2011 Annual Report

Efficiency in Public Health

During challenging economic times, public health must make choices. Potential choices include service cuts, increases in operational efficiency, or combinations of both. These strategies have pros and cons. Challenging economic times do not necessarily mean decreases in health issues. In fact, quite the opposite may be true. Hamilton County Public Health (HCPH) has managed to incorporate greater efficiency to the organization, stakeholders and the communities we serve, while continuing to maintain programming and vital health promotion services.

Throughout this report, you will find evidence of paradigm shifts in service delivery and disease prevention. The electronic age has ushered in a new era of reporting, allowing HCPH constituents to access up-to-the-minute information, often in real time.

Epidemiology is at the forefront of the electronic age as it pertains to gathering and disseminating health information. The Division's HealthWatch program gathers and collates absence information from participating schools throughout the County. This data gives staff the ability to quickly identify trends and proceed to remediation much more quickly.

The Division has also rolled out a sophisticated program to share health statistics and trends with the community. Called AHEAD (Access to Hamilton County Epidemiology & Assessment Data), this powerful tool is a compilation of data set up for public use. A visit to the AHEAD area on the Hamilton County Public Health website reveals charts, maps and tables illustrating select indicators by community. Individuals and communities can use the data to dial in on health trends and issues affecting their areas, which can help them to design and implement programs for improved health outcomes.

Perhaps one of the most noticeable examples of efficiency is in area of environmental health. HCPH provides inspection and licensing services for some 2,500 food service establishments throughout the County. Service territory realignment and electronic reporting resulted in more efficient staff resource allocation, while improving services for County residents. Public access to reports on individual establishments is readily available online. The agency was able to implement a second consecutive year of fee reductions to its licensees. Most important, however, is that these measures were implemented with no increase in food-borne illnesses.

Electronic information is a cornerstone for the past year. Every division in the agency has incorporated electronic and web-based reporting into the arsenal, allowing for wide-spread efficiency and increased information access. When County residents make property decisions or consider a home purchase, a quick search through Waste Management Division data provides a goldmine of valuable information. This includes data from landfill locations to lead-based paint hazards – information that was previously available only after extensive search through reams of paper.

The Nursing Division moved its files for the Bureau for Children with Medical Handicaps to electronic format. The efficient reporting format allows nursing staff more time to do what they do best – provide health care services to the children served through the program.

In vital statistics, birth records from any hospital in the state of Ohio are now available online. Previously, requests for birth records were funneled back to the county in which the actual birth occurred, creating logistical issues for customers. These are now available with the click of a computer mouse, creating convenience for customers.
Tuberculosis and other communicable diseases remain at the core of public health services. As you will note in this report, the Disease Prevention Division continues to respond to head off disease outbreaks throughout the County. Also of note is that efficiency in management of the tuberculosis program has saved taxpayers (through the County’s Indigent Care Levy) some $800,000 during the past two years.

An innovative look at health policy development and implementation drove our WeTHRIVE! movement to even more accomplishment in 2011. The program model allows us to work directly with communities to change traditional approaches to creating healthy environments through changing social norms instead of simply implementing legislation. This creates “buy-in” and ultimately, lasting adoption of healthy community policy.

Last year, we brought the movement to childcare centers throughout the County to implement healthy eating and physical activity policies for children. In addition, WeTHRIVE! worked in several communities, in some cases providing grant funding, to help them implement environmental changes to increase physical activity and healthy eating programs, while reducing tobacco use. Our Health Promotion and Education staff provides direct assistance to community leaders to implement community-wide initiatives focused on healthier lifestyles.

Also under the heading of efficiency, we worked closely with the Village of St. Bernard to evaluate population shift and its affect on public health services. Hamilton County Public Health had provided some services to St. Bernard for several years. In 2011, due to population loss revealed in census data, the City of St. Bernard became a village and folded its health function entirely into Hamilton County. While we recognize that major decisions like this are not without debate, we applaud St. Bernard’s move in recognizing and implementing a relationship built for maximum benefit and efficiency for its citizens, and we welcome them into our family of service.

While we are more likely to hear stories of deep cuts, closures and loss of services during these times, Hamilton County Public Health has worked hard to buck this trend. Later in this report, you can read the agency’s vision. Many organizations develop a vision, put it on a shelf and visit it occasionally. Not us!

At Hamilton County Public Health, the vision is lived daily, especially as it relates to revolutionizing the way we provide services and building innovative networks to solve problems. Particularly evident in challenging economic times, agency leadership has devised and implemented efficiency measures while accomplishing the "unheard-of" – maintaining and in some cases, increasing services and accessibility for all of our constituents. The year, 2011, was the fifth consecutive year in which Hamilton County Public Health did not raise assessments to the townships and villages we serve.

Through business-like operational strategy, Hamilton County Public Health has committed to consistent examination of its processes and procedures. As illustrated in this report, the ability to increase efficiency while maintaining service is a critical component of agency management. Pursuit of efficiency in service delivery and reporting is a constant charge to our team. In fact, our efficiency in service development and delivery has been noticed and accessed by some of our neighbors. Hamilton County Public Health contracts many of its services to surrounding counties. These include inspection services in plumbing and medical gases, and access to the agency’s valuable epidemiology services to five surrounding counties.

We are at the beginning of exciting times for health care. Technology will be used for everything from personal health records to physician communication to filling prescriptions. Hamilton County Public Health is already implementing electronic health record practices in the tuberculosis clinic. As new, efficient technologies become available, we will strive to be at the forefront of the movement.

We invite you to access data via our website: www.hamiltoncountyhealth.org. Follow us on social media sites Twitter, Facebook and YouTube. Be part of our health movement into the future!

Tim Ingram
Commissioner
Hamilton County Public Health

HAMILTON COUNTY
PUBLIC HEALTH

250 William Howard Taft Road, 2nd Floor
Cincinnati, OH 45219 • 513.946.7800
hamiltoncountyhealth.org
Financial Report
Numbers rounded to the nearest dollar

Revenues & Resources

- Fees & Permits: $4,603,467
- Grants & Contracts: $6,570,402
- Indigent Care Levy: $900,000
- Cities: $238,551
- Townships & Villages: $462,854
- State Subsidy: $81,057
- Other Revenue: $59,873

Total Revenue & Resources: $12,916,204

Expenditures

- Personnel Services: $4,171,763
- Employee Benefits: $1,227,035
- State & Other Agency Fees: $1,281,258
- Operating Expenses: $4,557,796

Total Expenditures: $11,237,852
### Programs and Inspections

#### Epidemiology and Assessment
- Birth Records Recorded: 5,754
- Birth Records Issued: 14,451
- Death Records Recorded: 4,718
- Death Records Issued: 23,861

#### Disease Prevention
- Communicable Diseases Reported (excluding STDs): 1,162
- Communicable Diseases Reported (including STDs): 3,331
- Confirmed Cases of Tuberculosis: 27
- Directly Observed Therapy Visits: 1,299

#### Nursing
- BCMH contacts: 2,568
- Immunizations Given at Clinics: 2,384
- Flu Shots Given (October 2010 – December 2011): 2,189
- Patients Visiting Regular Clinics: 1,149
- Public Health Nursing Referrals: 31
- Tuberculosis Screenings: 43

#### Waste Management
- Construction and Demolition Debris Landfill Inspections: 211
- Compost Site Inspections: 72
- Infectious Waste Facility Inspections: 116
- Lead Risk Assessments: 10
- Municipal Solid Waste Facility Inspections: 70
- Open Dumping Investigations: 199
- Environmental Sampling at Waste Facilities: 40
- Solid Waste Nuisance Inspections: 721
- Tire Site Inspections: 25
- Tattoo/Piercing Facility Inspections: 44

#### Plumbing
- Backflow Surveys: 250
- Backflow Inspections: 83
- Testable Backflow Devices: 9,365
- Plumbing Nuisance Investigations: 39
- Plumbing Permits Issued: 3,567

#### Health Promotion and Education
- Fall Prevention Presentation Attendees: 329
- Fall Prevention Website Visits: 9,500
- You Hold the Key Participants: 3,651
- School Wellness Teams Supported: 11
- WeTHRIVE! Community and School Gardens: 11
- Competitive Food Policies for Schools Supported: 22
- WeTHRIVE! Physical Activity Infrastructure Enhancements: 9
- WeTHRIVE! Child Care Resolutions: 15
- WeTHRIVE! Community Resolutions: 7
- WeTHRIVE! Website Visits: 12,605

#### Environmental Health
- Nuisance and Housing: 2,353
- Food Service Inspections: 6,815
- Food Safety Training — Individuals Trained: 648
- Food Safety Training — Facilities Trained: 135
- ServSafe — Individuals Trained: 79
- Jail Inspections: 5
- Manufactured Home Park & Camp Inspections: 184
- Marina Inspections: 1
- Public Accommodation Facility Inspections: 153
- Nuisance Complaint Inspections: 2,192
- Rabies Control Cat & Dog Bites: 762
- School Inspections: 462
- Swimming Pool/Spa Inspections: 1,260
- Smoke Free Ohio Inspections: 133

#### Water Quality
- Mechanical STS Inspections: 10,905
- Mechanical STS Re-inspections: 3,773
- STS New Construction/Repair Reviews: 121
- Household Sewage Code Variances: 8
- Installer/Repairer Registrations: 102
- Non-mechanical STS Inspections: 1,744
- Non-mechanical STS Re-inspections: 89
- Semi-public STS Inspections: 439
- Semi-public STS Re-inspections: 121
- Septic Hauler Registrations: 26
- STS Permit to Install: 91
- Subdivision Reviews: 4

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**Frequently Requested Information**

**Customer Service and Important Phone Numbers**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main Number</td>
<td>(513) 946-7800</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administration/Health Commissioner’s Office</td>
<td>(513) 946-7822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Fax</td>
<td>(513) 946-7890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plumbing Fax</td>
<td>(513) 946-7925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TB Clinic Fax</td>
<td>(513) 946-7603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odor Complaint Hotline</td>
<td>(513) 946-7879</td>
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**Web sites**

- HCPH Online: [www.HamiltonCountyHealth.org](http://www.HamiltonCountyHealth.org)
- Follow us on Twitter: [@HamCoHealth](https://twitter.com/HamCoHealth)
- Join us on Facebook: [fb.com/hcphd](https://facebook.com/hcphd)
- YouTube: [youtube.com/hamcohealth](https://youtube.com/hamcohealth)
- WeTHRIVE!™: [www.WeWatchUsThrive.org](http://www.WeWatchUsThrive.org)
- HC Fall Prevention Task Force: [www.FallPreventionTaskForce.org](http://www.FallPreventionTaskForce.org)
Program and Services Updates

**Disease Prevention**
Disease Prevention staff received more than 1,600 reports of communicable disease during 2011. In cooperation with the Divisions of Epidemiology and Environmental Health, Disease Prevention staff responded to 26 local communicable disease outbreaks in 2011. The Tuberculosis clinic treated 12 persons with active tuberculosis disease and more than 200 with latent TB infections. Staff provided 4,034 TB skin tests, 866 chest x-rays, 2,417 prescriptions, and 1,026 physician visits to Hamilton County residents.

**Emergency Preparedness**
Emergency Preparedness staff continued to work with the 45 jurisdictions to develop a plan that would utilize familiar local places as Points of Dispensing (POD) should the need for mass medication or vaccine distribution arise. HCHP conducted two large-scale exercises in 2011 in which six communities organized, set-up and operated PODs that provided 432 doses of free seasonal flu vaccine. During this exercise, 14 closed POD facilities also participated in notification, request for supplies and distribution drills. In another exercise, 1,012 heads of household, representing a total population of 4,386, were dispensed medication in less than two hours. Both exercises/vaccination distributions were simulations of how a POD would operate during a real emergency.

**Environmental Health**
In 2011, the Environmental Health division significantly reduced the food service license fees for operators by increasing efficiencies. All inspection areas were realigned. Realigning inspection areas enabled a 10 percent reduction in staff mileage. In addition, the digitalization of food inspections has significantly reduced the amount of time necessary to manage and oversee the food program. Most important, efficiencies were accomplished with no affect on the County’s food-borne illness incidences.

**Epidemiology**
The Division of Epidemiology and Assessment continued to provide contractual services for clients in five neighboring counties. The division also worked to build a new program – Community Access to Epidemiology and Assessment Data (AHEAD) – to share public health statistics with the community. The community AHEAD program is a web-based tool that provides an array of community-level health statistics. In 2011, health statistics in the following areas were loaded to the new tool on the HCHP website: communicable diseases, birth outcomes, and injuries.

**Health Promotion and Education**
The Health Promotion and Education (HPE) Division continued with county-wide progress of WeTHRIVE! initiatives and expanded to two new focus areas: child care centers and communities at-large. The work with child care centers is supported by the Strategic Alliance for Health grant and a new funding stream from the Child & Family Health Services grant. In 2011 HPE successfully worked with a total of 15 child care centers across Hamilton County to pass a WeTHRIVE! Child Care Nutrition & Physical Activity policy. Through the Communities Putting Prevention to Work grant, HPE was able to release community mini-grant funds for jurisdictions to make policy and environmental changes in their communities. Nine grants were awarded and of those nine, seven communities passed a WeTHRIVE! Wellness Resolution.

**Nursing**
The Immunization Action Program shifted focus from vaccinating children in their homes to educating physician vaccine providers about the latest CDC immunization recommendations.

Nursing successfully converted Bureau for Children with Medical Handicaps case files to electronic format, decreasing the amount of space needed to maintain paper files and increasing the amount of time staff are available to provide services to eligible children and their families. Nursing also completed a thorough study of the immunization clinic program which resulted in a major overhaul of the program by consolidating the number of clinics from 13 to 5.

**Plumbing**
In February 2011, the Plumbing Division began inspecting residential and commercial plumbing projects in Brown County. The Division also added inspection services for medical gas in Brown, Warren and Clermont Counties. This crucial service ensures that medical gas installations for human consumption comply with National Fire Protection Association standards.

**Waste Management**
The Division of Waste Management (DWM) enhanced its online communications to improve access to public records and provide useful information to the community. Users can now access an interactive map of known closed landfill facilities in the county, many of which DWM continues to monitor for environmental concerns. The site also lists properties where lead paint hazards have been identified and orders to abate have been issued.

**Water Quality**
The Division of Water Quality teamed up again with Hamilton County Community Development (HCCD) to capitalize on funding made available through the Ohio Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WP-CLF). Our joint efforts resulted in $160,000 being granted to help lower income families in Hamilton County repair or replace failing septic systems. These funds will result in 10-20 septic system replacements and/or repairs.

**Vital Statistics**
HCHP participated in statewide access for birth certificates throughout 2011. It was the first full year that the Vital Statistics Program has been able to provide a birth record for any person born in Ohio. In many ways, this state level change has made it easier for Hamilton County residents to obtain birth certificates, especially if family members were born at different hospitals throughout the state.
Hamilton County Public Health Mission
The purpose of Hamilton County Public Health is to work with the community to protect the public health and environment. By providing education, inspections, health care coordination and data analysis we strive to assure that the citizens of Hamilton County are safe from disease, injury and contamination.

Hamilton County Public Health Vision
Hamilton County Public Health will revolutionize the way it provides services to a changing community. We will provide a network of information to be used as a tool to improve public health. Communities will develop new and innovative ways to solve problems. Together we will be uniquely equipped to face the challenges of tomorrow and provide an environment in which we will be proud to live and work.

Our Core Values
Our service will be prompt, reliable and professional. Our staff will be caring and responsible.

District Advisory Council
Members include presidents of township boards of trustees, village mayors and the President of the Board of County Commissioners. Members are required by law to meet annually in March. They select four of the five members of the Board of Health, make recommendations to the Board of Health and authorize city contractual agreements.
Chairman: Joe Sykes
Secretary: John Waksmundski

Licensing Council
The Licensing Council provides input on rules and fees regarding business entities licensed by the Hamilton County Board of Health. It meets at least annually and appoints one member to the Board of Health.
Chairperson of Licensing Council: Larry Riddle
Vice Chairperson: Jim Brett
Secretary: Bill Mowery

Board of Health
The Board of Health is the governing body of Hamilton County Public Health. It has the authority to adopt rules and regulations which have the same status as law, enact policies within the jurisdiction of HCPH and hire a health commissioner. Meetings are held at the HCPH office the second Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m.
President: Thomas Chatham
Vice President: Jim Brett
Board Members: Kenneth Amend, M.D.
Tracey A. Puthoff, Esq.
Mark Rippe

Health Commissioner and Staff
Health Commissioner: Timothy Ingram
Assistant Health Commissioner: Kathy Lordo, Department of Community Health Services
Assistant Health Commissioner: Greg Kesterman, Department of Environmental Health Services

Divisions
Disease Prevention: Pat Allingham, Director
Environmental Health: Jeremy Hessel, Director
Epidemiology and Assessment: Ted Folger, Director
Health Promotion and Education: Stacy Wegley, Director
Nursing: Mary Sacco, Director
Plumbing: Lisa Humble, Director
Waste Management: Chuck Dejongheere, Director
Water Quality: Chris Griffith, Director