

# **Four Corners Health Department**



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.



## **2016 Annual Community Report**

## **2016 Proud and Important Work**

As President of the Board of Health, I am proud to be an advocate for public health. All board of health members across Nebraska are volunteers who promote programs including clean air and water, safe food, healthy living conditions and behaviors, health and wellness education, disease and environmental control, crisis and emergency management and prevention. The Four Corners Board of Health continues important advocacy for the health of the residents in our four counties and our commitment to the Four Corners community.



The productive work of the local health department is vital to communities. As stewards of the financial health of this department, our board continues to meet the challenges in the working budget. Each year we face financial challenges when national and state budgets make cuts or decrease funding for the important work done in the public health system. This department has always been working within a practical yet cautious budget, prepared by the staff and endorsed by board action. Public health is very important business. As advocates, we need to continue to voice our concerns for proper public health funding so quality work can be done.

Recently when visiting with an executive from a social service agency, she complemented the collaboration and cooperation of the staff of Four Corners Health Department. She shared, "we really like working with Four Corners because they are great partners and so professional." That should make us all proud to acknowledge the importance of good partners in the public health work of our employees. Thanks, and kudos to our employees.

This annual report will share the programs and challenges of 2016. We had a major change in the Executive Director's office. The excellent foundational and honorable work of Vicki Duey (retired) will be continued by Laura McDougall. Special thanks to Vicki Duey for respectfully working with, educating, engaging and recognizing the importance of each of the board of health members throughout her tenure. Thank you to Vicki and encouragement to Laura.

Proud and Important work for the health of the public continues in Butler, Polk, Seward and York counties.

Sincerely,

*Margaret Brink*, MS  
President



As I write my first letter as Executive Director for the Community Annual Report, I want to start with a quick review of 2016. It was a year of change and transition for Four Corners Health Department. Our accomplished and respected Executive Director of over 13 years, Vicki L. Duey, announced her retirement in April, and thus the wheel of change began to spin. Added to the mix were new staff members, different program opportunities and changes to job descriptions for current staff. Through all the changes in 2016, our spirit and dedication has kept the department moving forward and able to create impact within our counties. I hope that in reading this annual report, you are able to recognize ways in which public health has personally touched you and your community.

This is really an exciting time to be working in the field of public health. In fact, many people are using words like “transformation,” “population health” and “integration.” At Four Corners, we are where the rubber meets the road—or better yet, the *gravel* road. We are the boots on the ground. Our mission is to help people be healthy, in the sense of whole-person-health. We want people to be connected to the communities in which they live; this promotes health and wellbeing. We have many great resources within our rural communities, and sometimes it is a matter of building bridges and networks to get people connected. For many years, our healthcare providers have been tirelessly serving our residents and neighbors. Now together, we are better able to find ways to combine our efforts in preventative health efforts and connecting people to medical homes.

A main focus of our department will be to closely collaborate with our local partners, relying on our combined strengths to make a difference in people’s health. We want to support healthy habits and environments where people eat, breathe, work and sleep. Our programs strive to do this, where we offer things like health screenings, health coaching, worksite wellness, household hazardous waste collections, home visits, preventative oral health screenings, and even encouraging children to try new fruits and vegetables. Many of these activities are possible through combining efforts with schools, childcares, extension, community action, healthcare providers, and many other local partners.

Before I close, I want to thank our Board of Health for their dedication and thoughtful support of our department. They are volunteers who demonstrate their commitment to their neighbors and communities by sharing their time and skills for the good of all. Their guidance, spirit and leadership are truly appreciated.

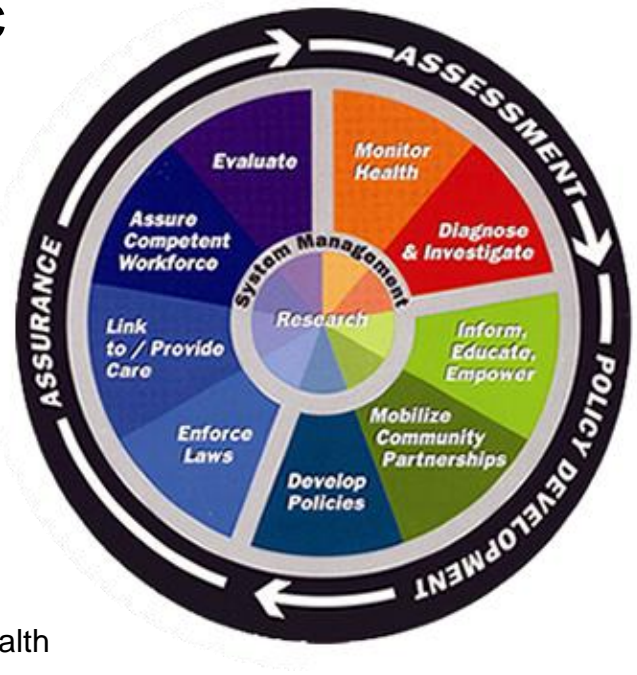
Sincerely,

*Laura McDougall*  
Executive Director



# The Ten Essential Public Health Services Wheel

Every health department strives to achieve the 10 Essential Public Health Services based on the needs of the community it serves. What does Four Corners do to reach toward these goals? In this annual report we will share stories and activities being done to improve the health of our district within the Ten Essential Public Health Services. This is only a brief snapshot of what we are doing; not everything can be included. We hope this report will show you some highlights of what is being accomplished with our partners that improves the health of the district. Please feel free to ask any staff member for more specific information. We would appreciate the chance to tell you about the work being done every day at Four Corners Health Department.



## #1) Monitor health status and understand health issues facing the community.



Four Corners Health Department collects and monitors rates of disease and other factors that may affect the health of our communities. Every 3-5 years, the Department gathers State and Local data, and information from our local public health system partners to complete a Community Health Assessment (CHA). Then a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) is developed that outlines what public health priorities our communities

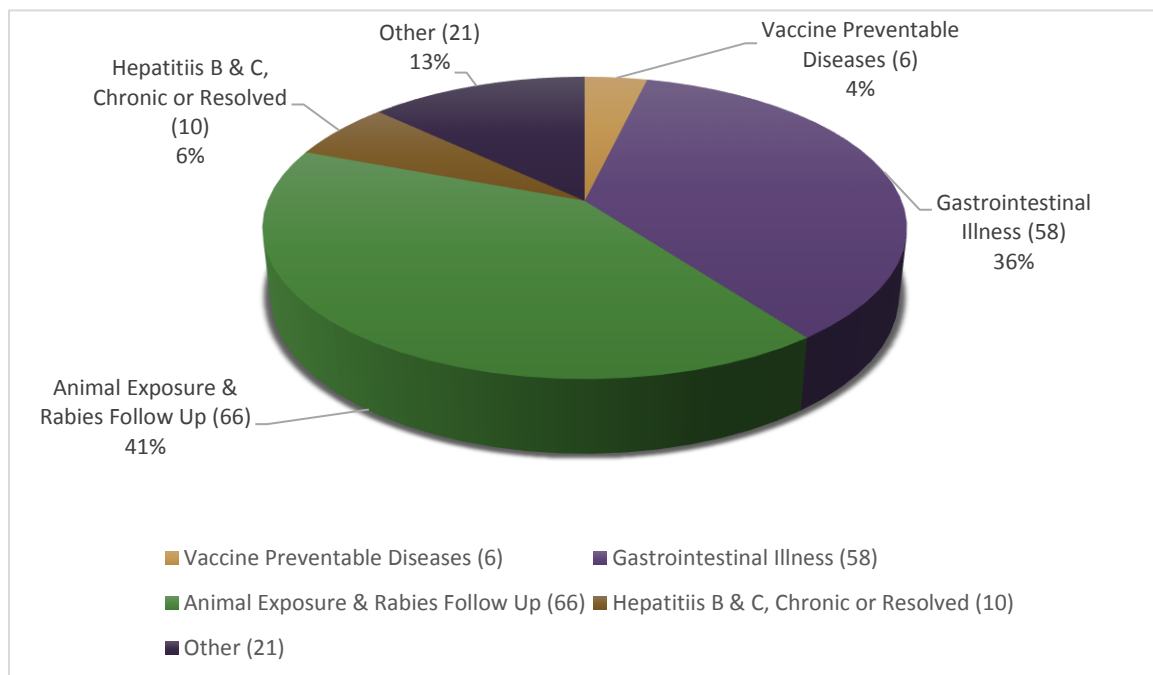
will have for the next 5 years, and how we will try to make headway on those issues.

As the assessment (CHA) was completed in 2016, the priorities were clear:

- Healthy Lifestyles (including Diabetes, Cardiovascular Health, Cancer Control, and Physical Activity/Nutrition)
- Behavioral Health (Drug and Alcohol Prevention, Access to Care, Suicide Prevention and Postvention, Bullying)
- Public Health System Collaboration (Sharing data, resources and communication among local organizations and agencies in the public health system)
- Motor Vehicle Crashes and Deaths.

The community plan (CHIP) to address these priorities is being developed during 2017.

When diseases that may spread within our communities are found in our District, they are reported by medical providers and laboratories to Four Corners. Our public health staff follows up with patients and medical providers to take action to stop the disease from spreading further. The following graph is a snapshot of the diseases that were reported and investigated in 2016:



**Animal Exposure & Rabies Follow up:** Two bats tested positive for rabies in our district this year.

**Gastrointestinal Illness:** Includes food and waterborne illnesses.

**Vaccine Preventable Diseases:** Includes Mumps, Whooping Cough, and Chicken Pox.

**Other:** Includes Meningitis, Invasive Streptococcus, Histoplasmosis, Lead Poisoning, Legionellosis, Lyme Disease, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, Toxoplasmosis, and Tularemia.

## #2) Protect people from health problems and health hazards.

Since 2003, Four Corners has been developing public health plans for responding to emergencies and disasters. This planning and preparing is not done in isolation; it is through aligning public health plans with those in the community, like emergency management, medical facilities, fire/EMS, schools, and many others. Highlights of 2016 activities include:

- Planning for possible Zika Virus response
- Community exercises and drills that focused on
  - Active Shooter situations
  - Ebola Response
  - Mass casualty response with Fire, EMS and hospital
- Helping Long Term Care and Assisted Living Facilities to resources needed in their emergency planning



*Emergency planning training held at the Seward Civic Center.*





Four Corners is committed to helping our communities protect the environment and drinking water. A grant through the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality helped to fund Household Hazardous Waste Events held in Polk and Butler Counties.

The events were very well received with close to 400 households removing hazardous waste from their homes and garages. This event was a great success due to our community partners and volunteers manning approximately 250 hours.

### Community partners and volunteers included:

- Local Fire Departments
- Law Enforcement
- City and Village officials
- Chambers of Commerce
- UNL Extension
- Students
- And many other community volunteers



### Hazardous waste returned for recycling or disposal included:

- 80 pounds of Acid / Base
- 140 gallons of antifreeze
- 301 Bulbs
- 190 pounds of batteries
- 1100 pounds of pesticides
- 7340 pounds of paint
- 1420 pounds of miscellaneous recyclables



Four Corners received grant funding from the NDOR Highway Safety Office to provide car seats to people who cannot afford to purchase them. We have two certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians (CPST) on staff and work with several community volunteer certified technicians as well.

In 2016, we checked 42 car seats, and 35 of these were provided by our department to help keep kids safe!

### #3) Give people information they need to make healthy choices.

Radon is a gas you cannot see, smell or taste. It forms naturally, and can be found in the earth and groundwater in our area. When radon gas seeps into homes and buildings, and is breathed in by people, it can cause health problems. It is estimated to be the second leading cause of lung cancer in the US. Kits for testing homes for radon gas are available at Four Corners each year between the months of January-March. In 2016, 350 kits were distributed. Of the 256 kits that were completed, 197 or 77% indicated that homes had higher than recommended levels of radon (over 4 pCi/L).



“Beat the Pack” smoking cessation classes are facilitated by our Public Health Nurse. The “Beat the Pack” program offers a step-by-step guide to help people quit using tobacco. It offers the support needed to live a life without tobacco. A variety of information and options available in Nebraska are also provided to help successfully quit tobacco.



**Do you have  
Pre-Diabetes  
or Diabetes?**

Many individuals in the Four Corners District are living with Diabetes and Pre-Diabetes. Four Corners is a leader in efforts to build a Diabetes Referral Network with the goal of improving outcomes for those with diabetes and pre-diabetes. The referral network connects people to available resources. It also addresses barriers to people accessing services, such as transportation. Network development has started in York County, with the intention of expanding this to other counties in the future.

For your health, **Regularly Exercise** and see your:

- Doctor • Eye Doctor and Dentist
- Dietitian • Pharmacist

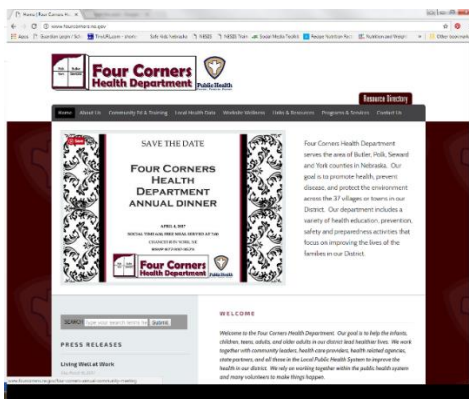
Looking for phone numbers and ideas?

Check out a list of resources just for you at:

<http://www.fourcorners.ne.gov/diabetes>



**Four Corners  
Health Department**



Our newly improved website can be found at [www.fourcorners.ne.gov](http://www.fourcorners.ne.gov). Same web address with whole new look! Visit for local public health information and resources.



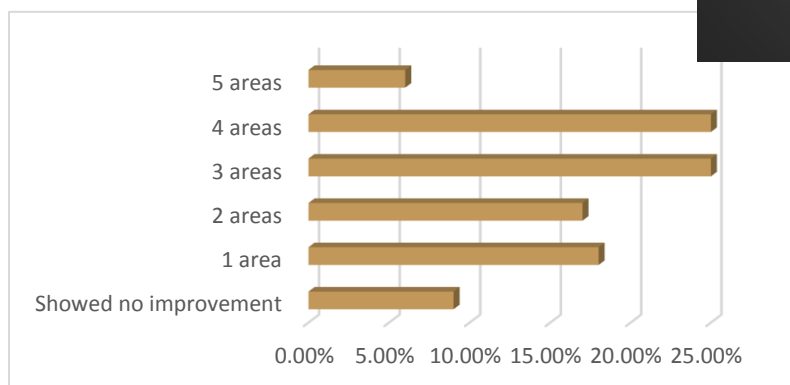
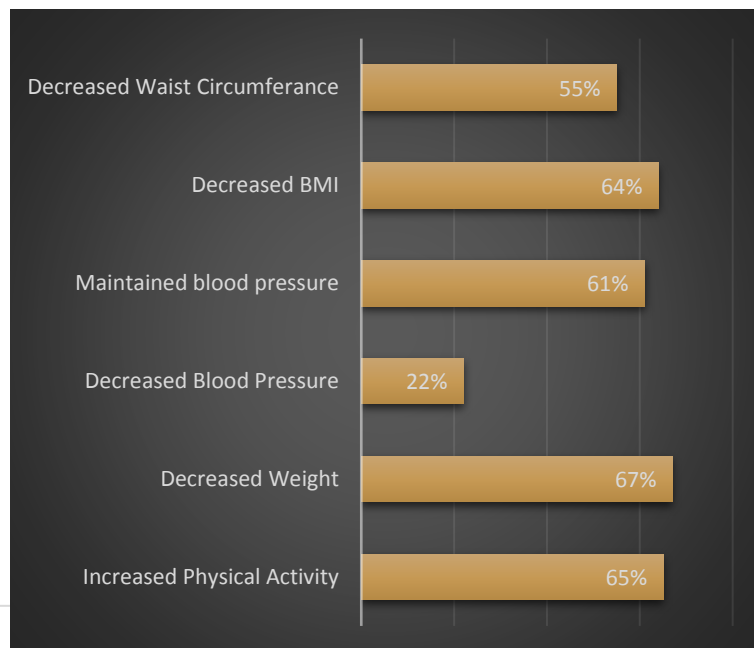
*Congratulations to Breeza Industrial in taking steps toward employee health.*

### #4) Engage the community to identify and solve health problems.

Four Corners provides worksite wellness outreach to businesses to help them create a healthier workplace. An example of this is when an employee is trying to eat more vegetables, and the workplace offers vegetables as an option at meetings instead of just cookies. Our worksite wellness program is called Take Heart Live Smart. Breeza Industrial, Ridgewood Rehabilitation and Timpfe are an example of three businesses that enrolled in Take Heart Live Smart in 2016.



Enrolled businesses participated in a physical activity program called Steps to Wellness. The Steps to Wellness Physical Activity Campaign for Worksites showed great success in helping employees get healthier, and results exceeded expectations. The goal of the Steps to Wellness program was to help more individuals reach the recommended 150 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity per week. This improves heart health, lessens risk for diabetes and certain cancers, plus much more!



94 post-assessments were recorded for six sites. Of those, 89 participants had an improvement in **at least one** of the five areas: waist circumference, Body Mass Index (BMI), blood pressure, weight, and physical activity minutes. Participants lost a total of 386.4 pounds combined!

*91% of participants improved in at least one area, while most improved in multiple areas*



# It's never too **Early**, **Talk** to your kids about **Drugs & Alcohol.**

With encouragement, 42% of teens are less likely to try drugs & alcohol.



**NEBRASKA**  
**PARENTS**  
*Be strong. Be the influence.*

This message brought to you by the York Country Drug Task Force, Southeast Nebraska Coalition, Region V Systems Prevention Coordination and Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

*To address problems of alcohol and drug use in our district, Four Corners participates in the York Drug Task Force, Butler Believes in Youth Coalition, Polk County Substance Abuse Coalition, Seward County Prevention Coalition, and the Suicide Prevention Coalition in Seward.*



## Veterans Crisis Line



1-800-273-8255  
PRESS 1

• • Confidential chat at [VeteransCrisisLine.net](https://VeteransCrisisLine.net) or text to **838255** • •

© 11/11 VHA

It is a fact that some veterans, service members and their families have difficulties in connecting to services, support and resources in rural communities. Through the VetSET program at Four Corners, we have been in contact with local military veterans, service members and families to learn about their needs. If we can help connect them with what is needed, that is a first step. In other situations, our community partners can assist in looking for solutions. No Wrong Door training, which provides information about how to better serve military veterans and families, was provided to those partners who want to better assist.

Childcares, preschools and families take part with Four Corners to address the problem of unhealthy weights in children. Our department provides education and interventions to young children and their families in the areas of nutrition, physical activity and oral health. Coupons were given to children under age 6 to purchase their own fresh produce at Farmers' Markets. Monthly messages are created to promote being active and eating more Fruits and Veggies. Look at our website each month for a new healthy recipe!



*Choosy is part of our campaign to introduce children to healthy habits.*

### **#5) Develop public health policies and plans.**

With the goal of improving the public's health, Four Corners enhances community support to breastfeeding families. Using evidence-based programs, our Health Educator has shared many resources, including sample policies, signage and education with childcares. This information can then be shared with families as well. Ways to support breastfeeding families and policies have been shared with worksites and additional breastfeeding training has been provided to healthcare providers.

Four Corners is supplying a school nurse to East Butler Schools for the 2016/17 school year. During this time, the nurse has been active in addressing student/staff wellness and developing a school nursing program for the school.

### **#6) Enforce public health laws and regulations.**

Four Corners often works together with local teams that enforce public health laws and regulations relating to the Control of Rabies. Teams consist of law enforcement, veterinarians, public health and medical providers. These different disciplines are experts in dealing with animals and the people who have come into close contact them. In 2016 there were 64 possible rabies exposures in our district. In addition, two bats were found to have rabies. Because rabies is so deadly for humans, it is critical that if anyone may have been exposed to rabies, the individual is referred to medical treatment. Therefore, it is essential that the public health team work together to see that animals are tested, and any exposed humans are notified if there a risk of exposure.

Local public health also becomes involved when concealed drug labs for methamphetamine are found, so that people are not occupying unsafe, contaminated properties. In 2016, a single meth lab was identified, with Four Corners follow-up according to policy to assure no one was put at-risk by the property.

## #7) Help people receive health services.



*Flu Shots*



*Fetal Occult Blood Testing (FOBT) kits a home test used to screen for colorectal cancer*



*Blood pressure and health screenings*

In our Community Health Hub program, the goal of Four Corners Public Health Nurses and Community Health Worker is to connect people to the resources they need, and overcome barriers. Part of this work involves offering brief health screenings to the community.



*Oral Health Screenings*

Four Corners held Oral Health Clinics to offer preventive oral health services to young children, with a specific emphasis on birth to five years of age. Blue Valley Community Action administering the Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) program partnered with us to provide these services to this target group. Clinics were held once per month in each of the four counties. The Four Corners team providing the services consisted of our Public Health Nurse, Community Health Worker and a Public Health Dental Hygienist. We served 77 families in our district during Oral Health Clinics in 2016.

## #8) Maintain a competent public health workforce.

Four Corners maintained a competent workforce through this year of transition. Nearly all employees took on new roles and responsibilities. Our staff team has risen to the challenge to impact the community in great ways.

We especially congratulate several staff on important certifications:

- Angel Dale and Ellyn Leif received Child Passenger Safety Technician Certifications
- Ellyn Leif completed her Community Health Worker Training
- Chris Blanke completed her Certification of Public Health

Four Corners staff members participated in over 60 trainings and conferences in 2016 to better equip them in their understanding and public health roles.



## #9) Evaluate and improve programs and interventions.

Our goal is to continuously evaluate and improve our programs and community interventions. Our Quality Improvement Team works to review programming to make sure it fills a community need, makes a positive impact for those we serve, and that we can financially support and sustain it.

We want to implement evidence-based programs, collecting data to further show our impact to our communities. Through these programs, we build partnerships with public health system partners, working together toward a common goal.

Rural care coordination models, along with the role of public health in those models, are being examined in a Community Access to Coordinated Healthcare (CATCH) project. Four Corners is taking part in this innovative project, along with several medical providers from the District. Through this endeavor we will find ways to work together more effectively to address complex health needs and chronic disease in our communities.

## #10) Contribute to and apply the evidence base of public health.



*In May, 2016, Four Corners hosted a Diabetes Prevention Program Lifestyle Coach Training for 13 new certified coaches.*

The Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) is offered at 6 sites in the Four Corners District. When individuals are referred and join the program, for one year they work toward two goals: losing 5-7% of their weight and being more active. By reaching those goals, participants may prevent themselves from getting type 2 diabetes or heart disease. The health department is the hub for all the district programs. In addition to offering technical assistance, data from sites is gathered to send to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in order to be recognized programs. Only those who follow evidence-based programs and contribute to CDC's data for long term evaluation are considered for the Recognized Provider Program. Henderson Health Care Services, Memorial Health Care Systems, Annie Jeffrey Memorial County Health Care Center, York Medical Clinic, Butler County Health Care Center, and David Place are sites who offered classes in 2016.

High school students, college interns and students are regular contributors to our department. A dual-major (Masters in Public Health/Physician Assistant) graduate student from the University of Nebraska Medical Center, performed part of her Capstone Project through Four Corners, in conjunction with the York Medical Clinic. She investigated the local perceptions, attitudes and barriers regarding diabetes care and prevention among medical providers in our district.



*Our capstone student, Emma Frost-Briley, distributing health information at Southeast Community College-Milford.*



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**Darla Winslow**, Polk County  
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**Chris Blanke**, Public Health Nurse,  
Community Education Coordinator

**Alison Otte**, Special Projects Coordinator

**Chris Lawrence**, Environmental Health,  
Emergency Response Coordinator

**Val Tvrdy**, Public Health Nurse, School Nurse,  
Community Health Worker

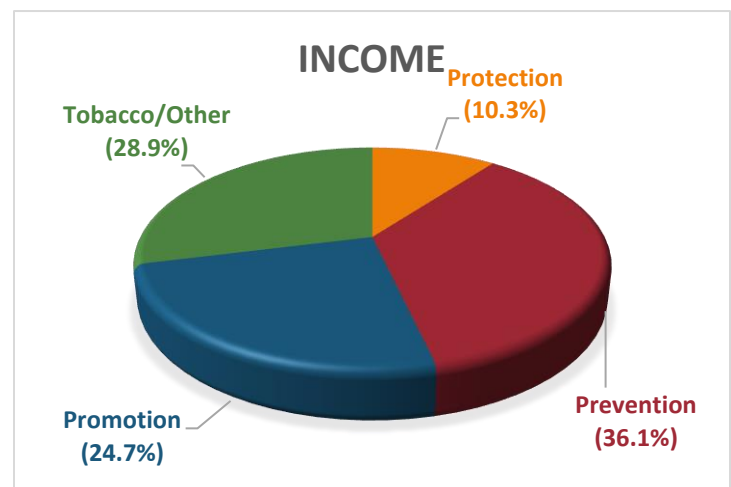
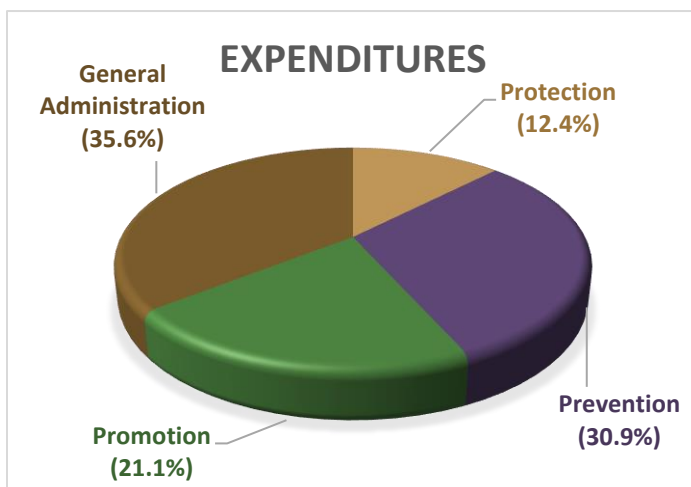
**Suzanne Phinney**, Public Health Nurse,  
Disease Surveillance

**Ellyn Leif**, Program Assistant,  
Community Health Worker

**Kathy Rocolle**, Administrative Assistant

**Angel Dale**, Office Manager

## 2016 Financials



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