



Sandusky County Public Health

Annual Report 2020



SANDUSKY COUNTY
PUBLIC HEALTH

Email: info@scpublichealth.com

Website: www.scpublichealth.com

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/scpublichealth.com>

Phone: 419-334-6377

Address: 2000 Countryside Drive
Fremont, OH 43420

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mission and Vision	Page 3
Board of Health Members	Page 4
Letter from Health Commissioner	Page 5
Board of Health Funds	Page 6
Covid-19 Response	Page 8
What is Public Health	Page 10
Public Health Accreditation	Page 10
Community Health Assessment	Page 11
Community Health Improvement Plan	Page 11
Strategic Plan	Page 12
Performance Management	Page 12
CQI – Continuous Quality Improvement	Page 12
Marketing Committee	Page 13
Health Partners	Page 13
Clerical Support	Page 14
Public Health Nursing	Page 14
Tuberculosis Test and Surveillance	Page 14
Welcome Home Newborn Visit	Page 15
Bureau of Children with Medical Handicaps	Page 15
Immunization Clinic	Page 16
Flu Clinic	Page 17
Communicable Disease	Page 18
Pediatric Cardiac Care	Page 18
Child Fatality Review Board	Page 19
Maternal Health and Infant Coalition	Page 19
Maternal Child and Health Program	Page 19
Emergency Preparedness	Page 20
Reproductive Health and Wellness Program	Page 20
Women, Infants, and Children	Page 21
Help Me Grow	Page 22
Environmental Health	Page 23
Health Planning and Education	Page 24
Substance Abuse Prevention	Page 25
Red Ribbon Week	Page 25
40 Developmental Assets	Page 26
Sandusky County Role in Opiate Use	Page 26
Medication Take Back Boxes	Page 27
Gambling Prevention	Page 27
Safe Communities	Page 28
Creating Healthy Communities	Page 28
PAX Good Behavior Game	Page 29
Tobacco, E-Cigarette, and Vape Prevention and Cessation	Page 29
Worksite Wellness Committee	Page 30

Mission Statement:

Our Mission is to improve, protect, and promote the public health, well-being and environment of the communities in Sandusky County.

We accomplish this mission through:

- Promoting a healthy community and protecting the residents from health risks.
- Preventing disease, disability, injury, and premature deaths.
- Defining health priorities determined through community health assessments.
- Monitoring the health status of the community.
- Developing health policy that supports and encourages improved health status.

We assist residents through public health education and information to:

- Understand both community and personal health risks.
- Accept individual responsibility for his/her health.
- Adopt personal practices that enhance both individual and community health.

We assure that:

- Health services are available and accessible to all residents.
- Medical services are of the highest quality and necessary.
- Environmental health conditions related to air, water, food, shelter, solid waste, sewage, consumer protection, and safety foster a healthy community.

Vision:

The communities of Sandusky County will Always Choose Health.



Board of Health Members



From left to right: Dean Auxter, Bob Gross, John Zimmerman, Regina Vincent-Williams, Ryan Zimmerman, Dr. John Yuhas, and Jim Mason



Administrative Staff

From left to right: Marsha Overmyer (Registrar), Stacey Gibson (Director of Health Education), Deb Agee (Director of Nursing), Bethany Brown (Health Commissioner), Martha Bowen (Director of Environmental), Bryleigh Wolf (Director of Support Services)

Medical Director

Dr. Jennifer Greenslade-Hohman, MD



A Letter from the Health Commissioner



Well to say the least, 2020 was certainly an “interesting” year for all of us. As January began, we were watching the world respond to a COVID-19 pandemic. This is something we in public health have trained on for years, hoping to never have to use that training. We began planning what our duties and response to this virus would need to be in mid-January, 2020. As the Governor’s Office and the Ohio

Department of Health issued orders, we strove to educate the public and aid local businesses in the best practices to use in following the guidelines set forth for the health and safety of the residents and businesses of our communities. The staff here at Sandusky County Public Health Department has worked diligently to perform their normal program duties while performing contact tracing, case investigations, and helping businesses with “restart” protocols in an effort to stem the spread of coronavirus. Towards the end of the year, we received our first COVID-19 vaccine. The vaccination effort started out vaccinating our healthcare workers that take care of COVID patients. The staff had to quickly learn about the new vaccinations, storage and handling, and who was qualified for the vaccine. These vaccination activities continue to ramp up for the next year.

We realize that struggle with COVID-19 will continue throughout the upcoming year. Be assured that your Public Health Department will continue to strive to meet the ever-changing needs of our communities while continuing to provide the programs we have always offered.

We realize that 2020 has been a long and somewhat frustrating year and we thank you all for your cooperation and support. Please know that you don’t always see us in the news, but we are constantly working behind the scenes to continue our commitment to ensure the health and safety of the residents of Sandusky County. Please take care and stay safe. Let us all work to make 2021 a brighter year for everyone.

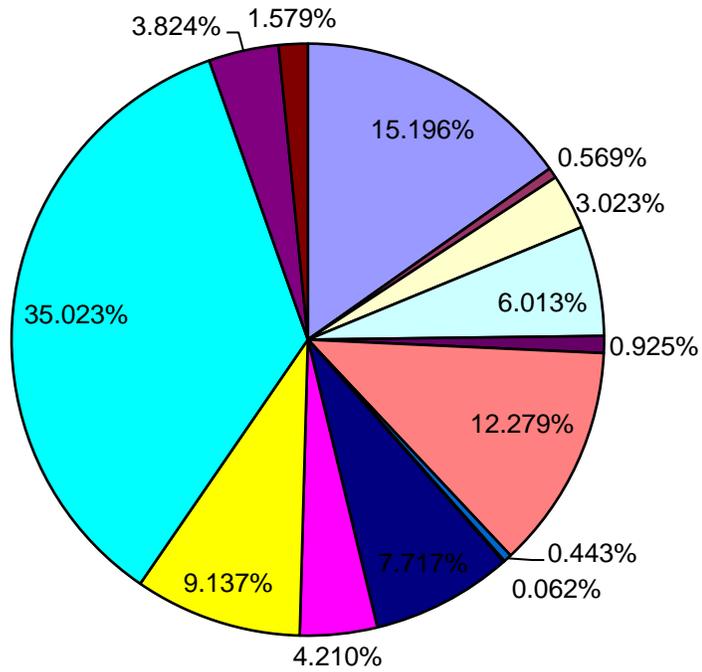
Bethany Brown, RN, MSN

Bethany Brown, RN, MSN
Health Commissioner

2020 BOARD OF HEALTH FUNDS

REVENUES

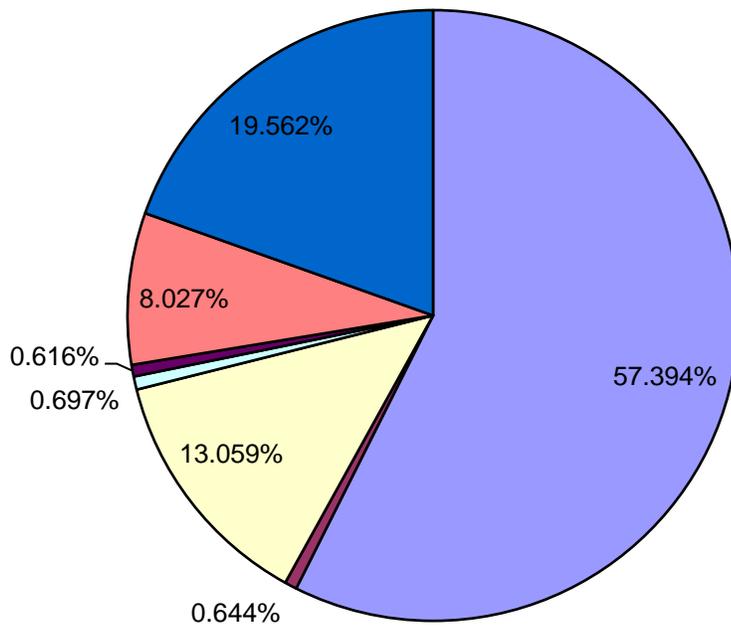
Total Revenue
\$4,002,001.97



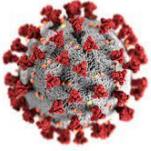
■ A. LEVY	■ B. STATE SUBSIDY	■ C. VITAL STATS	■ D. PERMITS, FEES	■ E. SUBDIVISIONS
■ F. CONTRACTS	■ G. PATIENT FEES	■ H. MEDICARE	■ I. PRIVATE INSURANCE	■ J. LOCAL PROJECTS
■ K. FEDERAL PROJECTS	■ L. STATE PROJECTS	■ M. MEDICAID	■ N. OTHER	

EXPENSES

**Total Expense
\$2,909,129.76**

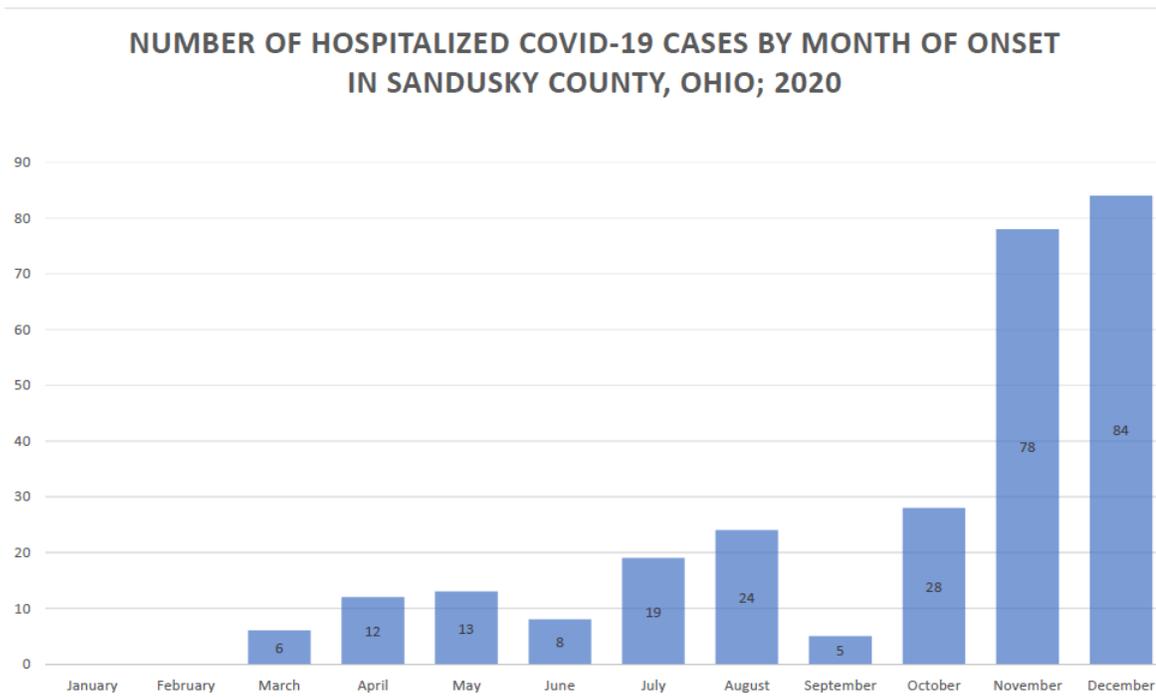
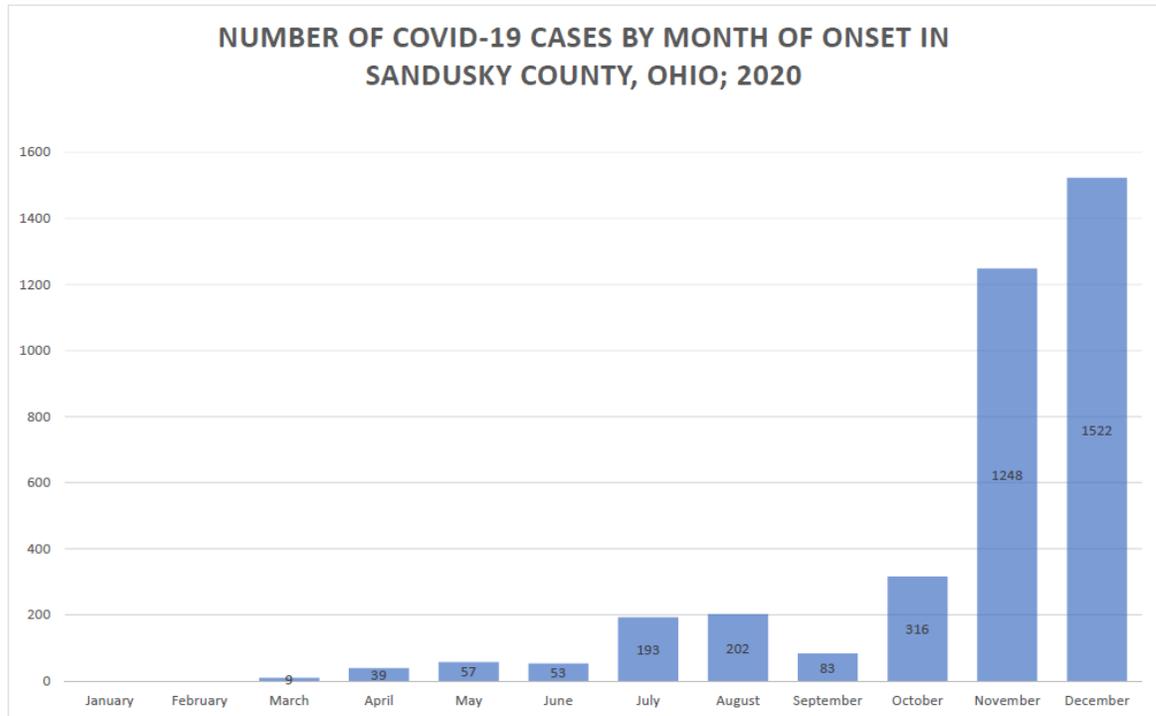


■ A. PERSONNEL	■ B. EQUIPMENT	■ C. SUPPLIES	■ D. TRAVEL
■ E. UTILITIES/MAINTENANCE	■ F. OTHER EXPENSE	■ G. CONTRACT SERVICES	

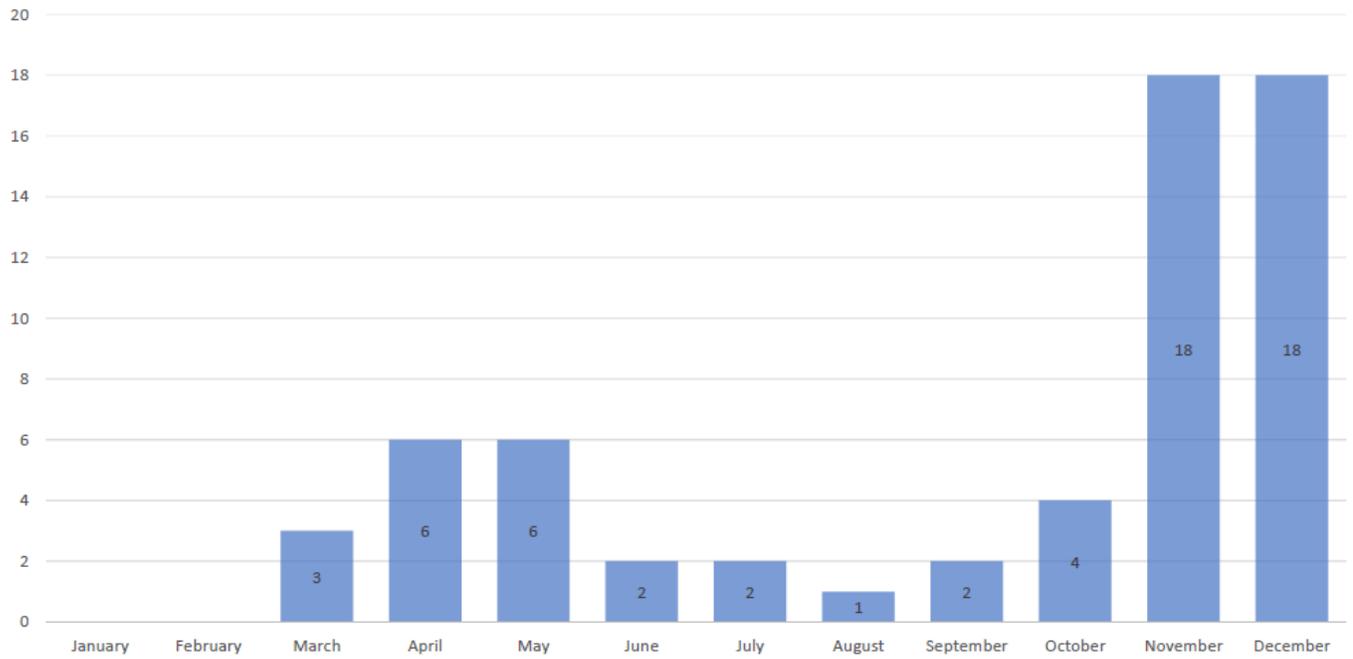


COVID-19 RESPONSE

In 2020, the staff here at SCPH was tasked to respond to the COVID-19 global pandemic. In the beginning, staff had to learn about the new disease and keep up with the ever-changing information. The staff worked long hours to keep the public informed and safe. Below are charts with the number of positive COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths that were reported for Sandusky County in 2020.



NUMBER OF COVID-19 DEATHS BY MONTH OF ONSET IN SANDUSKY COUNTY, OHIO; 2020



SLOW THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)



Wear a cloth face covering
in public spaces



Stay at least 6 feet
from other people



Frequently wash
your hands

What is Public Health?

Public Health has been a priority in Sandusky County since 1889. For 130 years, those working in the field of public health have worked to protect and maintain the health of the entire community; including every village, township and city. Public health recognizes that every individual's health is valued.

Public health is concerned with protecting the health of the entire population, no matter what size that population may be. Public health is community health. The dimensions of public health include health promotion, disease prevention, early diagnosis and prompt treatment, disability limitation and rehabilitation. Focusing on these elements ultimately leads to a healthier Sandusky County.



Local public health efforts include protecting drinking water, ensuring the safety of food at local restaurants, epidemiological studies, increasing vaccinations, emergency preparedness and increasing access to care for all. Continuation of critical daily strides in the decrease of infant and child mortality, and improvement of community health are most important to ensure that our daily lives are safe and the public's needs met.

An important piece of public health is the promotion of health care equity, quality and accessibility. Public Health works to limit health disparities, which includes equalizing preventable differences in the burden of disease, injury, violence, or opportunities to achieve optimal health that are experienced by socially disadvantaged populations.

Sandusky County Health Department will continue its commitment to ensuring optimal health for all community members for many years to come.

Public Health Accreditation

In November 2018, the Sandusky County Health Department was nationally accredited by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). The accreditation process took 3 years to review our programs, policies, procedures, tasks, and day to day operations, including how we work with our local board of health. Accreditation helps public health departments assess their strengths and areas for improvement so that they can continually improve the quality of their services and performance.

Public health departments play a critical, but often unrecognized, role in promoting and preserving the health of people in communities. When you see our seal of accreditation, you can rest assured that it means the Sandusky County Health Department has undergone rigorous, multi-faceted, peer-reviewed assessment process to ensure it meets or exceeds a set of quality standards.

The health department was one of the top 25 health departments in the state and top 200 nationwide to achieve this status. The health department will continue to strive to keep up the quality programs and services for all residents within the county.



Community Health Assessment



A community health assessment is foundational to improving and promoting the health of a community. Sandusky County's current community health assessment, completed in 2019-2020, describes the health of Sandusky County residents, the factors that contribute to health challenges, and existing community assets and resources that are mobilized to improve our community's health. This assessment helps ensure that local resources are directed toward where they can make the greatest and most timely impact.

Sandusky County has been involved in community health assessment since 1993 through a group known as Health Partners. These assessments have allowed Sandusky County to identify priority areas of concern. A number of issues have been identified as important to the community and the constituent groups who use the health assessment. To view this full report, visit our website at scpublichealth.com

Upon completing the 2019-2020 Sandusky County Community Health Assessment, the health department mobilized a group to community partners to identify [priority health issues](#). The updated Community Health Assessment was released on April 8, 2020.

Community Health Improvement Plan

The Sandusky County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) describes the comprehensive, cross-sector approach to addressing the community's most pressing health issues, including:

Priority 1: Mental Health and Addiction

- Increase Awareness of Trauma Informed Care
- Expand the Number of Primary Care Providers Screening for Depression During Office Visits
- Expand Community Collaboration to Increase Awareness and Coordination of Mental Health Services
- Increase Provider Training on Opioid Prescribing Guidelines

Priority 2: Chronic Disease

- Increase Healthy Eating Through Fostering Self-Efficacy
- Implement Healthy Food Initiatives

Priority 3: Maternal and Infant Health

- Increase the Use of Safe Sleep Practices
- Increase First Trimester Prenatal Care
- Implement Smoke-Free Policies
-

Cross-Cutting Strategies

- Increase Early Identification of Mental Health Needs Among Youth
- Implement School-based Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Programs
- Implement Shared Use (Joint Use Agreements)
- Implement School-Based Nutrition Education Programs
- Implement Complete Streets
- School-Based Physical Activity Programs and Policies
- Increase Access to Transportation
- Increase Recruitment for Mental Health Professionals

The plan also includes considerations related to social determinants of health and the underlying causes of health inequities. This CHIP contains an overview of national and state requirements driving local health planning efforts, a description of the County's health priorities and associated outcome



measures as selected by community partners, the framework and infrastructure that supports continued action, and a summary of how the plan will be monitored and updated.

Download a copy of the 2019-2020 Community Health Assessment and 2017-2020 Community Health Improvement Plan at www.scpublichealth.com

Strategic Plan (2018-2021)



The Sandusky County Health Department Strategic Plan was the result of planning efforts that were initiated in April 2018. This plan aligns with national standards set by the Public Health Accreditation Board and the 2017-2019 Ohio State Health Improvement Plan as well as linked to the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), Workforce Development Plan, Branding Policy, Marketing Plan, Quality Improvement Plan, and Performance Management Plan. Through a comprehensive planning process that included input from employees, board of health members, community partners, and community members, priorities were identified and special goals and objectives were set. Over the next three years the strategic plan

will be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis and formally rewritten every three years to ensure that the priorities, goals, and objectives remain relevant and related to our mission, vision, and values.

Strategic Planning Priorities:

1. Achieve public health accreditation
2. Continuous quality improvement
3. Workforce development
4. Branding, marketing, and communication
5. Community engagement
6. Financial health
7. Information technology

Performance Management and Continuous Quality Improvement

The Sandusky County Public Health (SCPH) is committed to be a performance-based organization. Leaders and staff at all levels strive to create a culture in which quality is a shared value, and performance management (PM) and quality improvement (QI) activities are actively pursued and supported. The Sandusky County Performance Management and Quality Improvement Plan provides an overview of the department wide PM system and outlines how the agency ensures that QI activities are strategically aligned to support goals and objectives associated with guiding plans such as SCHD's Mission, 2017-2020 Community Health Improvement Plan, 2018-2021 Strategic Plan, and the Workforce Development Plan. The plan also describes our approach for building and sustaining a culture of QI throughout the organization.



2020 Performance Measurement Goals

- Increasing Access to Care
- Provide exceptional service to the patients, families, communities and partners we serve
- Increase education, outreach, awareness of programs, policies and practices
- Create a Healthier Sandusky County

2020 QI Projects

- To update health department orientation process
- To update policy on work from home during pandemic

Staff knowledge, experience, and expertise around QI

- Staff knowledge, experience, and expertise around QI vary widely across SCHED
- All staff will participate in 0.5 hours of quality improvement training annually.

Marketing Committee

The purpose of the Marketing Committee is to promote the health department's programs and services in order to satisfy the public health information needs of our community. Goals include:



1. Promote a road community awareness of public health purpose and services
 - a. Increase perception among the public, policy makers and decision makers concerning the value of public health
 - b. Public health is critical to public welfare; therefore resources must be allocated to support public health activities
2. Differentiate the health department from other governmental departments
3. Draw a distinction between public health, and personal or clinical health service providers
4. Specific public health issues identified in the CHIP are addressed
5. Strengthen relationships with key organizations, agencies and policy makers
6. Promote the use of evidence-based strategies to reduce at-risk behaviors
7. Promote brand identity as part of the larger public health system.

Communication strategies may utilize print media, signage, digital, public presence and services. All marketing campaigns are approved by the Public Health Information Officer (PIO) and Health Commissioner. The PIO is the point of contact for the media and promotes health department events.

Health Partners

The Sandusky County Health Department staff continues to be the Fiscal and Coordinating agent of Health Partners. Health Partners' mission is to monitor and improve the health status of Sandusky County residents. Members contribute annual dues to ensure that Health Assessments occur on a regular basis.

Health Partner Members include:

- Community Health Services
- Department Jobs and Family Services
- Firelands Counseling & Recovery Services
- Fremont City School District
- Great Lakes Community Action Partnership
- Juvenile Court-Judge Brad Smith
- Jennifer Greenslade-Homan, M.D., Physician
- Mental Health & Recovery Service Board of Seneca, Sandusky and Wyandot Counties
- ProMedica Memorial Health Care System
- Sandusky County Board of Developmental Disabilities
- Sandusky County Public Health
- Sandusky County Family and Children First Council
- The Bellevue Hospital
- United Way of Sandusky County



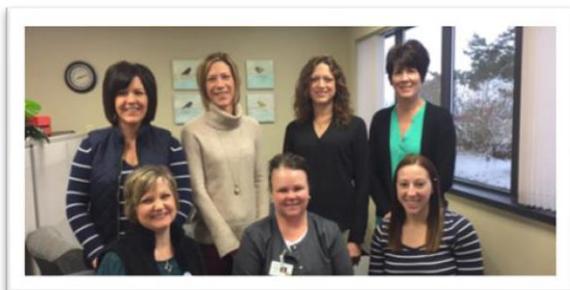
Sandusky County Health Partners



Clerical Support

In 2020, there were a total of **488** deaths and **185** births filed in Sandusky County, including **3** home births. There were **2,589** certified copies of birth certificates and **1,723** certified copies of death certificates issued at the Sandusky County Health Department in 2020. With statewide issuance in Ohio, anyone desiring a birth certificate (who was born in Ohio) may access the certified copy from any Local Registrar. In Sandusky

County hours of issuance are *Monday-Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM*. The cost is \$25.00/certified copy. Certified copies of death certificates must be secured in the county the death occurred.



Public Health Nursing

Public health nursing practice focuses on population health, with the goal of promoting health, preventing disease and protecting the public. Public Health Nurses comprise the largest segment of the professional public health workforce. By working with whole communities, public health nurses are able to educate people about health issues, improve community health and increase access to care.



The Sandusky County Public Health nurses are directly engaged in our Immunization clinics, Flu clinics, TB Control Program, and Reproductive Health and Wellness clinics; providing services to over **5,000** clients a year. This is in addition to nine other programs, services, and coalition groups led by the Public Health Nurses. Covid-19 response took the vast majority of the nursing division staff time in 2020. From the time the first case of COVID was diagnosed in a Sandusky County resident on March 22, 2020, through the end of the year, our staff investigated over 3,500 cases of COVID-19 infection. On December 28, 2020 SCPH nurses administered the first doses of COVID-19 vaccine to county EMS personnel.

Tuberculosis Testing and Surveillance

Public Health Nurses administered **203** TB skin tests in 2020, with no positive reactors. Two suspected cases of TB were reported to Sandusky County Public Health, and both were ruled out after investigation and follow up were completed.

The TB Program is not limited to the number of TB tests administered. The scope of the program involves surveillance, referrals and consulting with multiple health care providers, including hospitals and the Ohio Department of Health. Any positive test result and/or suspected case, whether seen through the health department, or referred from another health care provider, involves a thorough investigation and follow up. This can take several weeks. A confirmed case of active TB requires intensive case management lasting months to a year, as compliance with treatment must be assured.



Welcome Home Newborn Visit and Cribs for Kids



The Newborn Welcome Home Program was established through the collaboration of the Maternal Health and Infant Mortality Coalition. Funding for this valuable program has been provided by the generosity of the United Way of Sandusky County. The Newborn Welcome Home Visit consists of a free home visit by a Public Health Nurse from the health department, education on safe sleep and newborn care. Referrals can be made to area community resources, as needed. The Newborn Home Visit Program works in partnership with the Ohio Department of Health's (ODH) Cribs for Kids and Safe Sleep Program. This program works to reduce infant sleep related deaths by providing safe sleep environment and safe sleep education. By aligning services with Ohio Department of Health and

delivering evidence-based interventions, the health department is building a healthier community that enables infants to live injury free to their first birthday. Sleep related infant deaths are among the most preventable of infant deaths. By following the ABC's (Alone, on the Back and in a Crib) infants can live optimally for the first year of life. Sandusky County Public Health remains committed to preventing accidental death among infants. 2020

presented challenges for the program as home visiting was no longer permitted. The programs continue to offer support, education and referrals by phone followed by delivery of the pack-n-play crib by curbside pick-up or porch drop off. These

safe delivery options will be followed throughout the pandemic. In 2020, a total of 75 cribs were delivered to families throughout the county who were in need of a safe sleep environment for their infant. For more information on the Welcome Home Program and the Cribs for Kids Program, call 419 334-6377 or to find more information on Safe Sleep, visit www.SafeSleep.Ohio.gov.



Children with Medical Handicaps (CMH) Program

The Children with Medical Handicaps (CMH) Program is a health care program through the Ohio Department of Health. CMH links families of children with special health care needs to a network of quality providers and helps families obtain payment for the services their children need.

CMH's mission is to assure, through the development and support of high quality, coordinated systems, that children with special health care needs and their families obtain comprehensive care and services that are family centered, community based and culturally sensitive. CMH promotes early identification of children with handicapping conditions and treatment of those children by appropriate health care providers.

CMH provides assistance to children with special health care needs and their

families who meet the medical and financial eligibility criteria. Assistance is provided to children under the age of 21 who have special health care needs and are residents of the State of Ohio.

Major components of the program include: conducting quality assurance activities to establish standards of care and to determine unmet needs of children with handicaps and their families; funding services for the diagnosis and treatment of medically eligible conditions; collaborating with public health nurses to assist in increasing access to care; supporting service coordination for children with selected diagnoses; and assisting families to access and utilize appropriate sources of payment for services for their child.



In 2020, Sandusky County Public Health nurses provided services to **191** children who are active on the CMH diagnostic, treatment, and/or service coordination program.

If you have questions about the CMH Program please call (419) 334-6377. A Public Health Nurse would be happy to assist you and answer any questions.

Immunization Clinic



Sandusky County Public Health is the largest provider of vaccinations to infants, children, adolescents and adults in the county. The goal of the immunization program at Sandusky County Public Health is to reduce and potentially eliminate vaccine-preventable diseases among the county's residents. The nursing staff provided services for **2,931** clients with **4,209** immunizations administered. Sandusky County Public Health participates in:

- Vaccines for Children Program, provided by the Ohio Department of Health
- The statewide immunization registry IMPACT SIS
- The Get Vaccinated program, which is designed to improve and sustain childhood and adolescent immunization rates and to reduce vaccination coverage disparities in Ohio. This goal is accomplished through public health nurses working with immunization providers to adopt quality assurance methods to increase vaccination use, identifying and addressing any immunization disparities, and working with schools to assure that immunization levels are high.
- The Perinatal Hepatitis B Prevention Program, through which public health nurses work with healthcare providers and hospitals to prevent the transmission of hepatitis B from mother to infant. Our nurses work to ensure that all pregnant women are screened, and that infants of women who test positive receive the appropriate prophylaxis and case management follow up.



Getting immunized is important to protect yourself, your child, and to protect those around you. Vaccines are the best way we have to prevent infectious diseases. Vaccine-preventable diseases, such as measles, mumps, and whooping cough are still a threat. They continue to infect U.S. children, resulting in hospitalizations and deaths every year. Outbreaks of preventable diseases occur when vaccination rates drop. If children aren't vaccinated, they can spread disease to other children who are too young to be vaccinated or to people with weakened immune systems, such as transplant recipients and people with cancer. This could result in long-term complications and even death for these vulnerable people. If we stopped vaccinating, diseases that are almost unknown would stage a comeback. Before long we would see epidemics of diseases that are nearly under control today.

Immunization Clinic Schedule		
Fremont	2000 Countryside Drive	Monday- Friday: 8:00am-4:00pm LATE NIGHT CLINIC- Every Thursday until 6:00

Flu Clinic

In 2020 a total of **658** flu vaccines were administered to infants > 6 months old, children, adolescents, men, women and the elderly. Three separate flu clinics were offered at the health department, as well as the additional opportunity for clients to walk-in Monday thru Friday and get a vaccine. To increase access to the flu vaccine, the health department has typically partnered with area churches and small businesses. Due to COVID restrictions these clinics were not able to be held; however, the health department provided a drive-thru clinic on September 30 at the Sandusky County Fairgrounds.



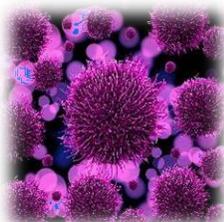
If you or someone you know is interested in our immunization program, or would like to make an appoint, call (419)334-6367



Communicable Diseases

Communicable disease control is a core function and responsibility of public health and is delegated to local health departments in Ohio. The health department conducts epidemiology and surveillance for communicable/infectious diseases. Sandusky County Public Health's epidemiologist monitors the health status of the county by investigating, analyzing, and mitigating disease outbreaks and emerging health threats.

Ohio Revised Code requires that certain diseases of public health concern be reported to the local health department. These reports are used to protect the public's health by quickly identifying outbreaks, tracking disease numbers and trends, and offering a snapshot of the community's health. Examples of some of the illnesses spread person-to-person include COVID-19, mumps, whooping cough, and chicken pox. This list also includes food related illnesses from organisms like Salmonella and E. coli. Sandusky Public Health staffs investigate and follow up on all reports of communicable diseases in an effort to prevent the spread of those diseases. In 2020, **3,898** individual reports for **18** diseases or conditions were received and investigated. Additionally, **14** community disease outbreaks were investigated and resolved. Health department staff also provided trainings on infectious diseases for community groups, and infection control for long term care facilities.



The most common conditions reported among Sandusky County residents 2020 (excluding chlamydia and gonorrhea) are shown below:

Reportable condition	Reported Cases
COVID-19	3,722
Hepatitis C	62
Influenza-associated hospitalizations	44
Salmonella	12
Lyme Disease	11

Pediatric Cardiac Clinic

Sandusky County Public Health works together with ProMedica Memorial Hospital and Pediatric Cardiologist Dr. William Suarez to provide a Pediatric Cardiology Clinic on the 2nd Tuesday of every month. The clinic is held at ProMedica Memorial Hospital and has provided care to **2,000** children from Sandusky and surrounding counties since it first began in 1986. A Public Health nurse from the health department attends the monthly clinic to provide Children with Medical Handicaps (CMH) assistance and ongoing case management for families. CMH is a program through the Ohio Department of Health that links families of children with special health care needs to a network of quality provider. This program also helps families obtain payment for these necessary services. If you, or someone you know, are interested in assistance from Children with Medical Handicaps, please call the health department at (419) 334-6377.



Child Fatality Review Board (CFR)

The Sandusky County Child Fatality Review Board meets annually, as mandated by Ohio law, with the purpose of decreasing the incidence of preventable deaths in children less than 18 years of age. To accomplish this, the review board:

- Promotes cooperation, collaboration and communication between all groups, professions, agencies, or entities that serve families and children
- Maintains a comprehensive database of all child deaths that occur in the county in order to develop an understanding of the causes and incidences of those deaths
- Recommends and develops plans for implementing local service and program changes to the groups, professions, agencies or entities that serve families and children that might prevent child deaths
- Reports aggregate data, trends, and patterns concerning child deaths to the Ohio Department of Health

Maternal Health and Infant Mortality Coalition

The Maternal Health and Infant Mortality Coalition was established in 2015 to improve maternal health and birth outcomes and reduce infant mortality in Sandusky County. The work of this Coalition has made an impact in reducing infant deaths in Sandusky County. Coalition members include:

- Sandusky County Public Health
- ProMedica Memorial Hospital
- Bellevue Hospital
- NOMS Healthcare
- Community Health Services
- Help Me Grow
- Department of Jobs and Family Services
- Family and Child First Council
- Mental Health and Recovery Services of Seneca, Sandusky and Wyandot County



This coalition of community members meets quarterly to examine risks, health disparities, barriers to care, education, and health programs.

Maternal Child and Health Program

The Maternal and Child Health Program has been providing support services for Sandusky County Public Health by identifying health needs, service gaps, and barriers to care for families. The objectives of the Maternal and Child Health Program are to eliminate health disparities, improve birth outcomes, and improve the health status of women, infants, and children in Ohio.



The 2020 focus of the Maternal and Child Health Program was on women's preconception health. Our goal is to support access to health and wellness care, prenatal care, and preventative medical visits for women of childbearing age, as well as to provide them with information and referrals.

Our public health nurses worked with multiple local small businesses and employers to host voluntary health screenings and educational sessions for their employees who met program criteria. We also assisted the employers with the development and implementation of policies that support women's health initiatives in the workplace.

We have clinics in both the Sandusky County and Seneca County Health Departments and offer after hour clinics every Thursday in Fremont. Fees are based on income, and services are available to both women and men. If you, or someone you know, are interested in our Reproductive Health Clinic, please call (419) 334-6355.

2020 Statistics	
Communicable Disease	Reported Cases
Gonorrhea	55
Chlamydia	183
Syphilis	4
HIV	4

Reproductive Health & Wellness Clinic Schedule		
Fremont	2000 Countryside Drive	Tuesday & Wednesday 8:00a-4:30p Thursday 8:00a – 6:00p Friday 8:00a – 2:00p
Tiffin	71 South Washington Street Suite 2	Monday 9:00a -3:30p



Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

WIC is the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children. WIC helps income eligible pregnant and breastfeeding women, women who recently had a baby, infants, and children up to five years of age who are at health risk due to inadequate nutrition.

The program improves pregnancy outcomes by providing or referring to support services necessary for full-term

pregnancies; reduces infant mortality by reducing the incidence of low birth weight (infants under 5 ½ pounds are at greater risk of breathing problems, brain injuries and physical abnormalities), and provides infants and children with a healthy start in life by improving poor or inadequate diets.

WIC provides nutrition education, breastfeeding education and support; supplemental, highly nutritious foods such as cereal, eggs, milk, whole grain foods, fruits and vegetables, and iron-fortified infant formula; and referral to prenatal and pediatric health care and other maternal and child health and human service programs.

In 2020, our WIC program served **608** new participants in Sandusky County. The average caseload per month was **913** participants, and an average **76** referrals were made monthly to prenatal and pediatric health care or other maternal and child health and human service programs. Our breastfeeding rates remained strong with an average of **35%** of all postpartum women on the WIC program, either exclusively or partially breastfeeding their babies. participants. The Sandusky County WIC breastfeeding team consists of three Certified Lactation Counselors and one Breastfeeding Peer Helper. We are an active part of the Sandusky County Breastfeeding Coalition, offer monthly infant feeding classes and continual breastfeeding help and support of all breastfeeding women.

Like many other agencies, Sandusky Co. WIC made some changes to weather the storm of COVID-19 in 2020. In March, we began conducting all participant appointments by phone, and all card benefit

reloads by drive-up curbside. This has worked out well, and our participants are very appreciative of the precautions we have taken to keep them safe. These practices will continue at least through the end of May, 2021.

As a recipient of the Gold Loving Support Award of Excellence, the USDA, FNS, and Ohio WIC has recognized us for providing exemplary breastfeeding promotion and support to our pregnant and breastfeeding women. The Sandusky Co. WIC breastfeeding team consists of one Registered Nurse and International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (RN, IBCLC), two Registered Dietetic Technician's and Certified Lactation Counselors (DTR, CLC) and one Breastfeeding Peer Helper. We are an active part of the Sandusky Co. Breastfeeding coalition, offer monthly infant feeding classes and continual breastfeeding help and support of all breastfeeding women.

If you or someone you know would benefit from the WIC programs supplemental foods, nutrition expertise, and excellent breastfeeding help and support, please call our office at 419-334-6363, we'd be glad to help!



Sandusky County WIC receiving the Gold Loving Support of Excellence Award

Pictured L to R: Angie Ruth, DTR, CLC, Sandusky County WIC Director, Tanya Halbeisen, RN, CLC, Sandusky County Breastfeeding Coordinator, and Meagan Richardson, RD/LD, CLC, State of Ohio WIC Breastfeeding Coordinator



Help Me Grow Home Visiting and Early Intervention



Help Me Grow serves children in both the Home Visiting and Early Intervention programs through three years of age. **Home visiting** is a voluntary, evidence-based parent support program that encourages early prenatal and well-baby care, as well as parenting education to promote the comprehensive health and development to share their thoughts about parenting, ask questions and receive reliable information based

on their individual family needs or topics of interest. Topics may include, but are not limited to: healthy pregnancies, baby and child health, breastfeeding, nutrition, immunizations, child growth and development, discipline, toilet training, child safety, household safety and local resources. Our home visitors are certified, well-trained and help empower parents with skills, tools and confidence to nurture the healthy growth of their children. All young children deserve the same opportunities to realize their full potential in life, regardless of economic, geographic, and demographic considerations. The parenting education and child development resources provided to families allows them to maximize this critical period of development in their child's life, providing a foundation for lasting success. Home Visiting program goals and benchmark domains are: improvement in maternal and newborn health,

reduction in child injuries, abuse, and neglect, improved school readiness and achievement, reduction in crime and domestic violence, and improved family economic self-sufficiency.



Early Intervention is a voluntary, evidence-based program that provides coordinated services to parents of young children with disabilities and developmental delays. EI is grounded in the philosophy that young children learn best from familiar people in familiar settings. That's why your local EI builds upon and provides supports and resources to assist parents and caregivers to enhance children's learning and development through everyday routines. It is a collaborative, home and community-based system where you and a team work together to provide ongoing support to your child. An EI Service Coordinator first meets with your family to gather info about your child, discuss your concerns and priorities regarding your child's development and shares information about resources in your community. They will work directly with your family to coordinate a developmental evaluation, and services, if needed. Eligible children are assigned an Early Intervention Primary Service Provider to begin visits in a child's everyday routine and natural environment. The Primary Service Provider models techniques to encourage development in the area of need identified by the family. These services build confidence and competence for the parent/caregiver so they are able to continue what they have learned and incorporate these activities into their family routine. All families, with the necessary supports and resources, can enhance their children's learning and development.

In 2020, Sandusky County Ohio Early Childhood Program received **145** referrals and **770** virtual home visits were made to families. If you are interested in the Early Childhood programs offered, or may know of a family who may benefit, please call **419 -334-6383** or visit www.scpublichealth.com/hmg

Environmental Health

2020 certainly has been a chaotic and somewhat frustrating year; but we persevered! Planning COVID 19 response began for us in February. During 2020, the Environmental Division spent 1024 hours in response planning, educating the public and essential businesses on proper and cleaning and safety protocols, aiding businesses in the "restart guidelines", organizing the site and procuring the materials necessary for the National Guard pop-testing completed on Dec. 9th, completing inventory records on all Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) sent to the County by the state, and organizing materials necessary for the administering of the vaccine. The staff has handled over 417 COVID complaints (50 to 60 per month) and have worked to help the nursing staff with initial contact for positive cases to help free up the nurses to do the case investigations.

14 plan reviews for new or renovated food services were completed and 291 licenses were issued for food operations. Also in the food program, 55 vending locations, 31 mobiles, and 28 temporary food operations were licensed and inspected. The staff completed 633 food inspections for 2020. The most noted violations include proper labeling/date marking of food containers and preventing cross contamination of food products. Cross contamination violations are corrected during the inspection.

The household sewage treatment system program has been extremely busy, For the 2019 Water Pollution Control Loan fund, offered by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA), we spent \$146,809 of the \$150,000.00 allotted to us. Additional funds through the H2Ohio program were obtained in the amount of \$250,000.00 to financially aid residents in repairing or replacing failed sewage treatment systems. We also have

\$150,000.00 in OEPA Water Pollution Control Loan Funds available to aid our residents in repairing or replacing failed systems.

Did you know that we monitor the county for rabies control? 135 investigations were completed for animal bites. These included dogs, cats, bats, and a goat. We would like to thank the County Dog Warden staff for working closely with us to protect the dogs in our county. Even if, for example, your cat is an indoor only animal, getting it vaccinated against rabies is essential. What if a bat gets in your house, the cat runs out when a door is open, or someone brings an animal into your home that is not vaccinated? Protect your animals because this also protects you and your family from anti-rabies vaccinations.

While not all of the pools/spas opened this year, the other 17 were licensed and inspected. All 7 body art facilities were licensed and inspected. We worked with these facilities on their reopening procedures and safety protocols in dealing with COVID. The 13 campgrounds were licensed and inspected to ensure safe camping while dealing with COVID restrictions.

Needless to say, all of us at your Public Health Department, are grateful for your continued support during this past crazy year! Let's continue to work together, be more considerate of each other and make 2021 a brighter year!



Health Planning and Education

The Health Planning and Education Division strives to engage and empower individuals, family and the community to make positive changes towards a healthy and active lifestyle. Division goals are driven by the Community Health Improvement Plan priorities and strategies selected through a network of collaborative partnerships.

Much of the work of the division is focused on health promotion, prevention activities and population level change; the health educators also facilitate and hosts of many community trainings, events, presentations and collaborative meetings. The Health Planning and Education Division uses a variety of evidence based strategies and promising practices to increase the likelihood of behavior change. Funding for programming comes from a variety of sources including state and federal grants, program allocations, and local mental health levy dollars.

Substance Abuse Prevention



MISSION: The Prevention Partnership Coalition builds a healthier community by preventing and reducing substance abuse in Sandusky County.

Prevention Partnership Coalition (PPC) Members recognize that large-scale change requires broad cross-sector collaboration and coordination. As an organization that specializes in the connecting members and providing community outreach, the PPC has become an essential resource for local organizations seeking to work together to reduce substance abuse and other risking behaviors while improving overall community wellness. PPC funding comes from the Ohio Mental Health and Addiction Services and local Mental Health and Recovery Service's levy dollars. Additional funds are leveraged from other grants and local agencies.

Major Accomplishments in 2020:

Provided **1,300** Detera Bags to community members as a new form of medication disposal for those who may not be able to access Take Back Boxes. Detera users place unused or unwanted medications in the bag, add water, and shake the bag to start the deactivation process. The bag is then placed in the trash for environmentally safe disposal.

Tobacco and Alcohol Server was placed online format and training can be accessed by going to www.scpublichealth.com

The Prevention Partnership Coalition received a 3-year Federal grant to implement strategies to prevent and reduce underage alcohol use.



Red Ribbon Week

Red Ribbon Week is the Nation's oldest and largest drug prevention program, reaching millions of Americans during the last week of October every year. Red Ribbon Week is celebrated annually October 23-31. Wearing red ribbons and participating in community anti-drug events, young people pledge to live a drug free lifestyle and pay tribute to DEA Special Agent Enrique "Kiki" Camarena.

All of Sandusky County schools participated in this yearly event by doing dress days, giving handouts and information for students and parents. The elementary schools all received a box of prizes such as earbuds, cups, drawstring bags, red ribbons, pencils, stickers, playground balls, footballs and basketballs. Each school also received a banner to keep the Red Ribbon Week Theme going throughout the year of Be Happy, Be Brave, Be Drug Free!



40 Developmental Assets



The Prevention Partnership Coalition works to decrease youth substance use by implementing the 40 Developmental Assets Program in Sandusky County Middle Schools. This program created by the Search Institute has shown that the more assets that youth have the less likely youth are to engage in risky behaviors like substance use, and the more likely they are to become successful adults. Each year students are selected from Sandusky County Middle Schools to be part of their school's asset team. In 2020, 2 schools were awarded grants to implement Asset Teams within their schools. Those awarded were Fremont and Lakota Middle Schools

Sandusky County Public Health's Role in Combating Opiate Use

The opioid epidemic is public health issue. This crisis has far reaching impacts that not only effect public health, but also law enforcement, the judicial system, child protective services, emergency medical services, hospitals, treatment centers, coroners, schools, employers, and state and local government.

Assessment – SCPH serves a primary role in conducting Community Health Assessment, which identify key problems and assets in our community, and Community Health Improvement Plan, which set priorities and coordinate resources around important health concerns in communities. In 2017, Mental Health and Substance Abuse became one of 3 priorities selected; this was primarily due the current opioid crisis.

Harm Reduction – Harm reduction is a public health intervention that seeks to reduce the harms associated with drug misuse. Through an allocation by the Ohio Mental Health and Addiction Services, Sandusky County Public Health was capable of providing **90** doses of Naloxone to area first responders in 2020. Opioid Abuse and Prevention training and distribution of naloxone to first responders and service entities included: Sandusky County EMS, Sheriff's Office, Bellevue, Clyde, Fremont, Green Springs police departments and the Sandusky County Drug Task Force.



SCPH was also awarded the Rural Communities Opiate Response Program grant in 2019. This will allow the future purchase of Project Dawn kits that will be disseminated to community members. Online training is available at sccpublichealth.com

Coalition/Collaboration – SCPH coordinates the Sandusky County Combined Coalition and provides expertise in planning, evaluation, and data collection in targeting strategies and measuring outcomes short and long-term. In the discussion of reducing the stigma of opiate use disorder (OUD), SCPH and the PPC are working

collaboratively with Ohio University and other rural counties throughout Ohio to tackle the issue of stigma when it comes to the opioid epidemic. The collaborative work is also targeted towards decrease drug misuse, and promoting treatment, recovery, and prevention.

The Workforce Development subgroup is focusing on expansion and retention of SUD/ODU workforce through training and professional development. The two main focuses are to increase the availability of peer support training and certification opportunities and to increase the availability of alcohol, tobacco, opiate, and other drug prevention trainings available in the community. SCPH is currently working with BRASS (Bellevue Recovery and Support Services) to provide Peer Support Trainings. SCPH is also working diligently to schedule prevention trainings to the community.

Policy/ Legislation/Advocacy – SCPH supports policy, legislation and advocacy that aims to decrease drug misuse and increase treatment, recovery and prevention. This includes removal of barriers to prescription drug drop boxes, and funding to support continued work. The Prevention Partnership Coalition was instrumental in placing six permanent drop locations for unwanted, unused, and expired medications throughout the county for the safety and well-being of community members. Drop box locations are the Bellevue Police Department, Clyde Police Department, Fremont Police Department, Gibsonburg Police Department, Woodville Police Department, and the Sandusky County Sheriff's Office.



Prevention/Education and Public Awareness – SCPH implements numerous prevention programs across a broad spectrum of services and is involved in implementation and/or assurance of evidence-based prevention education in schools. This team also plays a role in education and assistance with drug take back initiatives and education for prescribers on prescribing guidelines, Ohio Automated Rx Reporting System (OARRS), and Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment (SBIRT). We continue to raise awareness and public knowledge of the dangers of substance misuse and illicit drug use.

Medication Take Back Boxes

Prescription drug abuse and heroin use is on the rise across the nation, and our county is not immune from this issue. The Prevention Partnership Coalition was instrumental in placing six permanent drop locations for unwanted, unused, and expired medications throughout the county for the safety and well-being of community members. In addition, two times a year, letters and materials on the awareness of safe and proper ways to dispose of medication was mailed to physicians, pharmacies, human resources, churches, realtors, and many more.



Medication Drop Box Locations:

- Bellevue Police Department
- Clyde Police Department
- Fremont Police Department
- Gibsonburg Police Department
- Sandusky County Sheriff's Office
- Woodville Police Department

Gambling Prevention



In 2020, the Prevention partnership was awarded \$9,000 from the Mental Health and Recovery Services Board of Seneca, Sandusky and Wyandot Counties to target Gambling Prevention. The Prevention Partnership Coalition's successful approach and extensive knowledge of gauging Community Readiness, the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF), and Community Engagement have led to changing community conditions and measurable outcomes in reducing alcohol and tobacco rates. These successes in the substance abuse prevention field have prepared our coalition partners to extend our efforts into other

prevention areas, such as gambling prevention.

SCPH continues work with the Regional Gambling and Behavioral Based Addiction Network with several adjoining counties, to work together and share resources..

Safe Communities

Safe Communities is a program under the Ohio Department of Public Safety. Safe Communities receives funding from the Ohio Department of Public Safety and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. SCPH received \$35,000 in 2020. The goal of this program is to work with local groups and law enforcement to reduce traffic fatalities and focus on seven initiatives that serve to advance projects in specific traffic safety areas. Initiatives include:

- **Traffic Fatalities**- all fatal crashes occurring in Sandusky County are reviewed. Countermeasure recommendations are developed to prevent future crashes of a similar manner.
- **Impaired Driving**- works to prevent motorists from driving distracted or alcohol impaired through innovative programs, awareness campaigns, education and enforcement.
- **Motorcycle Safety**- increase awareness of motorcycle safety issues among motorcyclists and general motorists through education, awareness campaigns, and promotion.
- **Seat belt use**- to increase seat belt use in Sandusky County from **97% to 98%** through education and enforcement.



Creating Healthy Communities Program

The Creating Healthy Communities (CHC) program was established in 2015 in an effort to prevent and reduce chronic disease in Sandusky County. CHC's mission is "making the healthy choice the easy choice." Through cross-sector collaboration, CHC is implementing evidence based strategies that improve access to and affordability of healthy food, increase opportunities for physical activity where residents live, learn, work and play. Program funding comes from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant, administered by the Ohio Department of Health. Additional funds are leveraged from other grants, agencies, and organizations.



Major Accomplishments in 2020:

- Awarded 2020-2024 grant funding in the amount of \$100,000 per year
- Established a community garden at Hayes Memorial United Methodist Church, in Fremont
- Repaired one sidewalk at Hayes Memorial United Methodist Church to improve accessibility to the community garden
- Improve bicycle infrastructure in Clyde and Green Springs
- Worked with Crown Battery Manufacturing in Fremont to improve on-site healthy food options available to employees
- Hosted one on-the road bicycle workshop in Clyde with four representatives from community organizations and two representatives from the Ohio Department of Transportation
- Collaborated with Sandusky Metropolitan Housing Authority to install a new playground at the Day Woods housing complex



PAX Good Behavior Game and PAX Tools



PAX Good Behavior Game is an evidenced-based preventative intervention that teaches students self-regulation, self-management, and self-control. Using this tool in classrooms has proven to decrease negative behaviors, and to increase classroom instruction time. PAX has shown to decrease the number of youths who use alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, and decrease the number of youth who report suicidal thoughts or ideations.

PAX Tools is a program for parents and youth workers to teach self-regulation outside of the classroom. The focus of this program for 2020, was to get more day care and preschools using the same program as the schools in Sandusky County.

As of December 2020, there have been 14 different organizations who have been trained in PAX. There is still an increase in community interest and support for the program and continued implementation.

Tobacco, E-Cigarette, and Vape Prevention and Cessation

The following data related to tobacco use was provided by the 2019-2020 Sandusky County Community Health Assessment:

- 60% of Sandusky Co. tobacco users have attempted to quit smoking in the last year.
- 7% of youth are current tobacco users and 14% of youth report using an electronic vapor product in the last 30 days.

SCPH has been hard at work promoting tobacco cessation, prevention and policy change within the community based on the data above. SCPH worked with Fremont City Council to pass a city ordinance requiring all tobacco retailers in the City of Fremont to post the Ohio Tobacco Quit Line number. SCPH also provided education and information dissemination about tobacco related topics including vaping for local agencies and organizations. SCPH formed a Youth Vaping Task Force that is committed to preventing youth vaping and reducing youth access and availability of vaping products to youth.

Worksite Wellness Committee

MISSION: The Worksite Wellness Committee will work to provide opportunities for employees to develop healthier lifestyles by supporting the adoption of habits and attitudes that contribute to their positive well-being.

The Worksite Wellness Committee is made up employees who are enthusiastic about integrating wellness into the culture of the workplace. The committee meets bi-monthly to build, plan, and evaluate health and wellness initiatives offered to all health department employees. Funding for employee wellness incentives in 2020 was provided through the department's Aetna Wellness Fund. In 2020, the committee hosted a wellness challenges. Employees who participated in the challenge earned points for engaging in various wellness activities both inside and outside of work. At the end of the challenge, awards were presented to employees who earned most points as well as those who improved the most from the prior year. Other wellness initiatives that were supported by the Committee include:

- Water drinking challenge
- Lunch break walking challenge



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