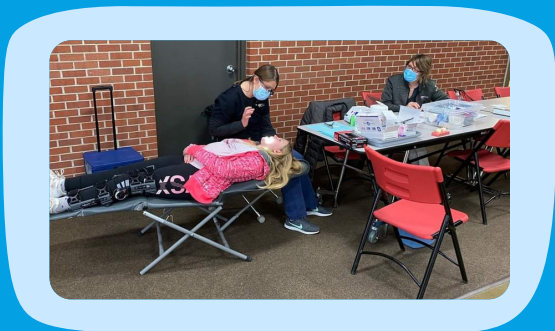


Fluoride varnish treatment strengthens tooth enamel to help prevent cavities.

Dental sealants are placed on the back teeth by using white sealant material that flows into the pits and grooves. Sealant acts as a barrier, protecting enamel by sealing out plaque, bacteria, and food.

“My favorite part was how Kendra was able to speak to the preschoolers about the importance of taking care of your teeth. In fact, some of my staff have made changes to their lifestyle to promote healthy dental care.”

- Panhandle Resident



If you would like to donate to this program, provided free to area children, please go to:
<https://tinyurl.com/4rysabk4>

Lead Poisoning Prevention

There is no safe level of lead in a child's blood

Childhood lead poisoning can cause irreversible health effects, including damage to the brain and nervous system, slowed growth and development, learning and behavior problems, and hearing and speech problems.

Lead poisoning is 100 percent preventable.

The key is to keep children from coming into contact with lead. Lead can be found both inside and outside the home.

The most common source of exposure is from lead-based paint used in homes built before 1978.

Lead poisoning occurs by breathing in the lead dust during renovation activities or by swallowing paint chips or lead dust.

If you have children in your home or daycare that are under six years old and you know the age of your home, testing for lead is one of the best precautions you can take.



You can protect your child by:

Visiting the doctor to test them for lead

Washing children's hands and toys often

Getting your home tested for lead

Did you know?

- ✓ Schools or daycares can get their water tested **FREE** of charge through DHHS' water testing lab. Contact Melissa Haas, mhaas@pphd.org, to find out how you can test your school or daycare's water today.
- ✓ PPHD can test your home for lead-based paint. Contact us today to schedule time to test your home.



Financial Statement



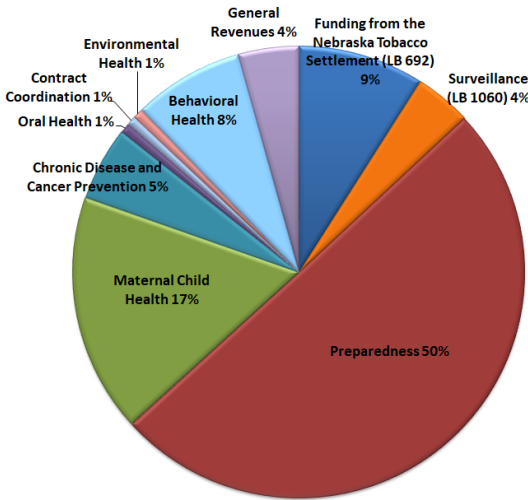
Sara Williamson
CFO, Accreditation
Coordinator
swilliamson@pphd.org



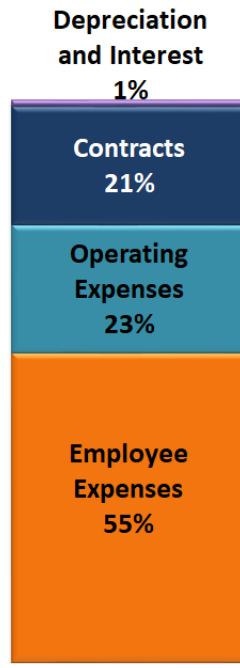
Amanda McClaren
Finance Assistant
amclclaren@pphd.org

Where does the money come from?

Program Revenues:

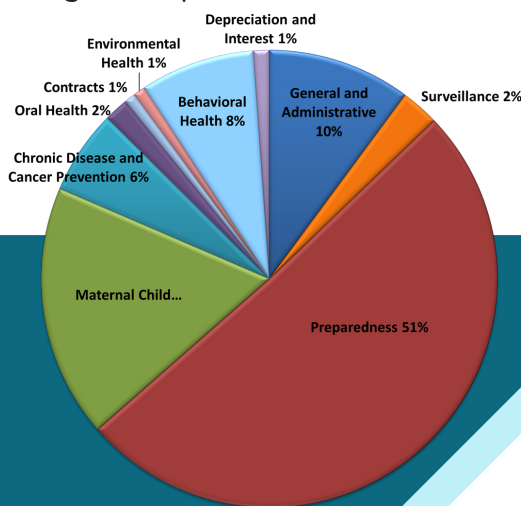


Expenses by Source:



Where does the money go?

Program Expenses:



Balance Sheet As of June 30, 2021

Assets

Cash and cash equivalents	87,319
Accounts receivable	828,262
Inventory	20,794
Certificates of deposit	13,285
Property and equipment, net of accumulated depreciation	369,233
Deferred outflows of resources for pensions	156,419
Net pension asset	225,266
Total Assets	\$1,700,578

Liabilities

Accounts payable	111,809
Accrued payroll liabilities	139,738
Deferred inflows of resources for pensions	322,891
Note payable - Platte Valley Bank	194,812
Total Liabilities	\$769,250

Net Position

Net Investment in capital assets	174,421
Unrestricted	756,907
Total Net Position	\$931,328

Total Operating Revenues \$3,273,624

Total Operating Expenses \$3,149,990

Thank you to our funders.

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**“WELL DONE, GOOD AND
FAITHFUL SERVANT.”
MATTHEW 25:23**



Dr. Matthew Bruner

January 27, 1977 - November 21, 2021

A true leader and advocate for his community and its well-being, he was personable, caring, and passionate about every patient and person he came in contact with. The Panhandle was blessed to have Dr. Bruner serve in numerous roles, including the COVID-19 response, to ensure a safer community.

He will truly be missed.