

# THIS IS *Public Health*

Health Department of Northwest Michigan  
2016 ANNUAL REPORT

## *Keeping Northwest Michigan Waterways Clean and Safe*

(Pages 27 and 30-31)

Healthy Babies, Happy Families  
(Pages 8-9)



Telehealth in School Health Centers  
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Bringing New Fruits and  
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Cover photo courtesy, Megan Robinson



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*I am pleased to present the Health Department of Northwest Michigan's annual report. I look back on 2016 with great pride in this agency, which has always demonstrated excellence and innovation.*

*This was a year of significant transition as our health officer, Linda Yaroch, prepared for retirement. Many months, even years, of planning laid the groundwork for this transition and the succession that follows. With her strong leadership, our health department is well prepared for the future. Linda's forty years of service to the Health Department of Northwest Michigan, starting as a public health nurse, is a daunting act to follow, but I am humbled by the opportunity to lead this agency and will strive to serve the people of our district in the very same tradition of excellence that Linda exemplified.*

*Linda left our staff with words of wisdom that reminded us of our mission of social justice: to ensure that every person has the opportunity to live a life of health in body, mind and environment regardless of their status or position.*

*The following pages will allow a glimpse into the work that our passionate and talented staff carry out each and every day in this mission to uphold the Michigan Public Health Code. They touch our community in numerous ways, from birth to death and everything in between.*

*Our health department is organized into several divisions, including Family Health and Community Health divisions which provides a wide array of services to families at home, in our many clinics and in numerous schools. The department's Environmental Health division promotes a healthy community through safe water, food, environment as well as disaster preparedness. The Home Care, Hospice and Aging Services division provides support and services for adults in times of illness through home health and hospice as well as a variety of unique and supportive programs for grieving families and elderly persons. Our eight dental clinics continue to thrive and oral health coordination across the region is reaching those with oral health concerns in non-traditional ways and connecting them to services. And finally, our Administrative Services division touches every service we provide and creates the healthy foundation our agency relies on every day.*

*Collaboration has also been a strong theme throughout the year as we continue to align visions and values with our partner health departments in the Northern Michigan Public Health Alliance. We provide vital support to one another and are no doubt proving we are stronger when we pool our expertise and other resources together. One of the most significant Alliance accomplishments was the implementation of the Community Health Innovation Region, which is currently underway and testing innovative methods of health care delivery and payment across the region. The Alliance has been recognized for its successful strategies in regionalizing our public health emergency preparedness efforts and creating an inclusive community health needs assessment coordinated with health departments and hospitals across a 25-county region.*

*I would also like to thank the members of our Board of Health for their ongoing support and belief in our mission that has existed for over 80 years. Although it is inevitable that challenges and uncertainties lie ahead, I am confident that with the dedication and commitment from our Board of Health and our staff we will be able to continue to protect and promote the health of Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet and Otsego counties with a tradition of excellence and innovation that has come to be expected from the Health Department of Northwest Michigan.*

Sincerely,

Lisa M. Peacock, RN, MSN, NP  
Health Officer

**Two-thousand-sixteen was a busy year marked by agency transitions.**

*As several of our key employees have retired or left public health, we have kept our focus on continuing to maintain levels of service and building on the foundation and mission to promote healthy communities and families.*

*It is also our good fortune however to have staff, including many recent hires, that bring new ideas and enthusiasm for public health. We are adopting a new collaborative approach with other local health departments including a shared health officer position, which goes along with the often spoken "do more with less" that we hear every year from our state and federal partners.*

*It is easy to speak these words, but the reality is that their burden falls on the many professionals who serve our communities every day. They are busy protecting our environment, making sure our food and water are safe, helping families and children eat nutritious foods, protecting us all against vaccine preventable diseases, investigating outbreaks and promoting health in so many other aspects of our lives.*

*In addition, they must always be ready to respond to emerging issues as well as new and novel concerns such as Ebola or Zika virus. As we have navigated through these changes and prepare to face what the new year brings, I thank all of our Board of Health members and the residents for their support and dedication for the future of public health in Northern Michigan.*

In good health,

Joshua Meyerson, MD, MPH  
Medical Director

# Board of Health

The mission of the Health Department of Northwest Michigan, derived from a commitment and responsibility to the Michigan Public Health Code, is to promote wellness, prevent disease, provide quality health care, address health problems of vulnerable populations and protect the environment for residents and visitors of Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet and Otsego counties.

## Antrim County



**Karen Bargy, Chair**  
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Personnel & Finance Committee



**Scott Kruger**  
Mancelona, MI  
Program & Evaluation Committee



**Jonathan Scheel**  
Petoskey, MI  
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**Betsy White**  
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## Charlevoix County



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Charlevoix, MI  
Program & Evaluation Committee



**Shirley Roloff,**  
**Secretary/Treasurer**  
Charlevoix, MI  
Personnel & Finance Committee

## Otsego County



**Duane Switalski**  
Johannesburg, MI  
Program & Evaluation Committee



**Julie Powers**  
Gaylord, MI  
Program & Evaluation Committee

## A Tribute to Linda Yaroch

Linda Yaroch, after 40 years of service to the Health Department of Northwest Michigan as a nurse, director and health officer, was honored by the Board of Health on December 6, 2016 with an official resolution. The resolution concluded:

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Health commends Linda Yaroch for her service and dedication and on behalf of the Department, its employees, and the people it serves, indicates its appreciation and says *Thank You.*



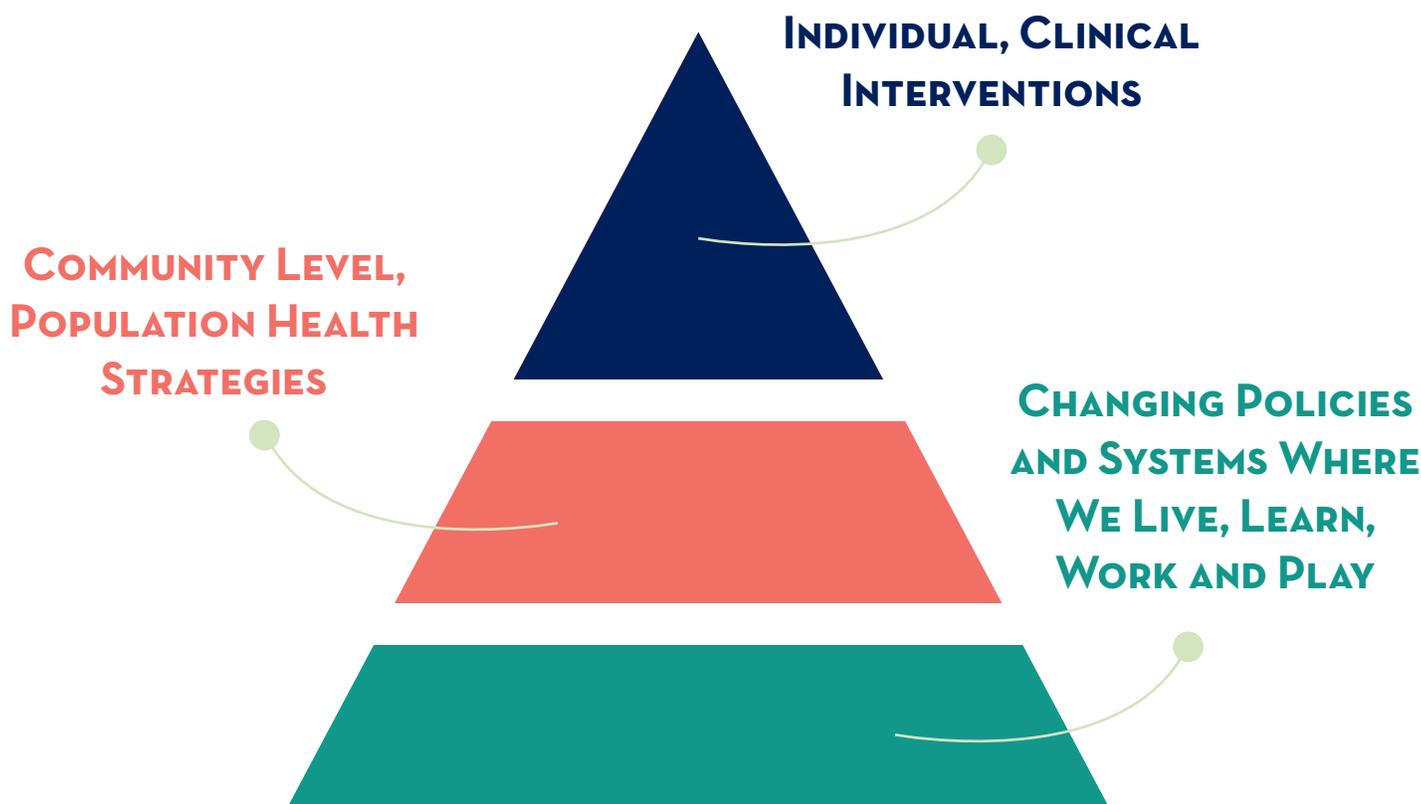
*"Part of the mission of public health is the belief that we value all people equally, and that no one should be denied the possibility to be healthy for belonging to a group that has been disadvantaged."*

- Linda Yaroch

# New Look for 2016

*The Health Department of Northwest Michigan's 2016 annual report may look different to you than previous years. Building on the work done by other health departments in Michigan, we used this year's report to tell our story in a bit of different way. Thanks to the dedication of the health department's staff, stories were written about the tremendous work accomplished every day.*

*You'll find stories on health department programs that touch every aspect of the lifespan, young to old and individual to community health. We've divided the content into a few sections, that take you through the model we practice in public health of addressing health at every level: individual, clinical level interventions to community level population health strategies to changing policies and systems where we live, learn, work and play - and at every step of the lifespan.*



*Finally, we hope this new format gives you insight into how our local health department carries out our mission to promote wellness, prevent disease, provide quality health care and protect the environment for all residents and visitors.*

**- Erika Van Dam, MPH, CHES - Deputy Health Officer  
and Mike Swain, MPH - Public Information Officer**

# Individual, Clinical Interventions

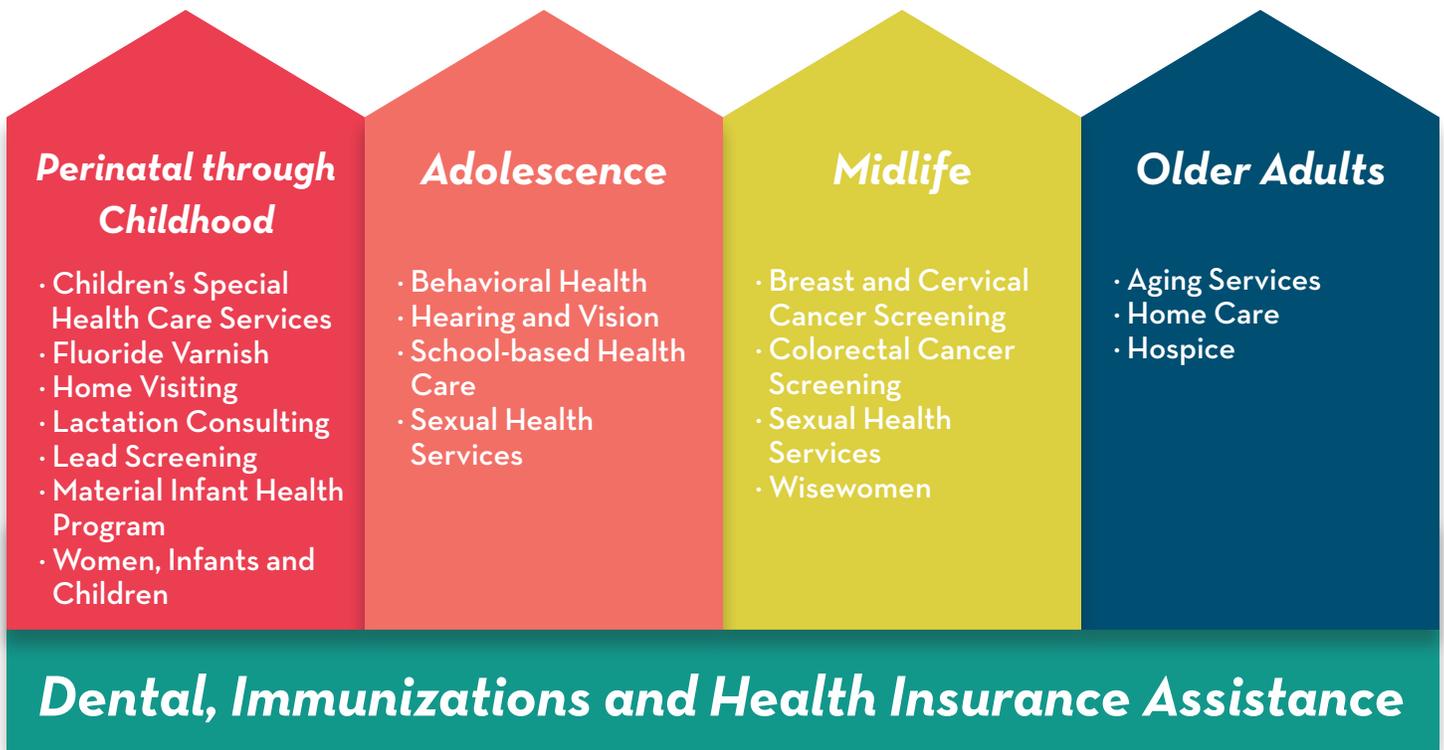
## CARING FOR RESIDENTS ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

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The Health Department of Northwest Michigan, in keeping with its **87 years of excellence** in clinical care, provides individual level services to all ages thanks to the expertise and dedication of well trained and skilled staff. These staff members are ingrained in the communities they serve and deliver patient centered care - making it personal.

The following pages will demonstrate the breadth of the work staff do for residents, regardless of where in the district they live, their age or socioeconomic status. Through this work, the health department is there for the community at every step of their life, whether it be comprehensive, home and office based support when a baby is born, a school nurse using telehealth technology with a local physician to diagnose and treat an ear infection, a cancer screening for an uninsured resident or a health department nurse providing skilled home care to a senior.

***Below is a graphic describing the stories on the following pages:***



# Making Health Services Convenient

## FOR NORTHWEST MICHIGAN RESIDENTS



The Health Department of Northwest Michigan operates a comprehensive central intake and scheduling service, staffed by four full time operators. When a resident calls the health department's 1-800 number, operators use their extensive knowledge of health care to assist residents. This assistance may look like enrolling a family in WIC, scheduling a dental appointment or helping an individual qualify for a health insurance plan.

Beyond these individual requests, more importantly operators notify callers of service they may need but are not aware of. For example, a mother to a newborn may call to enroll in the WIC nutritional program but also be offered an appointment for an immunization

or the opportunity to have a health department nurse conduct home visits. Or, somebody calling and worried about the price of a service may find out they are eligible for low cost health insurance.

Regardless of the circumstance, the central intake service leads the way in proving there is no wrong door at the Health Department of Northwest Michigan. In accordance with the department's mission and dedication to public health, staff ensure health department services are convenient and easily accessible. In 2016, central intake operators answered 30,302 calls. The reach of the service is crucial to protecting and promoting the health of northwest Michigan residents.

## Helping Craft Healthy Lives for the Youngest Residents

While access to health care begins in central intake, the most significant determinants of individual health take place at the earliest ages. These crucial years - from in the womb throughout childhood - cognitive, social, emotional, language and physical development is affected for the rest of one's life. These years set the stage for:

- » **SCHOOL SUCCESS**
- » **HEALTH LITERACY**
- » **SELF-DISCIPLINE**
- » **DECISION MAKING**
- » **EATING HABITS**
- » **HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS**

This is why the Health Department of Northwest Michigan places a large emphasis on providing services to expectant mothers and children - regardless of income. The health of the youngest residents of northwest Michigan is imperative to the future of public health in the region. In the following pages, you'll find information and stories on a variety of these services offered by the health department. Should you have any questions about enrolling in a program, please call central intake and scheduling at 1 (800) 432-4121.

*Source: Healthy People 2020*



# Healthy Babies,

Support from an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant provides breastfeeding and lactation care across the district



Introduction by: Erika Van Dam, MPH, CHES - Deputy Health Officer

By: Betsy Britton, Charlevoix County resident and breastfeeding mother to Ophelia

**B**efore becoming a mother, I took for granted the great effort that goes into breastfeeding a new baby. I thought breastfeeding would be easy; after all, humans are designed to be able to nurse their babies as their sole nourishment in infancy, and it's one of the very first bonds to occur after birth between mother and child. However, no matter one's passion and dedication to breastfeeding their baby, most women experience some level of struggle, whether it's the baby's latch, breast tenderness, coping with engorgement, confidence in the baby getting enough sustenance, knowledge of how to pump and prepare for the return to work, and the list goes on. That's why, upon receiving this thoughtful letter from Betsy Britton, a resident in Charlevoix County, many of our own employees had emotions surface,

*bringing them back to the days when they, themselves, were struggling to have a successful breastfeeding relationship with their child. I hear over and over again from new mothers that, without the support, care, and services from our Certified Lactation Consultants, they would have felt they had no choice but to quit breastfeeding. It is our hope that all mothers have the confidence and ability to breastfeed their babies, if they wish to do so, and our Certified Lactation Consultants will walk with them every step of the way to provide support, encouragement, and care to help establish the mother-baby breastfeeding relationship.*

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Dedication, compassion, perseverance, expertise and my number one cheerleader. These are just a few words to describe Danica

Howard. I am a goal setter. I am determined and am not someone who takes failure lightly. I knew breastfeeding wouldn't be easy, but I had mentally prepared for the pain I was sure to experience, I had read books and blogs and considered the what-ifs and planned ahead for issues I may encounter.

My daughter, Ophelia, latched immediately and nursed for nearly two hours. I experienced sensitivity in the hospital, but it was manageable. I was told my daughter was a great eater and I was proud! Then when I got home, my milk came in and everything changed. Due to my engorgement Ophelia couldn't latch well and tenderness turned to unbearable, toe curling, breathless pain. On a friend's recommendation, I reached out to Danica to schedule a consultation. She could sense I was at my breaking point and met me



# A SNAPSHOT OF Prevention and Protection of Health through Health Department Programs

## Hearing and Vision Screening

Preventing hearing and vision loss through screening. The screenings also help identify underlying issues, such as speech, language and social skills.

**9,370**  
school-aged  
children  
screened

**1,706**  
pre-school  
children  
screened

**729**  
referrals  
for treatment

## Immunizations

The health department administers immunizations to help protect individuals and the community from disease. Immunizations are provided across the region at many health department and non-health department locations. More on how immunizations protect the community can be found on page 26.

**9,925**  
doses administered

**12,778**  
doses administered

## Blood Lead Screening



Lead can damage the nervous system, kidneys and blood. By testing children, the source of the lead can be eliminated and mitigation techniques, such as diet, can be implemented.

## Health Insurance Assistance

**532**  
residents  
assisted

Staff help residents enroll in health care plans. In turn, these residents then can see a primary care provider - often for the first time - and catch health problems earlier and improve health outcomes.

## Early Childhood Behavioral Health Screenings

**1,637** developmental screens

Regardless of income or insurance status, this initiative helps families promote social and emotional development and connect them to behavioral health resources.

## Fluoride Varnish Applications

Protects children from tooth decay

**2,052** applications

**1,123** caries assessments

# Healthy Families Northern Michigan

Healthy Families Northern Michigan is a voluntary, non-income based, free home visiting program that offers guidance, information and support to help parents be ready for their baby's birth and raise a healthy family. Healthy Families Northern Michigan support workers can begin seeing families during pregnancy and continue until the child's fourth birthday. Healthy Families Northern Michigan follows the Healthy Families America model, whose vision is that all children receive nurturing care from their family essential to leading a healthy and productive life.

Healthy Families Northern Michigan recognizes that parents are their children's most important teachers. Healthy Families shares child growth and development information and activities with families, along with personalized, family-focused support in the comfort and convenience of the family's home. Family support workers also share information about available community resources.

***The family is in the driver's seat!***

## Proven results:

- » Nurtures child development, including long-term improvements in school performance
- » Helps parents be the best they can be and reach personal goals
- » Studies have shown improvements in: child safety; child health, including increased birth weight; parent-child interaction; school readiness and adjustment in 1st grade; family self-sufficiency; and coordination of services and referrals.

Healthy Families Northern Michigan offers support to families throughout 12 counties in northern Lower Michigan. It is a partnership among four local health departments:

### ***Health Department of Northwest Michigan***

- Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet and Otsego Counties

### ***Central Michigan Health Department***

- Roscommon County

### ***District Health Department #2***

- Iosco and Ogemaw Counties

### ***District Health Department #10***

- Crawford, Kalkaska, Manistee, Missaukee and Wexford Counties

**Call your local health department, visit their website,  
or visit [www.healthyfamiliesamerica.org](http://www.healthyfamiliesamerica.org) for more information.**

# Children's Special Health Care Services

## Children's Special Health Care Services General Information

- » Individuals with special health care needs may receive assistance to improve health outcomes
- » Assist individuals with special health care needs in accessing the broadest possible range of appropriate medical care, health education and supports
- » Children's Special Health Care helps persons with chronic health problems
  - ...by providing coverage and referrals for specialty services
  - ...by supporting the primary caretaker for the child
  - ...by coordinating services of many different agencies

## Facts and Figures

**480** children from birth until age 21 receive services annually at the Health Department of Northwest Michigan

**85%** of all enrolled children are contacted annually to receive individualized services including plan of care, and care coordination services

**1.5%** of children participating in Children's Special Healthcare Services in Michigan receive services at the Health Department of Northwest Michigan

Eligibility is based on the qualifying medical condition and over **2,700** physical conditions are eligible for coverage

## What Families Tell Us

*"When I reached out for help in December, I had no idea what to do. Professionally and gently somehow I got through everything with the help of the CSHCS staff."*

*"Great knowledge and very helpful."*

*"Fast responses, always kind and helpful. CSHCS staff is fabulous."*

*"Great help at thinking out of the box to find creative solutions. She has helped our family in many, many ways. She goes beyond "the call of duty" and our family appreciates all of her efforts!"*

*"Everyone I have been in contact with at the health department has been wonderful! Great resources."*

## Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program

**440** women screened

The health department provides low-income women with free breast and cervical cancer screening, helping to identify cancers at the earliest possible stage when it is most treatable. If cancer is found, staff help clients get follow-up services and assist with navigating the finances of such.



## Colorectal Cancer Early Detection Program

**39** clients served

As colon cancer is a leading cause of cancer death, and can be caught early through screening, the health department provides uninsured and underinsured men and women, ages 50 to 64, with at home screening tests which are processed at the health department's laboratory. Free colonoscopies can also be provided when necessary.

For more, check out page 18.

## Sexual Health Services



The health department, through the Well-Integrated Screening and Evaluation for Women Across the Nation program, screens low-income women ages 40 to 64 for heart disease and stroke. Nurses provide counseling and referrals to help clients improve their health.

**685** clients served

Staff help both men and women make informed reproductive health choices, and clinicians provide contraceptives. With a focus on pre-conception health, the health department strives to improve maternal-child health outcomes.

## Maternal Infant Health Program

**{ 6,294 }**  
visits

This program provides pregnant women and parents of infants the option of home visiting from a team of nurses, social workers and dieticians. During visits, staff check a baby's weight, provide breastfeeding support, and provide crucial information on caring for a new baby. Evaluations of this program have proven that it can lower the chances of a pre-term birth, prevent low birth-weight, and increase the likelihood of well-child visits. For every \$1 spent on this program, another \$1.38 is saved by the health insurer just in the first month of life.

## Women, Infant and Children (WIC) Nutrition Program

WIC promotes the health of pregnant women and their children up to age five through nutrition. WIC improves health outcomes, including earlier prenatal care, fewer low birth weights and access to health care.

**3,080** participants

# Mental Health *in Schools*

*Meeting kids where they're at*



*By: Natalie Kasiborski, PhD, LMSW, MPH  
Director of Community Health Services*

Time after time, health department and local school staff in northern Michigan heard stories about the struggles families faced when they sought mental health services for their child. Data indicated that youth in Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet and Otsego counties have high mental health needs. Despite this demonstrated need, youth face many barriers to accessing mental health care, including a shortage of mental health providers, complex insurance policies and issues of transportation related to rural geography.

Aiming to eliminate these barriers and increase access to mental health care for youth, in 2016, the Health Department of Northwest Michigan launched the Mental Health in Schools Initiative.

In order to logistically and financially staff mental health providers in local schools, the health department brought together many partners including:

- » **Char-Em Intermediate School District**
- » **North Country Community Mental Health**
- » **Alcona Health Center**
- » **Public Schools of Petoskey**
- » **Gaylord Community Schools**
- » **Charlevoix County Community Foundation**
- » **Petoskey Harbor Springs Area Community Foundation**
- » **Otsego County Community Foundation**

The partner agencies and schools worked together to secure start-up funding. In the first year, five mental health professionals are serving the students of nine schools in Emmet and Otsego counties. This tremendous partnership ensures that behavioral health services are sustainable and long-lasting once implemented. The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is excited about this model and hopes to continue to build upon the success of the first year and expand into additional schools in the upcoming years.

# Improving Access, Decreasing Barriers: Telehealth Technology IN SCHOOL HEALTH CENTERS

By: Susan McCloskey, RN, BSN  
Family and Community Health Nurse

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan's child and adolescent health programs bring inclusive medical and behavioral health care directly to students. Centers, located in Mancelona, Pellston, Boyne City and Gaylord schools, are staffed by nurses, nurse practitioners, mental health counselors and community health workers – each of whom provides a unique role. Some of the services they provide include:

- » Counseling for students and families
- » Health assessments and sports physicals
- » Treatment for illnesses and injuries and prescriptions
- » Chronic disease management
- » Lab testing
- » Referrals to specialists
- » Health insurance enrollment
- » Wellness programs and classroom education

Services are aimed at achieving the best possible physical, intellectual

and emotional status of children and adolescents by providing services that are high quality, accessible and acceptable to youth. In that spirit, Rambler Wellness – the school wellness program located in Boyne City Schools and serving students in kindergarten through eighth grade – implemented telehealth technology.

Sue McCloskey, a registered nurse at the Boyne City location, had a student in her office, Isaac, who was experiencing ear pain. After Mrs. McCloskey examined the student she found some signs of concern. She then contacted the student's mother, Ami Dionne, who is a teacher in another district. Dionne asked if a telehealth visit could be done. It was the most accessible option as it is difficult for her to leave her job to pick her son up and take him in for a conventional office visit.

Mrs. McCloskey was able to connect with a Dr. Harmeling at the Munson Healthcare Boyne Area Health Center and the student was able to be diagnosed right in the

nurse's office in school. Dr. Harmeling was also able to call in a prescription for his mom to pick up on their way home.

As a result of the health department's clinic and telehealth arrangement with the Boyne Area Health Center, Isaac was able to stay in school while his mother was able to continue working the rest of the day in her classroom and later pick up the prescription to alleviate the symptoms.

Without this infrastructure offered by the health department, both Isaac and his mom would've missed school and work – resulting in negative health outcomes, as study after study proves the more time a student spends at school the more likely they are to live a healthy life.

The health department's four school health programs operate with the belief that healthier students learn better, better learners graduate and higher graduation rates result in healthier communities. The telehealth capabilities implemented in 2016 help make these beliefs come true in communities across northwest Michigan, with the joint force of schools and public health alike.



Health Department of Northwest nurse Sue McCloskey treats a student at a Boyne City school, with expertise from clinicians at the Munson Healthcare Boyne Area Health Center via telehealth technology

***“The benefits of this program are amazing. Both my son and I were able to stay in our classrooms, but better yet, it took away the worry and stress associated with finding a substitute and leaving work or having to spend a late evening at a walk-in clinic.”***

***-Ami Dionne***

# Dental Clinics North Serves Over 23,000 in 2016, Increases Financial Assistance

By: Erika Van Dam, MPH, CHES  
Deputy Health Officer

Access to care is a unique challenge for those who live in Northern Michigan, and Dental Clinics North has a proud history of connecting those in need with oral health services they could not have received otherwise. Dental Clinics North remains a strong partnership of six local public health departments: District Health Departments No. 2, 4, and 10, the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department, Grand Traverse County Health Department, and the Health Department of Northwest Michigan. My Community Dental Centers continues to provide the staffing and dental expertise for the eight Dental Clinics North locations across Northern Michigan.

In addition to providing access to clinical dental services for the entire family, Dental Clinics North is committed to reaching the highest quality of service provision through:

- » Collaboration with partners, including health departments, federally qualified health centers, hospitals, My Community Dental Centers, schools and pre-schools, commissions on aging, community stakeholders, and others
- » Evidence-based public health strategies focused on the prevention of dental disease, including the connection to a dental home for pregnant women and their children; the application of fluoride varnish in babies and children; the application

of dental sealants in children and adolescents; and facilitated referrals for children to establish dental homes after an oral health screening

- » Furthering education and skill sets by providing training to professionals throughout the region on clinical guidelines, standards of care, new dental procedures, and client-centered care
- » Participating in data collection and epidemiological studies and contributing to the advancement of public health strategies within the oral health profession to better serve community residents
- » Conducting comprehensive outreach through community events, school events, and health fairs to connect people in need of oral health services to the most appropriate dental clinic resources
- » Fostering investment in our communities by oral health professionals by offering opportunities to volunteer at school-based oral health screenings and earn Continuing Education Units
- » Continually upgrading dental equipment and investing in infrastructure, including a new facility in Harbor Springs, and a complete renovation in Alpena, creating an atmosphere and environment that supports our commitment to delivering quality oral health services



*“Despite tooth decay being the #1 childhood chronic disease in the United States, the issue remains under the radar and overlooked in so many circles, especially in rural Michigan. My hope is to save children from preventable pain caused from tooth decay, through the establishment of a dental home by age one, one child at a time.”*

- Dawn Marie Strehl, RDH, Oral Health Coordinator

## DENTAL CLINICS NORTH CLIENTS SERVED BY LOCATION | 23,784

ALPENA	1,993
CHEBOYGAN	2,152
EAST JORDAN	1,771
GAYLORD	3,461
MANCELONA	2,181
PETOSKEY/HARBOR SPRINGS	2,519
TRAVERSE CITY	6,059
WEST BRANCH	3,516
HOSPITAL PROGRAM	132



**9,932 CLIENTS**

SERVED IN THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT OF NORTHWEST MICHIGAN JURISDICTION

## NORTHERN DENTAL PLAN

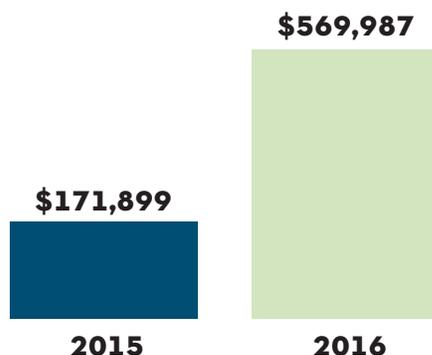
The Northern Dental Plan provides comprehensive dental services at a reduced fee to uninsured and undersinsured adults and children for a lifetime membership fee of \$50 per person. In 2016, significant changes were made to the plan in order to provide dental services to more people in need and to increase the amount of financial assistance given to patients. The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is proud of its commitment to the underserved population. Within the Health Department of Northwest Michigan jurisdiction, 1,447 clients received dental services at a reduced fee through the Northern Dental Plan, and of those, 580 clients received financial assistance through the Dental Assistance Fund.

### NORTHERN DENTAL PLAN

■ 2015 ■ 2016



### AMOUNT OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GIVEN AT DENTAL CLINICS NORTH



## SCHOOL-BASED ORAL HEALTH SERVICES

3,782 children were screened at 18 schools around the Dental Clinics North region for gum disease, suspected areas of dental decay, previous dental disease or problems and the need for dental sealants.

As a result of the screening, 35%, or 1,338 children, were referred to and assisted with establishing a dental home.

# Michigan Colorectal Cancer Early Detection Program

## How It Can Save Your Life

By: Joy Klooster, RN, BSN, MBA  
Community Health Coordinator

When I got the call from Anne, our Public Health Technician in Gaylord, that there was a positive FIT (Fecal Immunochemical Test) on a client, I was slightly surprised, but not frantically concerned. It isn't very often that this take-home-kit for colorectal cancer screening is positive. A positive FIT means that blood was detected in the stool that was tested. However, oftentimes a client has bleeding hemorrhoids that may cause a false positive FIT result as their colonoscopy is negative.

I made the call to Melanie, the client, and told her the results. She was a little more concerned because she didn't think she had any hemorrhoids to cause a false result. I gave her what reassurance I could give her and she agreed to continue with further screening.

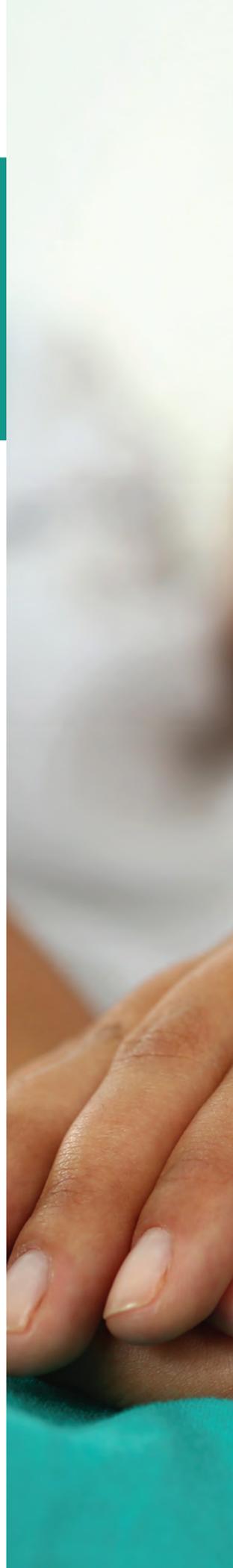
After several phone calls, I arranged to have Melanie follow-up with a colorectal surgeon at the Otsego Memorial Hospital in Gaylord. He reviewed her results and explained to her what he wanted to do with the next screening: she was to have a screening colonoscopy. He told her there was a possibility that there would be polyps and therefore the test would turn into a diagnostic colonoscopy where the polyps would be removed. The surgeon also told Melanie about the risks involved and that potentially a cancer could be found.

After her office visit with the surgeon, I called the client. She told me she was scheduled for a colonoscopy in a couple weeks. I reviewed with her about the colon prep and sent her a gift card to purchase the

prep supplies and a gas card to give to the person that gives her a ride as she would not be able to drive home from the procedure. She verbalized understanding and was all set for the procedure.

A week or so after the colonoscopy was scheduled, I called Melanie to see how she did. To my surprise, she told me that she needed to have further surgery to take "two feet of my bowel out" because a large sigmoid colon polyp was found and it was cancerous.

Fortunately, we had scheduled the client for an enrollment appointment at the Health Department for the Healthy Michigan Plan and she was eligible to receive insurance benefits immediately. She had her surgery where 22 inches of bowel was removed and her margins were clear of cancer! She has recovered completely and has a great prognosis. She blurted out to me, "I am so thankful for the health department. It saved my life. My surgeon is thankful, too." Our outreach efforts work to make sure we reach as many people as possible to let them know of our services and when they should be screened, and then we screen - regardless of income or insurance status. I am thankful too, for the Michigan Colorectal Cancer Early Detection Program for allowing me to offer this program to the residents in northwest Michigan. The Health Department of Northwest Michigan also features a wrap-around care model that can not only provide clinical services, but also make sure residents have access to health insurance to allow them to live long and healthy lives.





*“I am so thankful for the Health Department. It saved my life. My surgeon is thankful, too.”*

Health departments staff honored 75 veterans at the Charlevoix Senior Picnic through the We Honor Veterans Partnership



Total number of home care and hospice patient visits in 2016: **8,239**

By: Tina Lamont, RN - Director of Home Care and Aging Services  
Amy Wieland - Executive Director of Hospice of Northwest Michigan

# Home Care and Hospice Programs Exemplify Health Department's Focus on Entire Lifespan

*“Nurse Jennifer has been doing a marvelous job for us. We’re very pleased with the service. We’d be lost without her. When I’ve called for what I thought was an emergency, the nurse on call is always most helpful and knew what they were doing.”*

-Charles Unbehaun from Charlevoix

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan’s home care and hospice program continues the health department’s tradition of caring for the community at all stages in life. The division is made up of several nurses, aides and social workers. Additionally, Hospice of Northwest Michigan – housed at the health department – helps fundraise for needy residents and provides spiritual services.

Visiting people in their homes is a long public health tradition. The department has a 75-year history of caring for people who are recuperating from illness or injury. Home care services allow people to maintain or improve their independence and encompasses a wide range of health and social services. The Health Department of Northwest Michigan provides medical home care services as prescribed by a physician, including nursing care, physical, occupation and speech therapy, and assistance in navigating the health care system. Nurses are available for patients 24-7.

# Community Level, Population Health Strategies



*The Health Department of Northwest Michigan provides programming and services at a community level that protects the population as a whole.* Often this work is unnoticed, yet vital, to stopping the spread of disease. In 2016, some of the work accomplished for the entire population includes:

» **Communicable disease prevention:** Health department clinics and staff stand ready 24/7 to prevent and stop the spread of communicable diseases such as tuberculosis, sexually transmitted diseases and vaccine preventable disease. Through proactive disease tracking and new programming that addresses the social determinants of these diseases, 2016 was a year of relative calm and safety in the region.

- 247 communicable disease investigations
- 247 sexually transmitted infection investigations
- 32 vaccine preventable disease investigations

» **Environmental health:** In the following pages, you'll find information on a variety of the work environmental health sanitarians do daily to keep residents and visitors of northwest Michigan safe. This includes to beach water quality testing to keep swimmers and waterways healthy.

» **Nutrition and physical activity:** 2016 built on the progress of previous years in improving good nutrition and physical activity opportunities in northwest Michigan. Staff continued their work in collaborating with farmers to expand access to fresh fruits and vegetables, in addition to working with school districts and municipalities to create safe, bikeable and walkable routes for students to use to get to school. Additionally, staff continue to visit numerous schools to teach nutrition education in fun and creative ways that are proven to increase fruit and vegetable intake.

» **Substance abuse:** Health department staff continued their work with numerous partners across the region in addressing the opioid epidemic. Coordination between sectors and agencies resulted in the availability of Naloxone, an opioid reversing drug that saves lives, and prevention through prescription drop boxes. Staff visited many schools and hosted events aimed at preventing drug use amongst adolescents. Finally, staff hosted several town halls where treatment and law enforcement professionals conversed with parents on preventing drug use, in addition to distributing tools such as cabinet locks to prevent student substance use.



# Worksite Wellness and Wise Choices Join Forces at Jay's Sporting Goods

By: Joy Klooster, RN, BSN, MBA - Community Health Coordinator

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is all about connecting with the communities we serve. One project started in 2016 was to join forces with businesses throughout Otsego County. Jay's Sporting Goods was one willing business participant. Through the Getting to the Heart of the Matter in Michigan Worksite Wellness grant, employers in Otsego County were provided with an opportunity to develop or expand their worksite wellness initiatives.

Jay's Sporting Goods participated in this opportunity and took their worksite wellness program to a new level. Coordinated by the health department's Lynne DeMoor and Judi Marlin, both registered dietitians, Jay's incorporated more opportunities for employees to focus on wellness during the workday and beyond. Walking groups, known as Jay Walkers, now meet regularly to include movement in their workday. Garmin fitness trackers were purchased and provided at a discount to all employees participating in the wellness program. Monthly health seminars on the topics of nutrition, fitness and stress management are offered. Jay's has also put the stipend from the grant toward a data collection website for managing their wellness program.

Building on this partnership with Jay's, the health department's Wise Choices program, coordinated by Joy Klooster, RN, BSN, MBA, established a temporary clinic in Jay's meeting room. The Wise Choices program is designed to screen individuals and identify risk factors for heart disease, stroke and diabetes. The program offered a Health Risk Assessment with blood pressure monitoring, BMI, cholesterol, and glucose screening. Participants were able to receive one-on-one health coaching in weight management, diabetes prevention, blood pressure medication use, healthy eating habits, smoking cessation and physical activity. Except for the deer head mounts peering down at us in the meeting room, all information was held in confidence. Five of the six worksites that received the worksite wellness funding also participated in the Wise Choices health screenings.

Mark Copeland, manager at Jays, stated "this was a great idea to educate and motivate employees about their health and have them make a choice to be healthier." The Health Department of Northwest Michigan aims to bring similar programming to more businesses, and reach community members where they are at, in the years to come.



# Preventing Chronic Disease in Northern Michigan

*By: Susan Affholter, MPH - Community Health Coordinator*

Chronic disease continues to be the leading cause of death for northern Michiganders. The Northern Michigan Chronic Disease Coordinating Network is focused on the prevention, reduction and mitigation of diabetes, heart disease and stroke, cancer, obesity and tobacco use. Also, as its name suggests, the Network is focused on coordinating its efforts within multiple partners in health care and other sectors as well as with other similarly focused initiatives.

In 2016, the newly formed Northern Michigan Chronic Disease Coordinating Network met four times to develop its strategic action plan. The strategic action plan set the strategic directions for the Northern Michigan Chronic Disease Coordinating Network as follows:

- 1 To create healthier communities through collective action
- 2 To develop effective and adequate infrastructure that will support the efforts of the Northern Michigan Chronic Disease Coordinating Network
- 3 To improve relationships between patients, providers, and the community

The Northern Michigan Chronic Disease Coordinating Network action plan is implemented by its three workgroups: Health Systems Change; Community Linkages; and Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change.

A major accomplishment in 2016 was to form the Northern Michigan Diabetes Prevention Program Collaborative that coordinates and supports the efforts of Diabetes Prevention Program providers across the region. Throughout this work, residents across the region have the opportunity to live a healthy life.

# Bringing New *Fruits and Vegetables* to Petoskey Schools

By: Lynne DeMoor, MS, RDN  
Community Healthy Coordinator

Hundreds of students in Petoskey have tried fruits and vegetables they may have never heard of before, thanks to a grant focused on preventing chronic disease and with the help of countless parents and teachers. On nearly every Tuesday in 2016 during the school year, students at four Petoskey elementary schools tried a new fruit or vegetable, graded it, and likely found it in the cafeteria later in the week.

At the end of 2015, the health department found out it had been awarded a “Building Healthy Communities” grant. With implementation necessary in just a few short weeks, the health department leveraged the support of a group of motivated parents. The parents had already been meeting to see what they could do to improve nutrition in the schools. In true northern Michigan fashion, word of the group spread to staff at the health department. With the support of the parents and the school district’s food service director, the health department knew Petoskey schools would be a prime district to implement a food project.

After logistics were determined by the health department and school staff, a model was developed that relied on parent volunteers. The parent volunteers, after being trained

on food safety, present a new fruit or vegetable monthly to a classroom, and use a curriculum designed to increase fruit and vegetable intake among students. The presentation includes information on the local farm where the food is grown. After the presentation, students try the fruit or vegetable and then grade it on the following scale: loved it, liked it or tried it.

In the 2016-17 school year, nearly 50 classrooms participated each month. Based on the grade from the students, the Michigan grown fruit or vegetable will make its way into student’s lunches, thanks to the devoted staff in the school cafeteria.

Using an evidence-based practice called Smarter Lunchrooms, designed by the Cornell Center for Behavioral Economics in Child Nutrition Programs, the school cafeterias also saw improvements due to the grant. The changes, such as using cutlery to serve fruit in creative shapes or displaying vegetables in a more appealing container, can have significant results in increasing fruit and vegetable intake among students.

For decades, public health professionals have known how important nutrition is to prevent chronic disease. We also know that a child’s diet can impact their academic success. With that in mind, schools and local health departments strive

to work together to achieve their common goals. Previous work with schools has included Safe Routes to School (which redesigns roads, traffic signals and sidewalks to encourage walking and biking to school), SNAP-Ed (which provides nutrition education in classrooms) and of course school health centers.

As a result of the grant and the dedication of parents and school staff, Petoskey elementary students are now exposed to foods that grow in their community and can lead them to a healthy life.

**More:** [www.smarterlunchrooms.org](http://www.smarterlunchrooms.org)

## 2016-17 Calendar of Try it Tuesdays

September: Cauliflower

October: Apples

November: Winter Squash

December: Carrots

January: Parsnips

February: Beets

March: Frozen fruit

April: Dry beans

May: Radishes

June: Asparagus

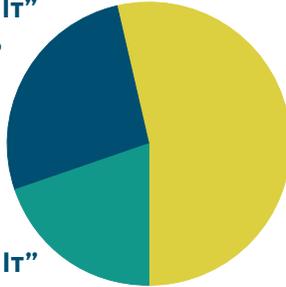


Photos courtesy:  
G. Randall Goss/Petoskey News-Review

**DECEMBER TRY-IT  
(DISTRICT)  
Winter Squash**



“TRIED IT”  
27%



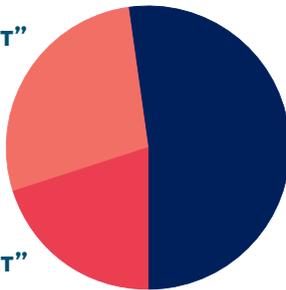
“LOVED IT”  
53%

“LIKED IT”  
20%

**JANUARY TRY-IT  
(DISTRICT)  
Parsnips**



“TRIED IT”  
28%



“LOVED IT”  
52%

“LIKED IT”  
20%

**Comments from teacher survey:**

“Parents have been very positive about the program. Students LOVE trying the new foods.”

“I am a teacher and a parent and my child loves it. Each month she comes home begging for me to make the recipes.”

“I have had amazing feedback from students and parents. It is a wonderful chance for students to try foods they may not be served at home and they love the idea that they can influence the lunch choices even just a little bit.”

“Our presenters are fantastic and the kids LOVE to participate. They asked last time if this would continue next year! Keep up the good work!”

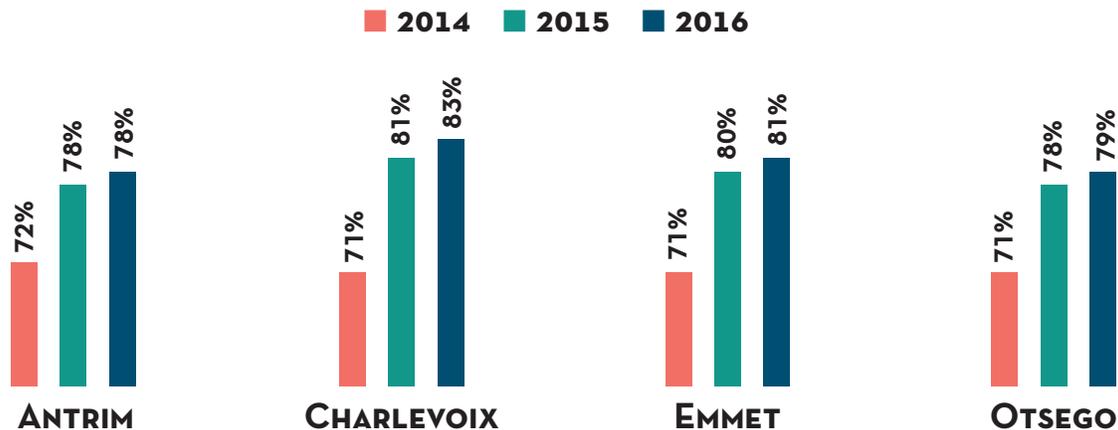
“I LOVE that students are all trying new foods at the same time! I LOVE that healthy foods are becoming a part of their everyday conversation!”



# State Waiver Rule Increases Vaccination Rates, Northwest Michigan Better Protected from Disease

By: Yvonne Louiselle, RN, BSN  
Family and Community Health Nurse

## ADOLESCENT IMMUNIZATION RATES BY COUNTY



Immunization completion rates ages 13-18, does not include HPV. Source: MCIR

In 2015, Michigan implemented a rule that in order to obtain an immunization waiver for school the waiver must be accompanied by a consultation with a nurse at a local health department. Since implementation, waiver rates have gone down and immunization rates have gone up in the region – further protecting the region against deadly disease.

While immunizations are the most effective way to prevent against many diseases, they are not 100 percent effective – which is why everyone needs to be vaccinated. When more people are vaccinated, the chance of an outbreak is further negated. Additionally, there are some residents of northwest Michigan who can't be vaccinated – such as pregnant women and cancer patients. However, when all of their neighbors are vaccinated they are protected through “herd immunity.”

In 2016, health department nurses conducted 282 waiver education appointments – appointments for students whose parents did not

want them vaccinated. Of these 282 students, 23 left the health department with one or more vaccinations – a success as a result of the waiver rule that adds greater protection to all residents.

Many parents have commented that they expected to be lectured or made to feel bad about their decision to not vaccinate their child. These parents were pleasantly surprised to find that the health department nurses simply wanted to make parents aware of the medically recommended immunizations, the benefits and risks and the responsibilities of individuals who chose not to be vaccinated – not to pass judgment on their decisions.

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan works for every resident and visitor's wellbeing, and is always available for questions and concerns on public health topics. The health departments strives to be a safe place for all parents and patients to contact with their concerns and know that the information they receive is accurate and honest.

**In 2016, the health department saw an increase in nearly every category of immunization coverage**

*In cooperation with other area health departments – because vaccine preventable diseases know no borders – not only did adolescent immunization rates improve, but so did rates for 19 to 35-month-old infants. Health departments are also participating together in a reminder effort to encourage parents to follow up on their child's vaccine schedule.*

*Beyond immunizations for children, the health department also actively offers immunizations for adults. Again in cooperation with northern Michigan area health departments, reminders were sent to seniors who received the influenza vaccine in the past to receive the shot again in 2016. Multiple flu clinics were also hosted by health department nurses at senior centers, businesses and schools.*



# MONITORING OUR BEACHES

## So You Don't Have to Worry

By: Scott Kendzierski, REHS, MS  
Director of Environmental Health Services

The district the Health Department of Northwest Michigan serves is known for its recreational opportunities with hundreds of miles of Lake Michigan shoreline, as well as hundreds of miles of shoreline on inland waterways and inland lakes.

For more than a decade, water quality monitoring has been conducted on both Lake Michigan and inland lake beaches in the region. This important work is made possible through grant funding from the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. Those who live on or near the lake, and seasonal tourists who visit and enjoy Northern Michigan's unspoiled beaches, have come to trust that the water quality is being monitored for their safety. The monitoring program has been successful in protecting public health, and has also supported the economic benefit of having clean, safe swimming areas.

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan (HDNW) had a very successful 2016 Public Bathing Beach Program, which is a state grant to monitor 31 Great Lakes public beaches. Beaches are selected based on historical use patterns and geographic location. This program has been a huge success and endeavor for the agency and has garnered appreciation within the community and among visitors to the area. Beach operators have been making many improvements to their beaches and

have tied the monitoring efforts into some of these improvements (new signage indicating beach testing status and defining sampled areas of the beaches with better buoys and other methods).

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan monitors over 50 inland and Great Lakes beaches within our four-county district for a ten-week period during peak summer months. Monitoring consists of collecting over 1,500 samples and performing analysis for E.coli. Testing is conducted at the Northern Michigan Regional Laboratory in our Gaylord branch office. Results are compared against the Environmental Protection Agency full body contact standards for E.coli. Public health interventions are implemented when an exceedance is confirmed, which can include issuance of health advisories, follow-up sampling, closure orders and sanitary surveys.

In 2016, the health department was awarded beach funding from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and United States Environmental Protection Agency, through the Clean Michigan Initiative bond and the Great Lakes Beach Monitoring Grant. The funding is used to support a comprehensive beach monitoring program for beaches within our district and to participate in a rapid testing pilot project.

The health department entered into a pilot project through the State of Michigan, evaluating rapid testing

technology. Quantitative Polymerase Chain Reaction technology is being piloted in 10 health departments statewide to determine the viability of the testing methodology for turnaround times that greatly increase the speed at which results can be in the hands of health officials. Conventional testing methods can generate results in 18 to 24 hours. Due to the transitory nature of water quality, rapid testing allows health officials to have a much quicker health response to water quality impairments and a quicker way to re-open beaches by quicker follow-up sample results. The HDNW is not only conducting these analyses for our district, but also entered into a contract to conduct sampling for Grand Traverse County Health Department and Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department.

Staff involved in beach water quality monitoring are knowledgeable in water chemistry, wastewater practices, issues revolving around various types and sources of contamination, GPS technology, computer and data entry protocols, GIS mapping and general safety principals, as well as possessing skills that enhance communication with the public and beach owner/operators. Most of the staff has been employed in the district for many years, providing insight and historical information centered on area beaches, past problems and closure events, as well as well having long-established relationships with owner/operators and municipalities.

# Changing Policies, Systems and Environments

## Where we Live, Learn, Work and Play

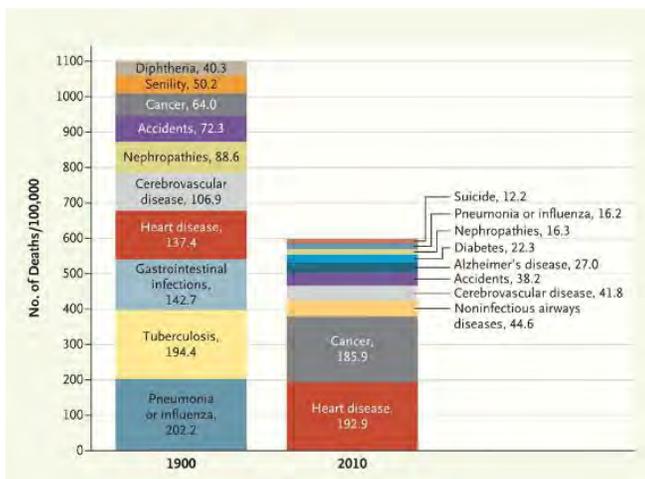
Over the last century, the leading causes of death have shifted from communicable disease and illness to chronic diseases and preventable death. To effectively approach these new challenges, the Health Department of Northwest Michigan has adapted to implement comprehensive interventions at individual, population health, and policy, systems, and environmental level. Policy, systems, and environmental change approaches work within the infrastructures in which we live, learn, work and play. Changes may take a lot longer to implement, but the hope is that they reach entire populations, are long-lasting, sustainable, and produce true behavior change.

In the following pages, you'll find several ways the health department conducts this level of work. The first is the Northern Michigan Public Health Alliance. The

Alliance, a partnership of six northern Michigan health departments spanning 25 counties, is working across jurisdictions to implement the same electronic health record to achieve efficiencies and align our vision for patient documentation, create a regional emergency preparedness operation, align programming and policy efforts across the region, and inform elected officials in Lansing and Washington on the public health impact of legislation being considered.

On the environmental health front, the health department has used policies to protect our waterways through the regulation of septic systems through an updated sanitary code, in addition to assisting a local township in passing a time of transfer ordinance that ensures new homeowners are aware of the water system needs on the property. Moreover, the health department published restaurant inspections online so that consumers can be better informed when they dine.

In 2016, the Health Department of Northwest Michigan made significant strides in laying the foundation for policy, systems, and environmental change level work. This work will prove to be significant in addressing 21st century leading causes of death and carries out the health department's mission of preventing and protecting the public's health in a way that when paired with clinical and community level work will make northwest Michigan a healthier place to live and visit.



*New England Journal of Medicine, Vol. 366, No. 25. (20 June 2012), pp. 2333-2338.*

# Northern Michigan Public Health Alliance Continues Award Winning Work

By: Jane Sundmacher, M.Ed.  
Community Health Planner



Left to right:  
Lisa Peacock, Health Department of  
Northwest Michigan  
Linda Yaroch, Health Department of  
Northwest Michigan  
Mike Lahey, Grand Traverse County  
Health Department  
Wendy Trute, Grand Traverse  
County Health Department  
Orlando Todd, Michigan  
Department of Health and Human  
Services

Organized in December 2014 following a two-year exploration of cross jurisdictional sharing opportunities among six local health departments, the Northern Michigan Public Health Alliance has achieved many successes. In 2016 highlights include:

» **Designation as backbone organization for the Northern Michigan Community Health Innovation Region**

As backbone, supports the Northern Michigan Community Health Innovation Region Steering Committee. See page 32 for additional information.

» **Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Director's Award for Excellence in Local Public Health**

For the second year in a row, the Northern Michigan Public Health Alliance was awarded the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services' Director's Award for Excellence in Local Public Health. In 2016, the Alliance was recognized for developing the Northern Michigan Public Health Emergency Preparedness Team, the first of its kind in the State. Three Alliance members--Benzie Leelanau District Health Department, Grand Traverse County Health Department, and Health Department of Northwest Michigan, pooled their State grants, creating efficiencies, reducing duplication, and most importantly, enabling each to increase resources at the local level for developing and exercising plans with community partners.

» **Two agreements to share Health Officer**

Sharing Health Officers is an important way that local health departments can maximize resources. One agreement was launched in 2016—with Lisa Peacock, Northwest's Deputy Health Officer assuming Health

Officer responsibilities for Benzie Leelanau District Health Department—and another was planned—with Denise Bryan, Health Officer for District Health Department #2, set to lead District Health Department #4 as Health Officer effective in January 2017.

» **Coordinated regional Community Health Assessment**

In 2016 the six local health departments completed a common community health assessment for their 25-county region in partnership with hospitals and other community partners. Priorities were ranked by cross-sector groups across the region, identifying access to healthcare, chronic disease prevention, and substance use as top priorities.

» **Regional grant funding to address top priorities**

In 2016, the Alliance partners were awarded over \$3M in grants to address top-ranked priorities across the region. One of the strengths of the Alliance is its ability to tap the specialties within its partners. For example, a major regional immunization initiative is led by District Health Department #10, which manages the State's immunization registry. With its expertise in chronic disease prevention, Health Department of Northwest Michigan coordinates a \$1M+ grant on behalf of the Alliance.

» **Regional funding to improve public health infrastructure**

The Alliance is the first group of local health departments in the country to develop a common electronic health record. In another first, five of the Alliance members are “edge partners” with the software vendor, customizing the electronic health record for public health services.

# New Ordinance in Milton Township

By Scott Kendzierski, REHS, MS  
Director of Environmental Health Services

Milton Township, located in Antrim County, is a sensitive ecological region due to the vast water resources of Lake Michigan, Elk Lake, Lake Skegmog and Torch Lake. The richness of these water sources are a driving force behind the local economy and the protection of these resources are critical to the area.

In 2012, Milton Township took an important step in the recognition of these resources by adopting the Septic Inspection and Property Transfer Ordinance. The adoption of this ordinance was driven by the desire to protect natural resources, to provide information to owners and purchasers of properties using on-site water and wastewater systems and to

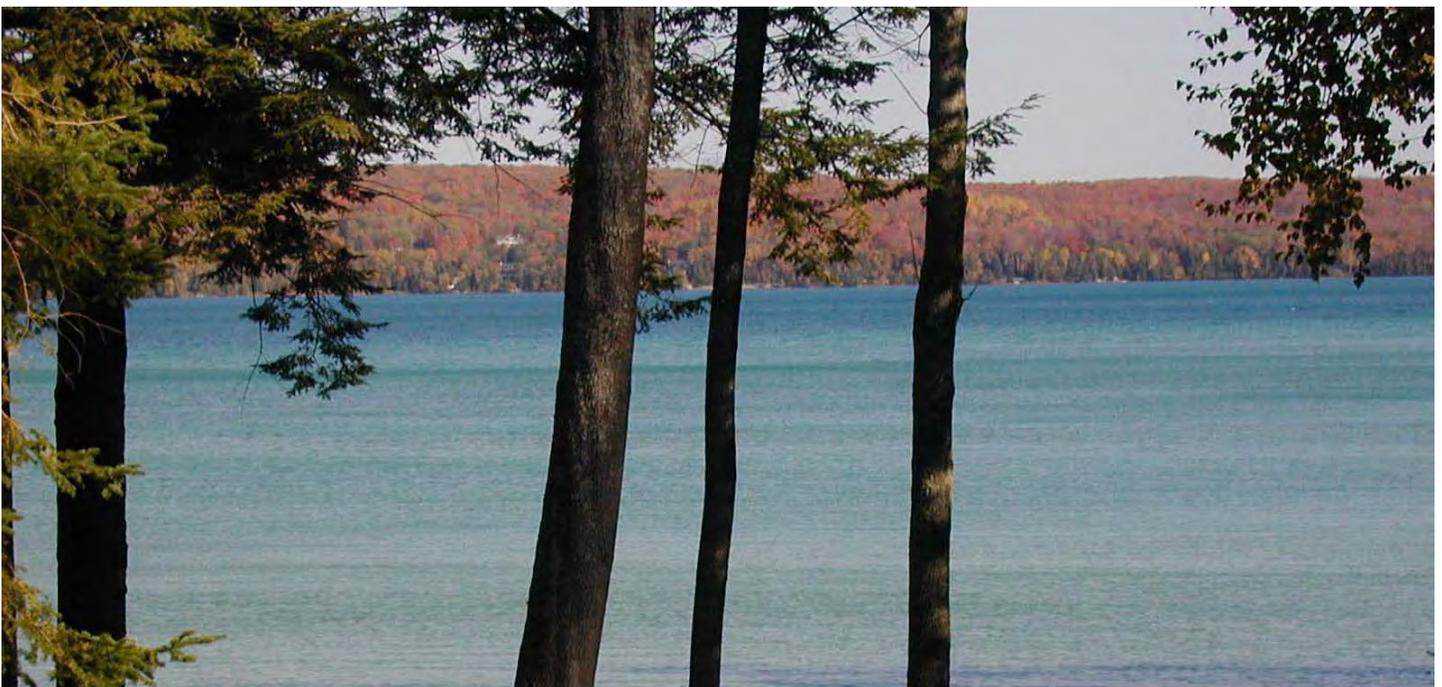
raise awareness of ways to improve and extend the life expectancies of on-site systems.

The ordinance requires evaluations of residential and commercial on-site water supply systems and on-site sewage treatment and disposal systems at a time of property transfer. Trained environmental health staff at the Health Department of Northwest Michigan evaluate systems for functionality, compliance with regulations and provide recommendations for improving systems. Additionally, staff have the authority to require corrections to systems that pose a risk to environmental and human health. Water supply systems are evaluated by determining compliance with

Michigan's Water Well Construction and Pump Installers Code, the District Sanitary Code and Michigan's Safe Drinking Water Act.

To assure consistency of inspections and compliance with the federal, state and local regulations, Milton Township entered into an intergovernmental agreement with the Health Department of Northwest Michigan. The agreement establishes a relationship between the two entities and clearly defines the roles of each in executing the ordinance.

In 2016, 46 properties were evaluated. Since the implementation of the Ordinance in October 2012, a total of 189 evaluations have been performed by HDNW in Milton Township. Prior to sale or transfer,



# Paves Path Forward to Protect Waterways

all properties in Milton Township must have an evaluation unless the system is new or has been evaluated recently.

While this ordinance is going into its fifth year, there is still some misinformation or lack of information regarding what the ordinance is and what the health department is responsible for and requires at the time of evaluation. Due to many frequently asked questions regarding the Septic Inspection and Property Transfer Ordinance a brochure has been created and is available online and in HDNW offices that explains the evaluation is not pass/fail, and the process and procedures of the evaluation.

Over the past several years, the evaluation process has been well received by buyers, sellers and realtors. While very few required actions have resulted from the inspections, the Septic Inspection and Property Transfer Ordinance has helped raise awareness regarding the installation, use, operation and maintenance of on-site systems. Homeowner education has been one of the positive outcomes of the ordinance and evaluation findings serve as a broad indicator of the overall status of on-site systems in Milton Township.

Beyond the status of existing water and wastewater systems, the determination of compliance with the current District Sanitary Code

and the future uses of the property has put relevant information in the hands of buyers and sellers. On some sites, the existing structure cannot be replaced or added on to due to non-compliance of the property, with respect to current regulatory requirements. This information is critical to buyers wanting to establish a home in Antrim County, and it also encourages the home to be advertised and priced accordingly.

In addition to property owner and buyer benefits, Milton Township and HDNW have also benefited by having a better understanding of how existing systems are functioning and what impacts they are having on public health and the environment. The on-site systems evaluation findings indicate that there are relatively low rates of on-site septic system failures with life expectancies that commonly exceed statewide averages, and on-site water supply systems are largely compliant with state regulations and are providing safe water for domestic uses. While the District Sanitary Code serving Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet and Otsego counties is one of the more restrictive sanitary codes in the state, it appears that the code encourages system longevity and minimizes impacts to public health.

**For more info, visit:**  
[www.nwhealth.org/tot.html](http://www.nwhealth.org/tot.html)

Milton (North) T.30N - R.09W



Milton (South) T.29N - R.09W



# NORTHERN MICHIGAN COMMUNITY HEALTH INNOVATION REGION

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## NORTHERN MICHIGAN PUBLIC HEALTH ALLIANCE *Serving as Backbone for New Innovation Region*

By: Linda Yaroch, RN, MPH  
Executive Director of the Northern Michigan Community Health Innovation Region

**N**orthern Michigan Public Health Alliance achieved one of its major goals in 2016 when the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services awarded officially designated the organization as backbone organization for a 10-county region in Northwest Michigan. Of the five Community Health Innovation Regions in the State, Northern Michigan is the only one led by public health and the only rural region.

Community Health Innovation Regions (CHIRs) are one of four foundational components to the State Innovation Model, a four-year, \$70 million federal grant awarded to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

According to *Michigan's Blueprint for Healthcare Innovation*, Community Health Innovation Regions are geographic areas where partners act cohesively with a broad-based vision for region-wide impact, to make the environment healthier and to connect health services with relevant community services. The goal for all CHIRs is to achieve the "Triple Aim": better health at lower cost with improved satisfaction.

The Northern Michigan Community Health Innovation Region has two major, inter-related responsibilities:

### **Expand the Community Connections clinical community linkages model across the 10-county region**

Community Connections provides an easy way for health care providers, social service agencies, schools, and families to access resources in the community. Registered nurses, social workers, and community health workers are just a call away through Community Connections, described below.

### **Conduct consolidated community health assessment**

The Northern Michigan Community Health Innovation Region is partnering with hospitals and other community partners to plan a major regional community health assessment. In addition, as Community Connections identifies gaps in resources—affordable housing, for example—the Northern Michigan Community Health Innovation Region will convene partners, including State partners, to develop plans to address the problem, secure needed resources, and utilize collective action to resolve or mitigate.

## YEAR I (2016/17) PRIORITY POPULATION: Emergency Department Utilizers

*The Northern Michigan Community Health Innovation Region's response to excessive Emergency Department use is three-fold:*

### Community Connections

Community Connections is a clinical community linkages model, is a framework for linking patients who have health-related social needs to resources in the community. It features an electronic patient assessment that identifies patients with problems with access to healthcare, food insecurity, housing, transportation, etc. that will be administered

in Emergency Departments, patient-centered medical homes, health departments, and other health care providers and community agencies within the Northern Michigan Community Health Innovation Region. Depending on where they live, patients/clients who need linkages will be automatically referred to a Community Connections HUB.



Three local HUBs will be operational by summer 2017, each one staffed by a HUB Coordinator, Registered Nurse, Social Worker, Community Health Worker, and Call Center Operator: **Northwest HUB**, managed by the Health Department of Northwest Michigan, serves Antrim, Charlevoix, and Emmet counties. Operational for several years, Northwest t is providing assistance to the other HUBs, sharing Experience and policies and procedures. **Grand Traverse HUB**, managed by Benzie Leelanau District Health Department, serves Benzie, Grand Traverse, and Leelanau counties. **District 10 HUB**, managed by District Health Department #10, serves Kalkaska, Manistee, Missaukee, and Wexford.

### Multi-component Educational Campaign,

a unified, coordinated evidence-based campaign is in under development with strategies customized for individual, provider, and community levels.

### Root causes of social determinants of health

will be identified by the Community Connections HUBs. In response, the Northern Michigan Community Health Innovation Region will create comprehensive, region-wide Community Health Improvement Plans to address them.

## YEAR II (2017/18) SECONDARY POPULATION: Individuals with Chronic Disease, with a Focus on Obesity

Fortunately, there are many initiatives in the NMCHIR designed to address individual healthy eating and physical activity behaviors as well as policies and environments that support these behaviors, such as schools, worksites, healthcare organizations, and communities. However, there could be better coordination among them.

Utilizing the ABL Framework for Community Change, the Northern Michigan Community Health Innovation Region is engaging community partners and constituents in the development of a comprehensive Community Health Improvement Plan to reduce obesity in the region.



*For more information about the Northern Michigan Community Health Innovation Region, contact Linda Yaroch, Executive Director, at [lyaroch@nwhealth.org](mailto:lyaroch@nwhealth.org) or 231-547-7621.*

# A New Simple Sanitary Code for the District, for the first time since 1964

By: Scott Kendzierski, REHS, MS  
Director of Environmental Health Services

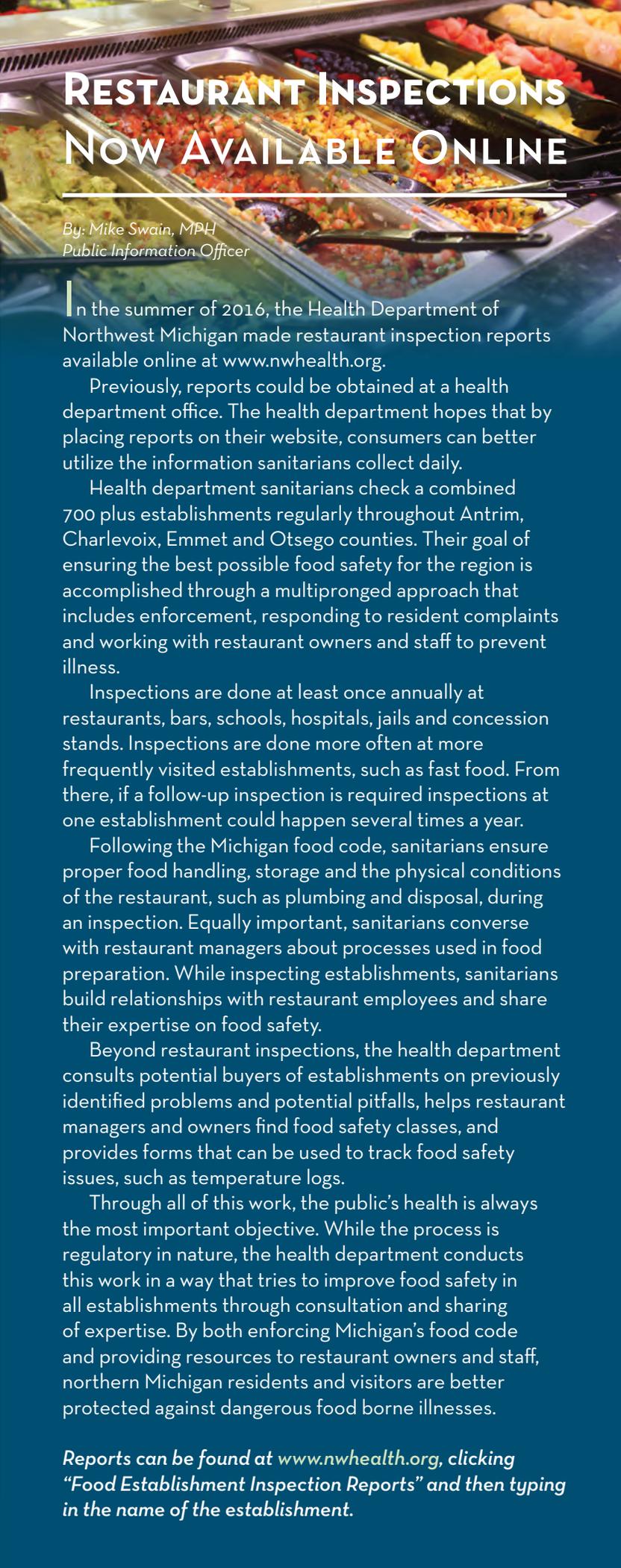
A new District Sanitary Code received final approval in December of 2016 after several years in development. The new code unifies the district under a single sanitary code, for the first time since 1964.

The recent process in passing the new District Sanitary Code included the involvement of internal workgroups, the Board of Health, County Boards of Commissioners, special committees, Sanitary Boards of Appeals, and several stakeholder groups. The legal process included adoption by the Board of Health, public hearings in each county and final approval by each County Board of Commissioners.

**The new code unifies the district under a single regulation and establishes uniform site approval criteria, takes advantage of the best practices of the former codes and industry changes, enhancing wastewater system design standards.**

Additionally, the code reflects changes in regulatory citations, an improved definition section, provides for application terms, permit terms, and revises the variance and appeals sections.

As part of the implementation process, contractor meeting were held in each county in March and appeals board trainings are set for late spring 2017.



## RESTAURANT INSPECTIONS NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE

By: Mike Swain, MPH  
Public Information Officer

In the summer of 2016, the Health Department of Northwest Michigan made restaurant inspection reports available online at [www.nwhealth.org](http://www.nwhealth.org).

Previously, reports could be obtained at a health department office. The health department hopes that by placing reports on their website, consumers can better utilize the information sanitarians collect daily.

Health department sanitarians check a combined 700 plus establishments regularly throughout Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet and Otsego counties. Their goal of ensuring the best possible food safety for the region is accomplished through a multipronged approach that includes enforcement, responding to resident complaints and working with restaurant owners and staff to prevent illness.

Inspections are done at least once annually at restaurants, bars, schools, hospitals, jails and concession stands. Inspections are done more often at more frequently visited establishments, such as fast food. From there, if a follow-up inspection is required inspections at one establishment could happen several times a year.

Following the Michigan food code, sanitarians ensure proper food handling, storage and the physical conditions of the restaurant, such as plumbing and disposal, during an inspection. Equally important, sanitarians converse with restaurant managers about processes used in food preparation. While inspecting establishments, sanitarians build relationships with restaurant employees and share their expertise on food safety.

Beyond restaurant inspections, the health department consults potential buyers of establishments on previously identified problems and potential pitfalls, helps restaurant managers and owners find food safety classes, and provides forms that can be used to track food safety issues, such as temperature logs.

Through all of this work, the public's health is always the most important objective. While the process is regulatory in nature, the health department conducts this work in a way that tries to improve food safety in all establishments through consultation and sharing of expertise. By both enforcing Michigan's food code and providing resources to restaurant owners and staff, northern Michigan residents and visitors are better protected against dangerous food borne illnesses.

*Reports can be found at [www.nwhealth.org](http://www.nwhealth.org), clicking "Food Establishment Inspection Reports" and then typing in the name of the establishment.*

# 2016 Finances

## Health Department of Northwest Michigan Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance

DECEMBER 31, 2016

### REVENUES AND OTHER SOURCES

State/Federal Grants	\$9,921,038
Grants from Local Units of Government	\$988,682
Fees and Collections	\$14,913,689
Community Grants and Donations	\$856,533
<b>Total Revenues and Other Sources</b>	<b>\$26,679,942</b>

### EXPENDITURES

Personnel Services	\$9,664,709
Supplies	\$2,631,681
Contract and Professional Services	\$10,920,109
Communications	\$208,147
Travel	\$483,367
Space Costs	\$1,151,464
Other Expenditures	\$1,324,698
Equipment	\$236,587
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$26,620,762</b>

Revenue Over Expenditures \$59,180

**NET FUND BALANCE CHANGE \$59,180**

*Fund Balance Beginning* \$6,355,514  
*Fund Balance Ending* \$6,414,694

### GRANTS AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT 2016

Alcona Health Center	Northern Health Plan
Antrim Co High Tea	Northern Michigan
Bellaire Lioness Club	Regional Entity
Char-Em United Way	Otsego Co Community
Charlevoix Co Community	Foundation
Foundation	Otsego Memorial Hospital
Comm Anti-Drug Coalition	Petoskey Public Schools/
of America	MI Dept of Education
DHD 10	Petoskey-Harbor Springs
Frey Foundation	Area Community
Gaylord Country Club	Foundation
Jack Walczak	Robert Wood Johnson
McLaren Northern	Foundation
Michigan Hospital	Smiles On Wheels
MI Department of Health &	Substance Abuse and
Human Services	Mental Health
Michigan Fitness	The Christ Child Society of
Foundation	Northern MI
Michigan Health	Tobacco Free Michigan
Endowment Fund	Traverse Regional
Michigan Primary Care	Community Foundation
Association	Ward & Elis Gallery
Munson Healthcare	Wexford Missaukee Inter
Charlevoix Hospital	School District
Munson Medical Center	
National Network Of Public	
Health Institute	

### DENTAL CLINICS NORTH COMMUNITY PARTNERS 2016

Dental Clinics North	Leelanau County Senior
Community	Services
Partners 2016	Petoskey-Harbor Springs
Benzie County COA	Area Community
Char-Em United Way	Foundation
Charlevoix County	Rotary Charities of
Community Foundation	Traverse City
Emmet County Senior	Salvation Army,
Grant	Chebogyan
Father Fred Foundation	



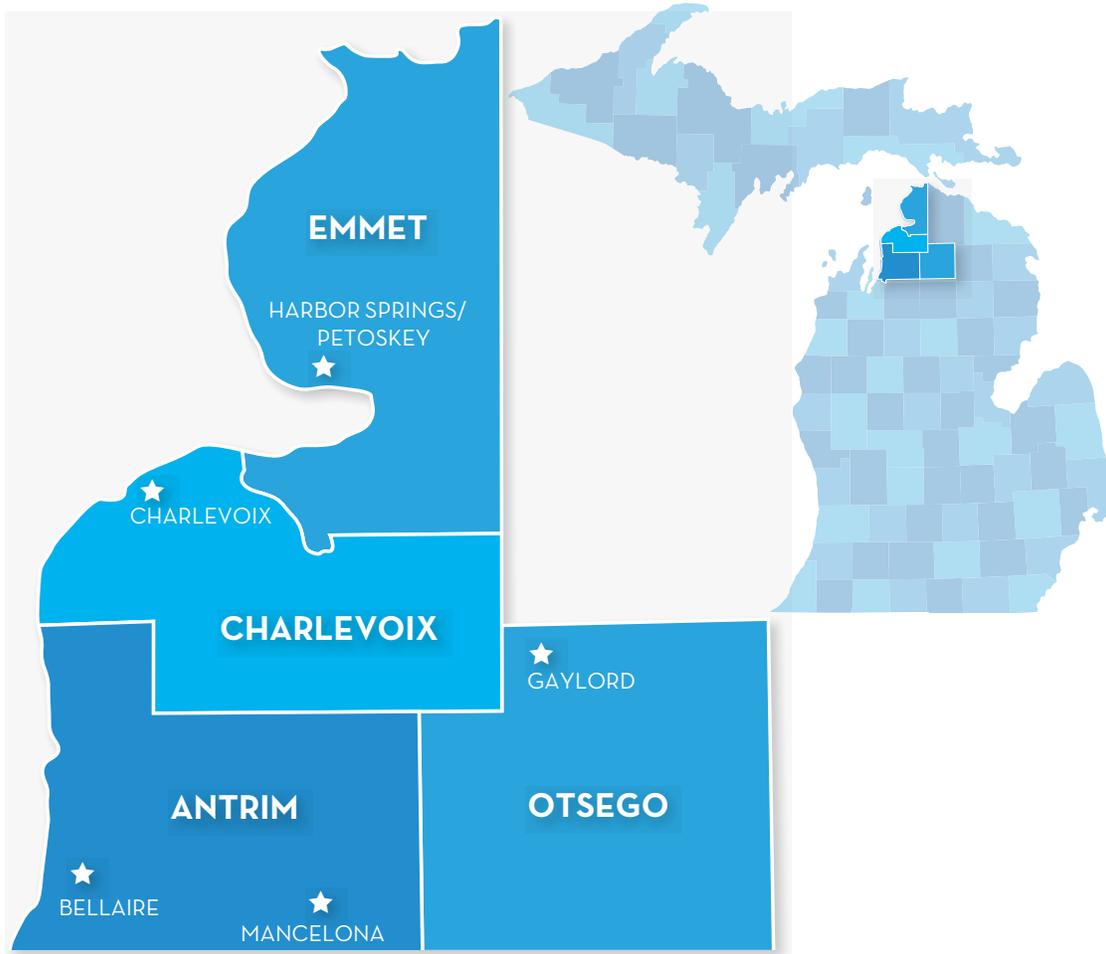
**HEALTH  
DEPARTMENT**  
of Northwest Michigan



# HEALTH DEPARTMENT

of Northwest Michigan

**ANTRIM  
CHARLEVOIX  
EMMET  
OTSEGO**



## **ANTRIM**

209 Portage Dr.  
Bellaire, MI 49615

*Ironmen Health Center*  
205 Grove St.  
Mancelona, MI 49659

## **CHARLEVOIX**

220 W. Garfield St.  
Charlevoix, MI 49720

*Rambler Wellness*  
Boyne City Elementary and  
Middle Schools  
1025 Boyne Ave.  
Boyne City, MI 49712

## **EMMET**

3434 Harbor-Petoskey Rd.,  
Suite A  
Harbor Springs, MI 49740

*Hornet Health Center*  
Pellston High School  
172 Park St.  
Pellston, MI 49769

## **OTSEGO**

95 Livingston Blvd.  
Gaylord, MI 49735

*Gaylord Blue Devil  
Wellness Center*  
Gaylord High School  
90 Livingston Blvd.  
Gaylord, MI 49735



find us on  
**facebook**

**800.432.4121**  
**www.nwhealth.org**

*Home Care & Hospice:* 800.551.4140  
*Dental Clinics North:* 877.321.7070  
*Dental Clinics North Website:*  
[www.dentalclinicsnorth.com](http://www.dentalclinicsnorth.com)