Annual Report
2022-2023
Cherokee County Public Health provided by Cherokee Regional Medical Center works to promote health and wellness within Cherokee County, Iowa.

If there was one word to describe this past year at our agency it would be--growth. Our department has grown from a staff of two to a staff of ten in seven months time. This has allowed for new perspectives, growth in knowledge and services, and a broader reach into the community.

We have been excited about the growth and changes that have occurred within our department over the past year and we feel that they are allowing us to be more involved in making positive change for the health and support of our community.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you; our community. We love what we do and find joy in supporting those around us.

Kayla Mayer
Public Health Manager
Accomplishments
July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023

- Re-staffed the entire department due to retirements and resignations while increasing head count by 6 staff members.
- Health Improvement Plan was updated and is being implemented.
- Beginning new programming for the Child and Adolescent Health and Oral Health program.
- Many outreach events to be involved with the community and raise awareness of services and community-wide issues.

What is Public Health?

THE 10 ESSENTIAL PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

To protect and promote the health of all people in all communities

The 10 Essential Public Health Services provide a framework for public health to protect and promote the health of all people in all communities. To achieve optimal health for all, the Essential Public Health Services actively promote policies, systems, and services that enable good health and seek to remove obstacles and systemic and structural barriers, such as poverty, racism, gender discrimination, and other forms of oppression, that have resulted in health inequities. Everyone should have a fair and just opportunity to achieve good health and well-being.
Assessment and monitor population health.

Population health is assessed through the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and through this a Health Improvement Plan (HIP) is created. The CHNA was completed in conjunction with Cherokee Regional Medical Center during the summer of 2022.

**Top 4 Health Priorities - Cherokee County**

1. Teen Pregnancy and Parenting
2. Substance Abuse
3. Mental Health
4. Chronic Disease Prevention and Awareness

Completion Timeline: 2023-2025
Assessment

Investigate, diagnose, and address health hazards and root causes.

Disease investigation and surveillance includes monitoring the numbers of infectious disease cases within our community and informing the public on what they can do to prevent the spread of whatever disease is at bay. We also investigate diseases to help discover their source and prevent further outbreak, this includes an interview with the individual with a positive result and contact tracing.

We have created a partnership with the Cherokee Regional Medical Center laboratory department so that we can update the community on influenza-like illness trends in real time.
Cherokee County Public Health holds the contract with IDHHS to receive the Tobacco Use Prevention and Control Community Partnership Grant. During the past year we have communicated with medical professionals on topics such as Quitline, along with providing cessation education materials to share with the public. Information is also shared on social media outlets.

We have recognized a gap in education on vaping in our community for parents. Some parents think vaping is a safe alternative to smoking for their children and therefore are allowing their students to smoke. Due to this, we have changed our focus from ISTEP to Community Member Education where we can focus on educating adults who interact with students and also continue with the partnerships that have been in place for a number of years with the schools.

We also work with the local schools to provide education in the classrooms. Judy Stowater, RN presented to Cherokee's 7th and 8th grade students and Alta-Aurelia students. Kelley Wester, RN presented to the River Valley 8th grade students, MMCRU 9th grade students, and Cherokee's 5th grade students. We also had a BSN student from the University of Iowa help present and come up with some of the education for these presentations as well.

Judy Stowater, RN regularly attended WIC clinics in our community through December and Kelley Wester, RN took over this role in January. At these clinics, she specializes in maternal health and provides education to prenatal and post-partum mothers on how to take care of their bodies while pregnant, what warning signs may be present post-partum that warrant a doctor's visit, and how to care for an infant.
Over the past year we have increased our community outreach to better inform and educate the community on public health topics. We firmly believe that we need to go where the people are and we have threaded that theory into the work and outreach that we provide in the community. All of the work we do also correlates back to the community health needs assessment so we can focus on improving the health of all that live here.

We attended the Cherokee County and Marcus Fairs to increase awareness of services provided to the community for parents. We also went to all 3 local pools in conjunction with the EMS department at CRMC to provide freezies and education on topics for children and/or parents twice a month throughout the summer. We also arranged for car seat certification training to come to Cherokee and 7 individuals in the county got trained to provide this service to the community.
In conjunction with the Suicide Prevention Coalition and Rosecrance Jackson we offered weekly training sessions for the 5 weeks in May for Mental Health Awareness month. We know many mental illnesses stem from substance abuse so we linked the two together for these sessions. We also have ongoing work with the tobacco grant reviewed in the previous section.
A number of cancer survivors were struggling in our community along with an increasing percentage of individuals diagnosed with cancer in our community. We began a cancer support group in conjunction with the Cherokee Regional Specialty Clinic. Kayla and Judy attended a suicide prevention training called QPR. A flier was created and given out to all local co-ops in the county for farmers to reference. Homecoming parades were arranged and attended by suicide coalition members in Cherokee and Marcus. There was a suicide awareness golf tournament and public health helped serve the lunch. We helped arrange and coordinate the suicide awareness walk which was very successful in over 180 participants. The walk was held in both Marcus and Cherokee after a football game. In the month of October, the transition of leadership of the Suicide Coalition came back to the Public Health Department. The attendance and presence at an MMCRU basketball game also occurred to raise awareness of who is behind the movement towards no suicides and awareness of services. We also created a mental health survey at the turn of the year and sent it out to the community for feedback on what specifically individuals are struggling with in our community and how to better educate or target outreach.
Chronic Disease Prevention and Awareness

We worked closely with the Cherokee Fitness Center to offer multiple challenges community-wide to allow for anyone to participate in the wellness challenges to encourage healthier habits. We also presented to Trivium Life on how to perform proper hygiene and to the county 4th graders on sun safety. We hosted a diabetes day health fair which was successful in engaging individuals in their health. We were on the radio a few times to discuss current health topics.
Strengthen, support, and mobilize community partnerships.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Development</th>
<th>Cherokee County Healthcare Coalition</th>
<th>Cherokee County Suicide Coalition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monthly meetings; law enforcement, hospital staff, school staff, local social workers</td>
<td>Bi-monthly meetings with local businesses, funeral homes, radio, EMA, law enforcement, nursing homes.</td>
<td>Monthly meetings; law enforcement, hospital staff, school staff, local social workers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Northwest Early Childhood Iowa**: Monthly board meetings.
- **Cherokee County Planning Council**: Monthly board meetings.
- **Cherokee County Healthcare Coalition**: Bi-monthly meetings with community members.
- **Cherokee County Prevention Coalition**: Bi-monthly meetings with community members.

**Supports I-Smile Program**

Supports communication on public education topics within the county.

**Brings together multiple community partners interested in improving healthcare related emergency preparedness within the county.**

**Brings together multiple community partners interested in improving chronic disease outcomes, teen pregnancy and parenting, and substance abuse within the community.**

**Provides education, resources and information on suicide prevention in the county.**
Immunization Program

Vaccines for Children
Every county in Iowa must have a Vaccines for Children program. We work with IDPH on this program to provide vaccines at no cost to eligible children from birth-18 years of age to ensure all children have access to vaccines.

To be eligible children must be:
- Medicaid enrolled
- Uninsured
- Underinsured
- Native American
- Alaskan Native

Reminder recall is performed to ensure children are up to date on their vaccinations.

Immunization Audits
Daycares and schools are audited annually to ensure vaccination compliance according to Iowa Law. All daycares and schools had 100% valid certificates. This percentage accounts for provisional certificates, medical and religious exemptions as well. See the graphics to note the vaccination trends in our community.

Emergency Preparedness
Public Health is required to prepare for emergencies. During FY23 Kelley Wester attended a regional table top drill in Sioux City. Kayla and Kelley also both participated in the drill in Marcus put on by the EMA and Fire Department.

We purchased an AED for Jodi Schlichting, Athletic Trainer for CCSD and Fitness Center manager so she can bring this to all the local sporting events and have it on the field.

We also had a BSN student from the University of Iowa who piloted Project ICE for us which is a project used for the indentification of the elderly in the community.
Homemaker and Health Maintenance Program

For the history of the public health department in Cherokee County, homemaker and health maintenance services have always been offered and a large focus of the department. We have found through recent years the program has not been a large need in our community and the numbers have continued to drop throughout FY23. FY23 was the last year for this program taking new patients. There was also a change in Iowa Law Chapter 80 which allowed this change to occur. A change from individual care to population health.

Immunizations

The Vaccines for Children program ensures that all children in our county have access to safe, effective, and affordable vaccinations that they need to stay healthy.

Public Health also monitors the flu vaccination uptake within the community and ensures equitable distribution and access to COVID-19 vaccinations. To ensure equitable access, we provided outreach services in each community to improve the rates in our county. This had a very positive impact and closed the gap we were typically seeing between the state and our community uptake.
Building the Workforce

Over the past year, we have spent a large amount of time hiring new individuals with all different scopes of practice into the department. We have spent time ensuring we have the right people in the right places to keep employees satisfied in their positions.

Improving and Innovating

With much evaluation, research, and with quality improvement in mind, the decision to discontinue the Homemaker and Health Maintenance program after the completion of FY23 has been decided upon. An evaluation of the program showed the number of clients was dwindling, showing us that it is no longer a high need in our community. There were also changes in legislature for the movement of public health to go from individual cares to a population based focus.

In being a hospital-based public health agency, we also participate in the hospital's quality improvement program. We have four quality goals for the year; Service goal to receive positive feedback during immunization clinics, quality goal to improve countywide HPV vaccination rates, quality goal to improve county-wide flu vaccination rates, and a financial goal to utilize all of the emergency preparedness funds. All goals are on track to be reached by the end of this calendar year.

Building and Maintaining

Over the past year the department has been constantly building. We have been looking at our programming to ensure that it is serving the community and meeting their needs. We have been adding additional programming to make our services more available and we have provided multiple outreach opportunities to engage with the community. The department has grown from a department of two to a department of ten and we look to the future with hopes of growing further and offering more services to the community as we are able with the funding we have been provided.
# Public Health Finances FY23

## Revenue

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<td>Imz Grant</td>
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<td>COVID 19</td>
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<td>Sliding Fee Schedule</td>
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## Expenses

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<td><strong>TOTAL EXPENSES</strong></td>
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**TOTAL**                   | **-38493.28**|
Annual Report FY23
Child and Adolescent Health and Oral Health
Cherokee County, IA

Accomplishments
- Began the program January 2023 and onboarded 2 Registered Dental Hygienists, 2 RN’s, 1 Biller, 1 Care Coordinator, and 1 Outreach Coordinator
- Began providing direct oral health care services by March 2023.
- Began providing direct child health services by July 2023.

Hawki Outreach
Program serves to reach those who are uninsured children to enroll them in Hawki or Medicaid in an attempt to coordinate better preventative healthcare services. Requirement is to visit the county in an outreach capacity at least 3 times per year and talk about the resources to 16 local partners each month.
- Outreach was provided in Cherokee County at the Cherokee Public Library, MidSioux Food Pantry, and Cherokee and Marcus Fairs.

Medicaid Informing
Program serves to inform those newly enrolled in Medicaid of the health related resources available to them in their community.
- From March 1-September 30 we have provided resources to 70 children’s families in Cherokee County.
- We were able to verbally reach 62% of these families and ensure their access to care.

Oral Health
Program serves to connect Iowans with dental, medical, and community resources to ensure a lifetime of health and wellness.
- 212 children were seen for oral health services with a decay rate of 20%
- 85 of these children were seen at Cherokee Elementary grades 1-4 and these children had a decay rate of 29%

Child Health
We began providing lead services at head start in Cherokee in July but will begin providing lead services during regular visits beginning October 1, 2023.
Annual Report FY23
Child and Adolescent Health and Oral Health
Cherokee, Clay, Dickinson, Emmet, Lyon, O'Brien, Osceola, Palo Alto, Plymouth, and Sioux Counties

Accomplishments
- Began the program January 2023 and onboarded 2 Registered Dental Hygienists, 2 RN’s, 1 Biller, 1 Care Coordinator, and 1 Outreach Coordinator
- Began providing direct oral health care services by March 2023.
- Began providing direct child health services by July 2023.

Hawki Outreach
Program serves to reach those who are uninsured children to enroll them in Hawki or Medicaid in an attempt to coordinate better preventative healthcare services. Requirement is to visit the county in an outreach capacity and talk about the resources to 16 local partners each month.
- Outreach was provided in all ten counties at various events.

Medicaid Informing
Program serves to inform those newly enrolled in Medicaid of the health related resources available to them in their community.
- From March 1-September 30 we have provided resources to 1,192 children’s families throughout the service area.
- We were able to verbally reach 62% of these families and ensure their access to care.

Oral Health
Program serves to connect Iowans with dental, medical, and community resources to ensure a lifetime of health and wellness.
- 1544 children were seen for oral health services with a decay rate of 24%
- 355 of these children were seen across the service area and these children had a decay rate of 35%

Child Health
We began providing lead services at head start in July but will begin providing lead services during regular visits beginning October 1, 2023.