



250 William Howard Taft Road, 2nd Floor
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hamiltoncountyhealth.org

HAMILTON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH MISSION

Hamilton County Public Health educates, serves and protects our community for a healthier future.

HAMILTON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH VISION

Healthy choices. Healthy lives. Healthy communities.

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 Gwen McFarlin
Secretary Peggy Reis

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 Neal Ramsey

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 on the second Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

President Jim Brett
Vice President Kenneth Amend, M.D.
Board Members Thomas Chatham
. 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 Craig Davidson, Director
Health Promotion and Education Rebecca Stowe, Director
Plumbing Lisa Humble, Director
Waste Management Chuck DeJonckheere, Director
Water Quality Chris Griffith, Director



2013
AN AWARD WINNING YEAR

Hamilton County Public Health educates, serves and protects our community for a healthier future.

Our new mission statement simply but descriptively captures the essence of what we do every day in the world of public health. Much of the work we do – inspections, vaccinations, epidemiology, licensing – lives “under the radar” and serves to protect our community from disease. In fact, one of the best quotes I have seen that perfectly captures the work of public health came from *Cincinnati Magazine* in a recent story about our tuberculosis program: “*It’s always impressive when a public health crisis is averted before the public even knows it exists.*”

That is exactly what made 2013 such an exciting year for Hamilton County Public Health. It was one of those rare years in which we got to slide out from under the radar and show our community, our state and even the rest of our continent just what it is that we do every day to keep our region protected for a healthier future.

The recognition kicked off in April when one of our sanitarians earned the Ohio Environmental Health Association Sanitarian of the Year award in recognition for work with hoarders. The interest in working with hoarders led to development of a partnership with mental health professionals to not only provide hoarders with necessary help, but also better understand hoarding behavior. The resulting training and partnerships allow sanitarians who work with hoarders to not only help clean their properties, but also access mental health providers to work on the root of the problem.

These efforts have produced significantly more sustainable outcomes in terms of working with people to understand and subsequently change their behavior. I am particularly pleased with the team’s grasp of our agency mantra of education over enforcement in tackling a difficult mental health issue as it relates to public health.

Not to be outdone, another of our sanitarians snagged the Southwest Ohio Environmental Health Association’s Sanitarian of the Year award. This individual was recognized for work on development and implementation of educational programming for County licensees.

Again adhering to our agency mantra, this sanitarian taught safe food handling practices for more than 200 attendees during the year. In addition, we were able to develop a training program covering safe handling practices and compliance for organizers and vendors at the County’s farmers markets. Farmers markets are an important target as they are seasonal and not typically staffed by professional food handlers, making education important for this group.

Later in the year, one of our more recent efforts received recognition. Social media – Facebook, Twitter and YouTube – have become today’s standard for communication. Particularly in the world of public health, it is increasingly important to reach constituents with pertinent and timely messaging delivered in an easily “digestible” format. Hamilton County Public Health embarked on an extensive social media program approximately two years ago and it has already paid significant dividends.

Not only are we now able to reach highly-targeted audiences with specific health messages, but we are doing so in a variety of formats, from Twitter’s quick messaging to fully demonstrating healthy practices via video on YouTube. Washington University conducted a study among public health agencies across the U.S and discovered that one agency is the most “followed” by its peer groups – Hamilton County Public Health!

Social media work was again recognized last fall by the National Public Health Information Coalition. At its annual symposium, the organization recognized our social media program with its Silver Award for Excellence in Public Health Communication.

The crown jewel in our year of recognition was winning the Samuel J. Crumbine Consumer Protection Award. The Crumbine Award, sponsored by the Conference for Food Protection, is a prestigious international award given to local environmental health jurisdictions that demonstrate excellence and continual improvement in a

comprehensive food protection program. The purpose of the award is to encourage improvement and stimulate public interest in food service sanitation. The award is named in honor of Dr. Samuel J. Crumbine (1862 – 1954, and an 1888 graduate of the Cincinnati College of Medicine and Surgery), a sanitarian-physician and public health pioneer who was renowned for his innovative methods of improving public health protection.

This is the preeminent award in food protection, so naturally we are thrilled. We have worked extremely hard to develop a program that not only protects the citizens of Hamilton County, but also works closely with our partners in the food service industry with an emphasis on education over enforcement. The award is particularly exciting in that this is the 50th anniversary of the last time Hamilton County Public Health received the award.

- Criteria for an award-winning program include:
- Sustained excellence as documented by specific outcomes and achievements and evidenced by continual improvements in the components of a comprehensive program;
 - Demonstrated improvements in planning, managing and evaluating a comprehensive program;
 - Innovative and effective use of program methods and problem solving to identify and reduce risk factors that are known to cause foodborne illness; and
 - Providing targeted outreach, forming partnerships and participating in forums that foster communication and information exchange among regulators, industry and consumer representatives.

For an agency that most times carries on its mission outside public view, 2013 was most gratifying for the Hamilton County Public Health team. Even though we work to prevent disease during the course of our everyday responsibilities, every so often, it is nice to get caught doing a good job! Please join me in congratulating the team at Hamilton County Public Health for a remarkable year.



Setting the stage for future award-winning public health practices, the Hamilton County Board of Health, along with our staff, undertook a strategic planning session during 2013. With the excitement of public health accreditation upon us, as well as wholesale changes in our nation's health system, we closely examined our practices and revised overall direction for our services. Not only have we completely revised our Program Plan of Work, but we have also developed new mission, vision and values statements to reflect our direction.

You have already been introduced to our new mission statement, mentioned at the beginning of this report. Our new vision statement succinctly captures the direction established in our strategic plan: ***Healthy choices. Healthy lives. Healthy communities.***

Finally, our revised values reflect the new face of public health as it relates to our communities and the areas we serve.

- We believe:
- Everyone deserves an opportunity to live a healthy, fulfilling life.
 - We can achieve and sustain a healthier community for everyone by working collaboratively with others.
 - A healthier community reinforces the economic vitality of the region.
 - Accurate and timely information and services will better equip people to make healthy choices and strengthen the entire community.
 - Hamilton County Public Health's work to educate and to ensure compliance can result in a healthier community and environment.
 - Our team will be competent and strive to continuously improve delivery of our services.

We look forward to continuing to educate, serve and protect our community in 2014 and beyond.

Stay healthy!
Tim Ingram
Health Commissioner



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PROGRAM AND SERVICES UPDATES

DISEASE PREVENTION

During 2013, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) Prevention Grant funds were utilized to provide free testing, counseling and risk-reduction interventions to Hamilton County residents. During 2013, Disease Investigation Staff received 733 reports of syphilis infection and 303 reports of HIV infection. Of these, 557 required investigation and 497 were new infections. In total, 344 (96 percent) have received treatment for syphilis, many on-site in weekly clinics. Eighty- nine percent of those with newly identified HIV infections were successfully linked to HIV-related specialty care.

The Tuberculosis (TB) clinic provides walk-in TB testing for more than 3,000 Hamilton County residents annually. During 2013, 14 persons with active tuberculosis disease and more than 140 with latent TB infections received diagnostic testing and medical treatment. Staff provided 2,871 TB skin tests, 671 chest x-rays, 1,166 prescriptions and 715 physician visits.

Through the Bureau for Children with Medical Handicaps (BCMHI) Program, public health nurses provided assistance to parents so their children could receive diagnostic, therapeutic and service coordination services. Public health nurses also provided immunizations to adults and children in five locations throughout the County; and assisted parents of children with elevated lead levels to take measures that reduce those levels and safeguard their children's health.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Emergency Preparedness staff continued to work with the 45 jurisdictions to maintain a plan that utilizes familiar local places as Points of Dispensing (POD) should the need for mass medication or vaccine distribution arise. HCPH currently has established 35 Community PODs which would be open to the general public to cover those 45 jurisdictions during an event. HCPH also recruited 35 Closed PODs (businesses, schools, skilled nursing facilities) which would serve employees, family members and others associated with those facilities. This has re-routed nearly 30 percent of the population that would need to come to Community PODs, making both operations even more efficient. HCPH also participated in a regional distribution functional exercise that tested the request and notification procedures, information sharing, messaging, volunteer management and communications.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

In 2013, the Environmental Health Division continued to provide facility operators some of the lowest license fees in Ohio, largely due to efficiencies realized through use of the digital inspection program and efficient program planning. The Environmental Health Division received the 2013 Samuel J. Crumbine Consumer Protection Award, recognizing the agency's food program as the most innovative and cutting edge food safety program in North America. Environmental Health also boasts two individual award winners. Mandy Bartel was awarded the Ohio Environmental Health Association Sanitarian of the Year, while Eric Kepf was recognized as the South-west Ohio Environmental Health Association Sanitarian of the Year.

EPIDEMIOLOGY

The Division's Epidemiologists and Disease Investigators received more than 1,100 reports of non-STD communicable diseases and responded to 35 local communicable disease outbreaks in 2013. A manuscript detailing HCPH's 2010 response to a foodborne outbreak was submitted to, and published in the prestigious Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, a peer-reviewed journal published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The Division continued to provide contractual services for local health departments in four neighboring counties. A new contract with

Butler County Health Department for the provision of maternal and child health data analysis in support of Butler County's work related to the Ohio Equity Institute project was initiated. This was the first full year in which the Epidemiology and Assessment Division coordinated the Child Fatality Review for Hamilton County, which met six times throughout the year to discuss cases and develop recommendations. The Division also played a key role in the community-wide Cradle Cincinnati initiative, targeted at reducing infant mortality within Hamilton County. Contract-based work on several projects with Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center Division of Biostatistics and Epidemiology aimed at evaluating, improving and enhancing the utility of the Division's injury surveillance system processes and data were implemented in 2013.

HEALTH PROMOTION AND EDUCATION

The Health Promotion and Education Division continued with county-wide progress of the WeTHRIVE! Child Care initiative. Twenty-eight child care centers adopted wellness resolutions, completed assessments and developed work plans. Work plans focused on enhancing the ability of child care centers to provide a healthy environment for all enrolled children – specifically healthy eating, increased physical activity and reduced exposure to tobacco. Child care center staff received technical assistance to assist with implementation of the wellness resolution best-practice standards, including Coordinated Approach To Child Health (CATCH) Early Childhood curriculum training, menu reviews and recommendations by a registered dietician, and educational and promotional materials. The WeTHRIVE! Child Care initiative impacted 3,332 children in 2013. It will be expanded to include additional child care centers in 2014.

PLUMBING

The Division began inspection services for medical gas in Brown, Warren and Clermont Counties, in addition to its work in Hamilton County jurisdictions. This crucial service ensures that medical gas installations for human consumption comply with National Fire Protection Association standards. The Division also welcomed residential and commercial inspection services in Brown County and Saint Bernard to its areas served.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

The Division of Waste Management continued to enhance its online communications to improve access to public records and provide useful information to the community. Users can now access facility licenses, complaint information, reports on closed landfills, and view a video on how to use a HEPA vacuum to reduce lead hazards in the home.

WATER QUALITY

Hamilton County Public Health continues to partner with the Hamilton County Storm Water District (HCSWD) to address the federally mandated Phase II storm water requirements of the Clean Water Act. In 2013, the Division of Water Quality provided multiple services to HCSWD, which included using global positioning systems to map more than 1,600 household sewage treatment systems, providing storm water pollution prevention education and best management practices to more than 550 government employees, conducting investigations for nearly 400 storm water-related complaints and actively enforcing 45 properties to connect to sanitary sewers.

VITAL STATISTICS

Vital Statistics continued to issue birth certificates for people born anywhere in Ohio. In order to serve the citizens of Hamilton County best, the Vital Statistics Program has also been working to make the ordering process for birth and death certificates simple and easy. This included evaluating ways to streamline processes and increase the efficiencies of work flows, resulting in even better customer service.