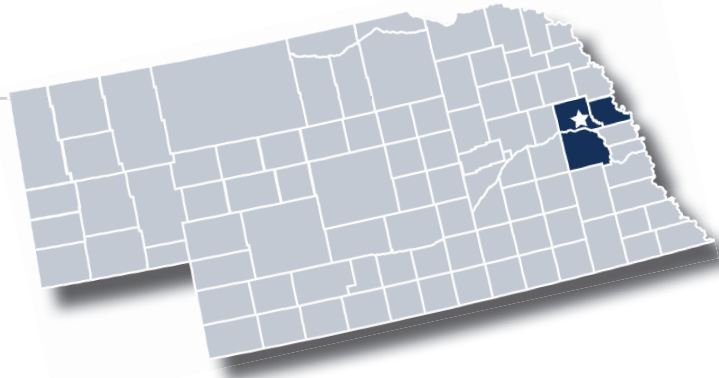


Three Rivers

Public Health Department

Serving Dodge, Washington, and Saunders Counties



Spotlight: Activating Youth as Health Leaders



In spring of 2018, Three Rivers Public Health Department (3RPHD) created its first Youth Action Committee (YAC) comprised of seven youth from Fremont High School. After extensive conversations with YAC, it was clear there were numerous barriers to access services at the 3RPHD clinic for these youth and their peers. One barrier was adolescents' lack of knowledge about sexual health and family planning services offered by 3RPHD (including the free and confidential sexually transmitted infection [STI] testing).

In effort to improve the knowledge and utilization of sexual health and family planning services, the Youth Action Committee (YAC) planned and hosted events and classes in the community.

Another barrier for youth accessing sexual health and family planning services was lack of trust in the confidentiality and anonymity of testing and services. Youth were afraid that parents would find out

if and when they accessed services despite the required confidentiality practices 3RPHD employs. 3RPHD efforts showed that youth did not know where to go to receive sexual health information. The YAC provided the insight that their peers seemed to lack knowledge of where to find accurate information about sexual health topics.

In an effort to improve the knowledge and utilization of sexual health and family planning services, the YAC planned and hosted events and classes in the community. They assisted 3RPHD's sexual health educator with writing grant proposals and securing funding to achieve goals such as creating a youth-only waiting room, hosting Parking Lot Parties to promote STI testing and facilitating classes to provide basic sexual health education. They held two Parking Lot Parties which were attended by nearly 80 youth and have plans to host more events in the future. They assisted with planning and co-facilitating sexual health education classes that cover topics relevant to youth such as STI, pregnancy prevention and family planning services. These

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classes were attended by 40 youth over two months, and the YAC plans to facilitate more classes throughout the upcoming school year. The YAC recruited five new youth for a total of 12 members. The newly recruited youth will go through training so they can promote clinic services and comprehensive, medically accurate sexual health education.

Since YAC's creation, the 3RPHD clinic has seen an increase of nearly 100 youth, aged 24 and under, seeking services. With the tools and education provided at the clinic and in the community, the YAC members met youth where they were. The YAC successfully equipped youth with the education needed to reduce high numbers of youth who have STIs and unplanned pregnancies within our health jurisdiction.

This report includes examples of efforts of Three Rivers Public Health Department to make the “Good Life” a healthy one in their jurisdiction. The following examples reflect work supported through multiple sources of funding, including monies from the Nebraska Health Care Funding Act (HCFA).

Local health departments act as communities’ Chief Health Strategists by assuring that the health and wellbeing of Nebraskans are protected and improved. Local health departments do this by working in each of the **Three Core Function Areas of Public Health**:



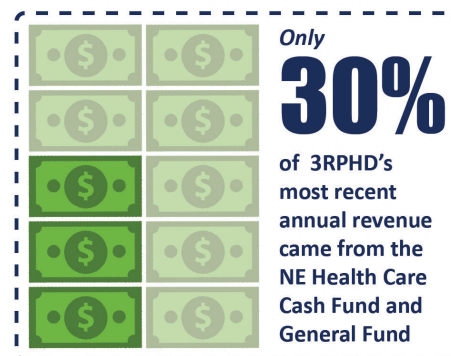
Assessment: Collect and analyze information about health problems in Nebraska communities.



Policy Development: Work with partners to apply data, educate the public, and develop programs and policies—all to address and prevent illness, disease and disability.



Assurance: Promote effective coordination and use of community resources to protect the health and wellbeing of Nebraskans.



Community Health Assessment (CHA) Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)

Every 3-6 years, Nebraska’s local health departments (LHDs) engage local partners (including hospitals, clinics, schools, law enforcement, military and veteran organizations, economic development agencies, businesses, foundations, other community organizations, and individual community members) to identify key, local health needs and issues through systematic, comprehensive data collection and analysis. This process is known as the Community Health Assessment (CHA). LHDs take the lead in coordinating this complicated process, synthesizing the outcome data, and prioritizing identified issues. The resulting formal assessment is used to create a community-wide plan aimed at strategically improving health – the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP).

With CHIPs in place, LHDs take a lead driving the work toward meeting CHIP goals and monitoring progress. Much of this work is done collaboratively through partnerships and workgroups that include the diverse sectors mentioned above.

The CHA/CHIP process ensures that local communities are able to work together toward a Good, Healthy Life for all Nebraskans.

CURRENT CHIP PRIORITIES:



Mental Health



Reduce teen pregnancy.
(Specific to Dodge County)



Access to Health/Well-being
(Knowledge, Awareness, etc.)

ACCESS TO AND LINKAGE TO CLINICAL CARE

Access to and Linkage to Clinical Care includes (but is not limited to) coordination of services between medical providers and providers of health-related social needs, oral health/dental services, and behavioral/mental health.



Three Rivers Public Health Department (3RPHD) gathers and analyzes data during the CHA process to determine gaps in our area. One gap identified is mammography services, especially for women who are uninsured and do not qualify for the state's Every Woman Matters program. Due to the need for mammography services, we collaborate with local hospitals, Good Neighbor Clinic, and other agencies to provide screening services. We provide follow-ups to women who needed diagnostic mammograms and ultrasound to link them to services.



CHRONIC DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

Chronic Disease Control and Prevention includes (but is not limited to) asthma, cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity, tobacco control, and worksite wellness.



In the 3RPHD district, there is a higher-than-average percentage of diagnosed diabetes among minorities. 3RPHD applied for and received funding to develop a diabetes prevention program for minority individuals in Dodge County. Three Rivers partnered with Methodist Fremont Health, Good Neighbor Clinic, and UNL Extension in Dodge County to refer individuals to the program and to provide education about pre-diabetes. Seven out of 15 individuals have successfully completed the program as of June 2019.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

Communicable Disease Control and Prevention includes (but is not limited to) communicable disease epidemiology (disease outbreak management/response), tuberculosis (TB), immunizations, sexually transmitted infections, and surveillance (tracking and following up on reports and provider/school reports).



In May of 2019, 3RPHD identified two cases of pertussis (whooping cough) at a middle school through monitoring and analysis of lab reports through the National Electronic Disease Surveillance System (NEDSS). 3RPHD worked with the school to recommend strategies for mitigation, including to provide information and education to all parents at the school. Through partnership with the school, 3RPHD was able to reach all members of the school population and reduce further spread of the illness.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Environmental Health includes (but is not limited to) radon, lead, emergency response, hazardous substances and sites, and Complete Streets initiatives.



3RPHD provided private well testing kits to residents of Dodge, Saunders, and Washington counties following the 2019 flooding in these counties. Of all wells tested, 30% to 50% received positive results for contamination of bacteria. The 3RPHD website provided access to information on environmental health issues, including Nebraska regulations, answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs), and a reporting form. 3RPHD collaborated with the Dodge County Emergency Manager and with Nebraska and federal emergency management agencies to facilitate a Multi-Agency Resource Center (MARC) to provide education on a number of flood safety issues and mold cleanup. 3RPHD provided cleanup kits to flood victims through the MARC and Nebraska Strong. 3RPHD also takes an active role in the Greater Dodge County Long Term Recovery Group (GDC LTRG) where 3RPHD's Emergency Response Coordinator (ERC) serves as Secretary and Leader.

INJURY PREVENTION

Injury Prevention includes (but is not limited to) motor vehicle injuries, occupational injuries, senior fall prevention, substance abuse, car seat safety, binge drinking, and distracted driving.



3RPHD leads a Safe Kids Coalition in which child passenger safety is the main area of focus. In July of 2018, 3RPHD was fortunate to be awarded a grant through Buckle Up for Life (BUFL) which allowed for the purchase of car seats, educational outreach materials, and a curriculum to educate parents, teens, and children about safe driving. 3RPHD collaborated with local organizations to provide needed car seat education to parents and families as well as car seats to those in need, free of charge.

MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

Maternal and Child Health includes (but is not limited to) Women, Infant, and Children (WIC), family planning, newborn screening, evidence-based home visitation, Early Preventative Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT).



3RPHD continues to operate a Title X clinic offering family planning services in our three-county service area. Services include contraceptive options, sexually transmitted infection (STI) and pregnancy testing, annual exams, and clinical breast exams. In addition, 3RPHD has used data from the last Community Health Assessment (CHA), to drive educational classes in the community. Due to the area's high rates of teen pregnancy and of STIs among youth, 3RPHD's Youth Action Committee (YAC) has been offering events and educational classes in the community to engage other youth. Our YAC offers peer-to-peer education to address the deficits of youth on sexual health topics.

Additional public health activities that Three Rivers Public Health Department performs to assure that the health and wellbeing of Nebraskans are protected and improved.

On March 14, 2019, the Emergency Response Coordinator (ERC) at 3RPHD was activated by the Dodge County Emergency Manager (EM), to assist with the flood response. The ERC assisted with shelter establishment and volunteer and donation organization, along with United Way and Salvation Army. 3RPHD's Epi Surveillance officer arrived at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) on March 15, 2019 and began contacting long-term care facilities to assess needs and/or available space for evacuees. The ERC received a request for a bariatric chair at the community shelter. This item was procured and delivered to the shelter. Mobilization of clinic staff for tetanus clinics in 3RPHD's jurisdiction began on March 19, 2019 and continued until March 25, 2019. During clinic response, 486 Tdap shots were dispensed. Between March 18, 2019 and April 5, 2019, 370 Tdap and 45 tetanus vaccines were given to walk-ins at 3RPHD.

3RPHD staff manned a table at the Multi-Agency Resource Center (MARC). Resources were handed out to consumers addressing mold, water testing, food and water safety, etc. Information and questions were answered regarding clean-up, tetanus shot availability, and water testing opportunities. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) water testing trucks made three visits, two located at 3RPHD and one in Ashland, NE. A total of 100 water testing kits were handed out to consumers through 3RPHD and more than 120 private wells were tested through DHHS/EPA. More than 250 medical kits were provided to residents.

There is a need for public health to engage community members in Community Health Needs Assessments (CHIPs), incident command training, public information, and injury prevention efforts increase collaboration across community partners. This will make for a robust emergency response plan and will benefit day-to-day public health and productivity.