

# **GENESEE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT**



## **2024 Program Budget**

**Adopted November 20, 2023**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF/ MEDICAL CONSULTANT/ BOARD OF HEALTH .....3

DEPARTMENTAL VISION, MISSION, VALUES .....4

GENESEE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART .....5

**REPORTS:**

HEALTH DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW .....6

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS .....8

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH .....11

PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING.....13

PUBLIC HEALTH EPIDEMIOLOGY.....15

PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATION.....18

PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS.....21

CORONERS / MEDICAL EXAMINERS.....25

WEIGHTS AND MEASURE.....26

FINANCE.....28

## ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF / BOARD OF HEALTH

### **PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTOR**

Paul A. Pettit, MSL, CPH

### **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DIRECTOR**

Darren Brodie

### **ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

Scott Senf

### **DEPUTY DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES**

Brenden Bedard, MPH

### **SR. PUBLIC HEALTH SANITARIAN**

Jessica Zaremski

### **DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL HEALTH NEEDS**

Deborah Krenzer-Lewter, MEd

### **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COORDINATOR**

David Bell, PHD, MPH

### **DIRECTOR OF HEALTH PROMOTION**

Kaitlin Pettine, MPH

### **MEDICAL CONSULTANT**

Alan Barcomb, MD

### **BOARD OF HEALTH**

Paul Grout – President

Deanna Page – Vice President

Mary Obear, MD

Thomas Madejski, MD

Kelly Rose Nichols, MD

Fred Miller - Legislature

Greg Torrey - Legislature



# VISION / MISSION / VALUES

---

## VISION

Everyone in our region can achieve an optimal and equitable level of health and well-being.



## MISSION

Genesee Orleans Departments of Health (GO Health) is a shared services arrangement that promotes the necessary safe and healthy environment, and health behaviors, that lead to improved health outcomes and community quality of life.



## CORE VALUES

**Commitment:** We improve our work environment and services through a continuous dedication to each other and staying true to public health principals and our vision.

**Integrity:** We maintain a high standard of professionalism, transparency, honesty and fairness, building trust as we deliver services and represent the departments and counties we serve.

**Respect:** We demonstrate in our actions and words that all people are important and deserving of fair and equitable treatment.

**Collaboration:** We work together as a team, across agencies, and with the community toward our common goals.

**Leadership:** We embrace a culture of transcending influence throughout our organization and the community.

**Excellence:** We consistently perform to the best of our abilities in all aspects of the work we do.

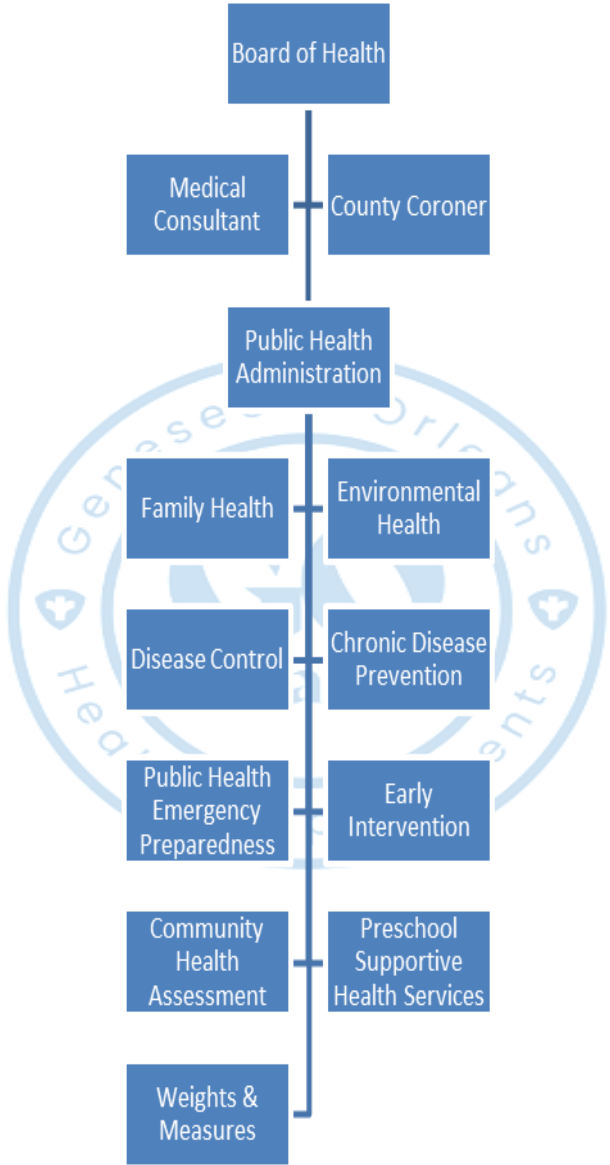


## STRATEGIC INTENT

Move from a narrow focus on meeting baseline regulatory-required aspects of public health to a broader population health agenda. With municipal, county, private sector, and regional partners, address the social determinants that influence overall health and well-being.



# GENESEE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



## Genesee County Health Department (GCHD) – Overview

The Health Department follows the mandates of the New York State Public Health Law (PHL). PHL mandates that each municipality in the State appoint a Board of Health which is empowered to protect the health and safety of its residents through enforcement of the PHL, New York State and local County Sanitary Codes. In 2015, the Board of Health was combined with Orleans County and now consists of seven members appointed by both County Legislatures to six year terms, one from each County Legislature, and at least three of whom are licensed physicians. The remaining members are community representatives that have professional backgrounds which strengthen and promote the health care provided by the Health Department. The Board of Health is a policy or rule making body and not an advisory board. The Board of Health, by statute, hires the Public Health Director.

The GCHD is a full service Public Health Agency, offering a number of diverse programs and activities within the mandated core areas of Family Health, Disease Control, Health Education, Community Health Assessment, Public Health Preparedness and Environmental Health. The department also provides optional programs (Preschool 3-5, Early Intervention, Coroner/Medical examiners services and Weights and Measures) specific to the health needs of Genesee and Orleans residents. There are currently 29 full time and including 7 shared staff working within the above mentioned Health Department divisions / program areas.

### **2024 Focus Areas**

As a department, we continue to lead in many areas when it comes to utilizing technology and enhancing public delivery in New York State. Our shared service model and continued integration of staffing and services are still recognized as a best practice and model approach to improved public health delivery. The landscape we operate in along with expanding un(der)funded mandates continues to shift resulting in the need for highly trained and adaptive staff that can help ensure our residents are safe and prepared during emergency situations. Our ongoing/standard funding streams are forecasted to increase as 2023 NYS adopted changes that increased the base state aide amount by \$100,000 (now \$750,000) in addition to covering 50% of eligible fringe costs are fully realized. These increases are being leveraged back into public health operations and helping to reduce county costs. Our fiscal approach continues to be conservative and always scanning for changes while seeking additional funding streams to enhance services and reduce county costs.

With all the public health emergencies for COVID from the federal, state and local level now lapsed, the departmental activities are shifting back to more traditional public health services and focus areas. These include tracking emerging infectious diseases (monkey pox, polio....), waste water surveillance for infectious disease (COVID, influenza, RSV), core program delivery, collaboration and public education. The use of technology continues to be a priority as the traditional means to communicate and push out information to the public continues to change. All departments are transitioning to electronic media and reporting to be more efficient in both education and service delivery. The department continues to explore ways to be innovative in the way we deliver services including researching the use of drones to assist in public health programs. We are also looking at ways to further utilize GIS capabilities to enhance and expand our reach and data collection in our departmental programs.

The department has realized significant programmatic and fiscal savings from our shared services to date. Currently, Genesee County is routinely sharing 7 staff including 5 administrative staff with Orleans County. Ongoing alignment of policies and procedures and a shared vision has been driven

by common oversight of the department's core divisions. All staff in both Counties are encouraged to look for opportunities to work collaboratively and integrate services whenever possible. The cross-jurisdictional sharing (CJS) activities show annual reoccurring savings for both counties by working collaboratively. These savings and other service enhancements have generated savings of over \$3,510,000 and are expected to continue moving forward.

The department is also in the final phases of achieving national accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). This has been a 4 year journey (due to COVID) that has helped drive efficiencies in operations, further alignment of our GO Health operations. Site visits will be completed in the fall of 2023 with accreditation expected in early 2024.

Looking ahead, the following is a fluid list of focus areas for the Department in 2024:

- Achieve PHAB accreditation
- Expand wastewater analysis for various infectious diseases, monitoring trends in the county
- Developing/implementing Emergency Preparedness initiatives including MRC growth, promoting the new Preparedness App, and continuing to support planning and community resiliency.
- Advocacy for rural health and stabilization of revenue and program mandates
- Respond to the changing landscape with conservative approach responses to new un/underfunded mandates.
- Implementation of the HUD grant now including Livingston and Wyoming Counties
- Seek out additional funding streams to offset county cost related to mandate expansion
- Continue to identify ways to leverage additional integration of the CJS relationship and opportunities with other neighboring counties
- Implementation of year on of the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). Focus areas include chronic disease and mental, emotional and behavioral health issues
- Wrapping up the HEALing Communities study, continued focus on GOW opioid taskforce work
- Continued use of drones for public health applications. Train and certify additional staff to fly drones in the field.
- Additional program specific goals / service needs are listed under program areas
- Continual seek our alternatives for Pre-K programs and transportation services within the GO health area
- Workplace recruitment and retention initiatives – leverage new CDC infrastructure funding to retain and train staff

Although 2024 will be another tight year fiscally, we expect a continued improvement in departmental stability by institutionalizing the CJS relationship, working with County management, community and regional stakeholders to leverage our scarce resources and limited human capital adding value to this department and the delivery of public health services to the residents of Orleans and Genesee County.

# DEPARTMENTAL DIVISIONS

## EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM

The Early Intervention Program (EIP) is part of the national Early Intervention Program for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. First created by Congress under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the EIP is administered by the New York State Department of Health through the Bureau of Early Intervention. To be eligible for services, children must be less than three years of age and have a confirmed disability or established developmental delay, as defined by the State, in one or more of the following areas of development: physical, cognitive, communication, social-emotional, and/or adaptive.

The mission of the program is to identify and evaluate as early as possible those infants, and toddlers, whose healthy development is compromised and provide for appropriate intervention to improve both child and family development. This is achieved by a variety of services, including: family education and counseling, home visits, and parent support groups, special instruction, speech therapy, audiology services, occupational therapy, physical therapy, psychological services, service coordination, nutrition services, social work services, vision services, and assistive technology devices. Research conducted by Rand Corporation has shown, "Well designed early interventions have been found to generate a return to society ranging from \$1.80 to \$17.07 for each dollar spent on the program."<sup>1</sup> Benefits include, but are not limited to, academic achievement, behavior and educational development.

In late 2013, Public Consulting Group (PCG) took over as the New York State Department of Health's State Fiscal Agent for the Early Intervention Program. In 2019, PCG was awarded the State contract to continue as the NYS Fiscal Agent for Early Intervention and they also will be developing a new system to replace the current New York Early Intervention System (NYEIS). The new system, called the EI Hub, start date has been postponed until sometime in late 2022. Counties will attend trainings on the use of the new system.

In July 2015, Genesee and Orleans County began sharing a Director of Children with Special Needs. Currently, there are two full time service coordinators for Genesee County. This is in compliance with New York State requirements.

In March 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic lead to children no longer receiving their services in-person. The New York State Bureau of Early Intervention approved tele-therapy as a way for children to receive their services. In 2022, in-person services resumed with tele-therapy still being an option for some families.

There continues to be a severe shortage of providers for Early Intervention and the Preschool Supportive Health Services Programs. Many therapists are leaving these programs for better paying jobs and benefits. The shortage is throughout New York State.

### Early Intervention Goals for 2024:

- Locate new providers and/or find innovative ways to make sure all children in the Early Intervention Program are receiving their services as identified on their IFSP.
- Learn the new EI Hub system and make sure service coordinators are maximizing what is billable for service coordination.
- Improve on meeting the Federal indicators in the Early Intervention Program at the required 100%.



## PRESCHOOL SUPPORTIVE HEALTH SERVICES PROGRAM

In 1975, Congress passed Public Health Law 94-142 (Education of All Handicapped Children Act), which was the first major law to ensure a public education for children with disabilities, ages five to twenty-one. The intent was to provide each student with a disability a free appropriate public education (FAPE). The Act reauthorized several times since, includes children ages three to five years, and is now codified as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (PL 108-446). States are required to establish and implement policies that assure a FAPE to all children with disabilities.

The Preschool Supportive Health Services Program (PSHSP) is a mandated partnership between the Orleans County and local school districts to provide services for children ages three to five years of age who have a disability or exhibit delays in development, which affect their learning. The purpose of this program is to maximize a child's developmental and educational potential prior to the start of kindergarten. Services include, but are not limited to educational and physical evaluations, transportation, special education teacher services, physical therapy, speech therapy and occupational therapy. Local School Districts guide families through the program while Genesee County and the New York State Education Department share the cost of the educational services.

Section 1903 (C) of the Social Security Act permits payment of certain Medicaid-covered services furnished to children with disabilities if those services are included in an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Currently, in New York State, Medicaid-covered services for students with an IEP include:

Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, Psychological Evaluations, Psychological Counseling, Skilled Nursing, Medical Evaluations, Medical Specialist Evaluations, Audiology Evaluations, Special Transportation

Genesee County is responsible for contracting with service providers and transporters. Tuition rates, multidisciplinary evaluation rates and Itinerant Teacher rates are determined by New York State, while County Officials determine related services' rates. The cost of transportation is approved through a bidding process in accordance with the provisions of the general municipal law. The County is reimbursed by the state 59.5% minus any Medicaid payment on eligible children for services and transportation expenditures. The county also receives \$75 per child for administrative costs. School districts are reimbursed for each child referred to the Committees on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) in their school district. If an individual school district's costs exceed the federal allocation, and is approved by the New York State Commissioner of Education, the County is then responsible for the additional cost incurred by the district. The County would then receive 59.5% reimbursement from New York State for CPSE administrative costs.

For the 2023-2024 school year, Genesee County continued to contract with a Municipal Representative from the previous years. The Municipal Representative attended most of the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) meetings held throughout the year. The contracted Municipal Representative is continuing to fight to control unnecessary spending in the program. The representative works carefully to ensure each student receives the correct level of service to meet his/her needs. The Municipal Representative is able to advocate on the county's behalf in an attempt to control unnecessary services from being incorporated into a child's Individualized Education Program.

For the 2023-2024 school year, Genesee County will be contracting with WNY Bus Company and ARC Transportation to provide preschool transportation. In June 2022 Genesee County ended its contract with VMC Consultants that had aided the Health Department with routing, billing and recruitment for busing services. The consulting firm also assisted with the bid process for preschool and Early Intervention bussing and created all the routes for the busses and was the main point of contact for the Bus Company and families. In 2022, the County hired a transportation coordinator that is shared between Genesee, Orleans and Livingston Counties. The coordinator will be doing all that VMC Consultants was doing for the County previously.

Throughout 2023, there continued to be a provider shortage in all disciplines for the PSHSP in Genesee County. There was a waitlist throughout the year for some children to receive their recommended services. New York State Education Department has let school districts know that it is their responsibility to have all children with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) receive their services and if the district is unable to locate a provider then the district needs to be the provider. In September 2022 the Batavia City School District opened up a center-based program and for the 2023-2024 school year there are approximately 37 children attending the Batavia School District center-based program.

**Preschool Supportive Health Services Goals for 2023:**

- Continue to contract with the present Municipal Representative and work towards controlling spending in the Preschool Supportive Health Services Program. Look for an additional Municipal Representative to contract with the County.
- Contract with new providers or find innovative ways to make sure all children in the Preschool Supportive Health Services Program are receiving their services as identified on their Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- Assist the new Transportation Coordinator with finding ways to save money in the transportation costs for the County and developing a RFP to locate a transportation company that will have a cost savings to the County.



## ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

The Environmental Health Department (EH) provides services to 57,800 residents (2021 population estimate, US census) in the County. Maintaining a healthy environment is central to increasing quality of life and years of healthy life for all Genesee County residents and visitors. EH protects against Public Health threats such as food- and water-borne illnesses, inadequate sanitation, and environmental hazards; prevents and controls rabies, adolescent tobacco use, smoking in public and work places, public health nuisances, injuries, disease, epidemics; and promotes wellness. To ensure these critical services are provided, EH has five (5) full-time staff. The Lead Poisoning Prevention Program and its associated NYS/CDC/HUD/Healthy Neighborhoods grants is a major branch of EH led by the Lead Program Coordinator and four (4) full-time staff. The Lab Coordinator also spends 60% of their time on laboratory work and 40% of their time assisting with other EH duties. Four of these full-time staff are fully-funded by grants. All EH staff are under the direction of a shared Environmental Director for both Orleans and Genesee Counties.

### Regulatory Programs

Regulatory programs and services are designed to minimize environmental health threats in order to protect public health and/or prevent illness in specific populations. Under the direction and guidance of five (5) sections of the New York State Department of Health – Division of Environmental Health Protection, environmental employees provide inspection services to businesses or portions of businesses operating under permit or regulatory acts in the following areas:

- *Adolescent tobacco use prevention (ATUPA)*
- *Agricultural fairgrounds and campgrounds*
- *Childhood lead poisoning prevention*
- *Children's camps*
- *Clean indoor air act (tobacco smoke)*
- *Cooling towers*
- *Drinking water quality/treatment/systems*
- *Food service facilities*
- *Hotels and motels*
- *Lead in School Drinking Water*
- *Mass gatherings*
- *Migrant farm worker housing*
- *Mobile home parks*
- *Public health nuisances*
- *Recreational water safety*
- *Ultraviolet tanning facilities*

### Community Health Programs

- *Rabies prevention:* Under Title IV of NYS Public Health Law, the county health authority is responsible for the services and expenses necessary for the suppression of human rabies. As part of the rabies prevention program, environmental employees are required to:
  - Perform prompt investigation of possible exposures
  - Make arrangements for appropriate disposition of animals involved
  - Prepare animal specimens for laboratory testing
  - Verify terms of confinement, observation and quarantines
  - Operate rabies vaccination clinics
  - Provide consultation services for urgent bite situations 24/7, 365 days per year
- *Residential and onsite wastewater treatment (OWTS):* Environmental employees provide technical assistance in the design and construction of residential onsite systems. Technical assistance is provided during on-site visits as well as by phone and includes:
  - *Evaluations of site, soil and/or existing systems*

- *Dissemination of information on minimum standards acceptable in New York State when residential onsite systems are being designed and/or constructed per 10NYCRR Appendix 75-A and NYSDOH Residential Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems Design Handbook (2012)*

## **2023 Accomplishments**

- Increased EH program services and capacities with no increase to County cost
- Assisted in the implementation of the first every Mandatory Water Use Restrictions in Genesee County, resulting from draught conditions and equipment failure
- Continued to support the expansion of the Genesee Countywide Public Water System
- Organization and operation of free rabies vaccination clinics to immunize 631 animals (106 cats, 525 dogs and 0 ferrets) and collect \$1,111 in donations at 3 of 4 clinics for 2023
- Environmental lead program was awarded a second round of HUD Lead funding, expanded HUD Lead program into all four GLOW counties. Expanded membership and participation in the GLOW Lead Coalition, expanded lead outreach via CDC lead grant to increase primary prevention of childhood lead poisoning throughout GLOW
- The Septic System Replacement Program paid out \$10,000 for one project so far in 2023, additional projects pending
- Outfitted the Wastewater Testing Lab, trained staff and successfully began testing for various communicable diseases throughout Genesee and Orleans.

## **2024 Objectives**

- Continue supporting municipalities' expansion of water districts to supply safe drinking water to their residents
- Increase the sharing of services between Genesee and Orleans counties
- Maintain full staffing, ensure all staff is fully trained and has all necessary certifications
- Successful implementation of all current grant programs, continue applying for and receiving new grant funding opportunities
- Raise awareness of the rabies virus and rabies virus prevention, carry out successful rabies vaccination clinics
- Expand the testing capabilities of the Wastewater Lab
- Increase lead testing rates in children ages 1 and 2
- Mentor interns that are interested in the field of Environmental Health

## PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING

For 2024, the nursing division is looking forward to collaborating on some new and existing initiatives, as well as consistently providing core common public health services. Some highlights to come are:

- Partnering with elementary schools to provide asthma education.
- Continue with an opioid overdose prevention program for the training of community members for the appropriate use of naloxone.
- Continue a strong relationship with the Genesee County Jail to provide adult vaccines.
- Work with GCASA to provide adult vaccines to their residential clients.
- Promote the importance of the Hepatitis A vaccine to food service workers.
- Continue the joint-cross jurisdictional partnership with Genesee by aligning public health nursing efforts for both departments.
- Provide the COVID-19 vaccine shots.
- Mpox surveillance, case investigations and prevention strategies.
- Polio education to make sure our population is up to date on their polio vaccines.
- Continue weekly wastewater analysis for SARS-CoV-2, Influenza A and B, RSV.
- Education on the new RSV vaccine.

### CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION

In addition to causing major limitations in daily living and leading to high costs of health care, chronic diseases are among the most preventable. Factors such as reducing or preventing tobacco use, poor diet and physical inactivity are known to protect and to reduce the incidence of chronic disease. Outreach and education methods are more important than ever, as society faces the threats of emerging and resurgent disease. The community is burdened with chronic diseases such as asthma, cancers, heart disease, and diabetes. Ensuring the public is able to acquire information, services and the skills needed to make quality-educated decisions based on sound theories will provide a healthier community and stronger workforce.

### Migrant Outreach Program

The outreach nurses visit migrant camps twice a week during the growing season, (usually starting in April to May and ending in October-November) to provide the following services:

- Adult immunizations;
- HIV testing with accompanying pre-and post-test counseling and linkage to care;
- Blood Pressure screening and referral;
- Tuberculosis Skin Testing and follow-up with appropriate Preventive Therapy which may include Directly Observed Therapy or not, depending on the situation.

Since 2016, we have been successful in widening our service provision area to include the camps in Genesee County, particularly the northern portion, which have not been routinely visited in the recent past.

### Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

There are several goals set out by NYSDOH for the Lead Poisoning Prevention Program. The education of the public, health care providers, other professionals and policy makers regarding the issue of lead poisoning and its prevention in children and pregnant women is ongoing.

An important goal is to improve lead testing rates of all one-year-old children and two-year-old children. In addition, testing should be arranged for or provided for uninsured or underinsured children. If so, it should increase rates as its use has already been shown to do. It would be helpful to consider the expense related to provision of these units. Follow-up of children with elevated blood lead levels is an obvious goal. Finding and getting rid of lead sources before children or pregnant women (or anyone else) is lead poisoned is a primary preventive goal. This is one area which the coordinator has discussed in relationship to the use of GIS mapping to determine where, in neighborhoods, clusters of available lead might be found. The Genesee County Health Dept. teamed up with Orleans, Livingston and Wyoming County for a Lead Poisoning Prevention CDC Grant. We were awarded the grant 5 year (\$1,241,130) grant in August of 2021. The funding will be used to support prevention strategies for childhood lead poisoning prevention, including blood lead surveillance, improving linkages to recommended services and ensuring blood lead testing and reporting.

### **Immunization program**

The area of immunizations seems somewhat less stable since the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has tied the ability to order Vaccine for Children (VFC) vaccine to providers' willingness and ability to enter all the immunizations they provide for children, 0 to 18, into the New York State Immunization Information System (NYSIIS). Will the providers opt out of the VFC Program and provide only private pay vaccine? The ability to bill Third-party insurers for vaccine administered at the Health Department is fragmented, often depending on the insurers' philosophy of the proper place for the immunization to be administered. The Health Department is a safety net and as such, needs to be ready to change direction according to what is needed without wasting resources.

### **Maternal and Child Health**

One of the goals to increase client acceptance is to discover a means of meeting prospective mothers while they are still pregnant. An introduction by someone they know and trust, the obstetrician, for example, would initiate a more positive relationship than a phone call after delivery when Mom is home and too tired to deal with one more unknown. The nurses would continue to attend discharge planning at United Memorial Medical Center (UMMC) as that is a valuable contact.

### **Rabies**

Public Education is being utilized to increase the public's knowledge of the proper way to handle a possible exposure. Education is also essential to inform the public not to touch any wild animals.

### **Hepatitis C Rapid Testing Program**

Continue the Hepatitis C (HCV) Rapid Testing Program to at risk individuals. This program provides free HCV rapid tests kits and controls to agencies that serve populations at risk for HCV. This program will provide a great resource at no cost to the county residents that are at risk for HCV. We are also in discussions with GCASA to provide this screening to their at risk populations.

### **Mosquito Surveillance**

Continue mosquito trapping for surveillance of the *Aedes albopictus* species.

## **Genesee County Jail**

Continue the successful partnership with the Genesee County Jail to administer vaccines through the vaccine for adult program to the inmates. Genesee County Health Department nurses will go to the jail and administer these vaccines.

## **Opioid Overdose Prevention Program**

Develop an opioid overdose prevention program for the training of community members for the appropriate use of naloxone. Health department staff will conduct these community trainings. The prevention program will also work with the opioid overdose taskforce.

## **Wastewater Analysis**

Continue analyzing wastewater for SARS-CoV-2, Influenza A and B, and RSV in our communities. We would like to expand this program to look for other pathogens when resources are available. We also have a contract with BioBot a wastewater analysis company, to look for chemical substances such as (Fentanyl, Nicotine, Cocaine, Methamphetamines) in two of our communities.



## **EPIDEMIOLOGY**

### **Structure and Responsibilities**

The Deputy Public Health Director/Director of Community Health Services supervises the epidemiology staff, as well as the Community Health Nurses (3). The department has an Epidemiology Coordinator and two Epidemiologists. The Epidemiology Coordinator also serves as the department's Accreditation Coordinator, Public Information Officer, and Local Coordinator for the New York State Public Health Corps (NYSPHC) Program. In addition, in January 2023 this position became shared with the Orleans County Health Department and now is responsible for increasing the epidemiological capabilities of GO Health.

The two epidemiologists serve different roles as one is a permanent employee responsible for communicable disease investigations and various of the following projects, and the other is grant sustained and is exclusively focused on supporting and overseeing the deliverables of the CDC's Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (CLPPP) for Genesee, Livingston, Orleans and Wyoming Counties (GLOW) including, but not limited to, surveillance of childhood lead levels and coordination of the regional Lead Coalition. Permanent epidemiology staff are content experts of reportable diseases which has proven to be an important and increasingly significant role with the COVID-19 pandemic and other emerging threats (e.g. Mpox, STIs) due to factors such as climate change, rapid urbanization, changing land use patterns, and increased international travel.

### **HEALing Communities Study**

HEALing refers to Helping to End Addiction Long-term, and the ultimate goal of the study is to reduce opioid overdose deaths by 40%. Genesee County is part of Wave 2 of this study, which is led in New York State (NYS) by Columbia University and funded by the National Institutes of Health. Wave 1 of the study occurred from January 2020 to June 2022 and Wave 2 began in July 2022 and lasts until December 31, 2023. The study focuses on implementation of the Opioid-overdose Reduction Continuum of Care Approach (ORCCA), which is designed to help communities reduce opioid

overdose deaths and includes required and optional evidence-based strategies. Genesee County is one of 67 jurisdictions involved with this study across four states in the country, all of which were selected due to their high burden of disease. An Epidemiologist is working on this study in addition to other staff. The Epidemiologist serves as the Data Surveillance Coordinator of the study Implementation Team. The Data Surveillance Coordinator is responsible for collecting, organizing, and reporting on data on fatal and non-fatal opioid overdoses and related indicators; improving local surveillance; and facilitating data-driven decision making at the county level. Staff have been busy in 2023 working with stakeholders who are members of the HEALing Genesee Work Group, a coalition nested within the existing Genesee, Orleans & Wyoming (GOW) Opioid Task Force, to implement various strategies. Before the end of the study, the work group will be developing a sustainability plan. In 2024 the Genesee County Health Dept. will be using an overdose analyzer to get real-time toxicology reports for Fentanyl, Nicotine, Methamphetamines and cocaine, the data collected will be used internally to develop strategy's to combat the opioid epidemic.

### **Genesee, Orleans & Wyoming (GOW) Opioid Task Force Data Work Group**

An Epidemiologist serves as the Chair for the Data Work Group for the GOW Opioid Task Force. This entails data management of fatal opioid overdose deaths, non-fatal opioid deaths captured by the NYS Syndromic Surveillance System, and other related indicators. Meetings are convened quarterly and focus on data sharing as a way to inform best practices and community awareness. This is a natural alignment with the duties associated with the HEALing Communities Study.

### **Lead Poisoning Prevention**

GLOW CLPPP is compiling blood lead testing rate data and elevated blood lead level data from the four county region .Through record keeping of the education that is provided throughout the GLOW region and data collection of testing rates and blood lead levels, we will try to determine if there is a correlation between education, testing rates, and blood lead levels. It is our hope that we can estimate that our education and outreach efforts is helping to increase blood lead testing rates and decrease elevated blood lead levels in children under 6 years old.

### **Mentoring NYS Public Health Fellows and Interns**

In early 2023, the Epidemiology Coordinator assumed the role as the Local Coordinator for Genesee and Orleans Counties for the NYSPHC program. This entails serving as a liaison between the New York State Department of Health program staff and GO Health to ensure the fellows are participating in required and optional program activities, are being adequately tasked by their respective departmental supervisor and have departmental mentor. Currently, GO Health has three fellows. In addition, student interns from local universities and colleges have shown an increased interest in epidemiology. As a result, the Epidemiology Coordinator is mentoring 1-2 student interns annually.

### **2023 Accomplishments:**

- GO Health submitted documentation for the 332 examples required by local health departments for initial accreditation in January. This step in the initial accreditation process was scheduled to occur in November 2022 but was delayed due to the Public Health Accreditation Board's (PHAB) migration to a new online submission portal which temporarily suspended the existing one beginning in October of 2022. This is the most significant step in the process which involved the majority of GO Health Staff in order to select and prepare thousands of pages of documentation that demonstrate conformity to the national public health standards.
- Completion of the Healing Communities Study will occur on December 31, 2023. Evidence-based strategies that have been successful implemented to decrease fatal opioid overdoses include, but aren't limited to, holding two additional Drug Take Back Day events, assisting in the promotion and operation of the newly implemented 'Text for Naloxone' line, and assisting



local organizations in becoming registered Opioid Overdose Prevention Programs (OOPS) with the New York State Department of Health to increase naloxone training and distribution.

- Inclusion of township, zip code and minor civil division (MCD) data for the 2022-2024 Community Health Assessment (CHA) for Genesee, Orleans and Wyoming Counties. The data is focused on various health topics including radon, health insurance status, languages spoken, infant and neonatal death, late or no pregnancy care, teen birth and pregnancy, asthma emergency room visits, preventable hospitalizations, premature death, poverty, naloxone administrations and substance use treatment for opioids. This data not only shows the differences among these geographic areas but highlights the health inequities that are occurring and need to be addressed.

Prior to the end of the year,

- In September and October, GO Health is scheduled to have a virtual and in-person Site Visit with PHAB. By the end of the year, GO Health will learn of PHAB's decision to deem or not deem the departments accredited.
- Development of a Genesee and Orleans Overdose Spike Response Plan. The purpose of the plan is to outline the procedures for the monitoring of opioid overdose occurrences in each county, as well as the mobilization of community stakeholders during an identified spike in overdose cases, whether the cases are fatal or non-fatal.

#### **2024 Objectives:**

- Development of a Fatality Review Board focused on conducting social autopsies on overdose and suicide decedents. This is a multi-disciplinary, collaborative process for understanding the risk factors and circumstances leading to such causes of death and identifying opportunities to prevent such deaths in the future.
- Creation of an ArcGIS Dashboard to track fatal and non-fatal overdoses occurring in Genesee and Orleans Counties as inspired by [Oneida County's Overdose Response Team Dashboard](#) to inform the public/stakeholders and aid in influencing outreach efforts, initiatives, programming and/or policies.
- Creation of an ArcGIS Dashboard to track sexually transmitted infections (STIs) diagnosed in Genesee and Orleans Counties. According to the CDC, the United States is currently in an STI epidemic that show no signs of slowing. This surveillance can help identify areas that are in need of targeted outreach.

# PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATION

## Core Responsibilities

The Public Health Education (PHE) team consists of the Director of Health Promotion and the Public Health Educator/Public Information Officer (PIO). The following includes some of their responsibilities: maintaining existing partnerships; developing new partnerships; promoting departmental services; providing referrals to services; implementing educational presentations in the community and to community partners on various public health topics; developing, implementing, tracking and evaluating the Community Health Assessment (CHA) and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP); assisting with grant writing to expand programming; managing the GO Health website and social media accounts; serving as the PIO's for GO Health; serving as a member on multiple local coalitions; fulfilling quarterly deliverables associated with various grants/programs; and serving as the lead mentor for public health interns.

## Health Education Programming and Training

The following list includes some of the educational programs and trainings the PHE team implements:

- **Immunization Program:** Conducts educational outreach about the importance of staying up-to-date on routine vaccinations, the various vaccines and the diseases they prevent, and the child immunization schedule.
- **Lead Poisoning Prevention Program:** Provides education and engagement on lead poisoning prevention and the importance of testing children for lead. The team promotes the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant, the Healthy Neighborhoods Program and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Genesee, Livingston, Orleans and Wyoming (GLOW) Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program.
- **Radon Awareness Program:** Provides education to residents on the health risks of radon, the health benefits of reducing exposure to radon and promotes radon testing. Through this program, the PHE team will advocate for policy change that promotes radon resistant construction when building new homes and promote mitigation and radon-resistant construction to contractors and code enforcement officers.
- **Chronic Disease Prevention:** Provides general education on chronic disease prevention to community residents on eating healthy, engaging in regular physical activity, getting enough sleep, getting screened, quitting smoking, limiting alcohol, and making healthy choices.
- **Substance Use Disorder Education and Prevention:** Active members of the Genesee, Orleans and Wyoming (GOW) Opioid Taskforce, the Community Education Work Group, the Law Enforcement Work Group, and the Families, Loved Ones and Allies Work Group. The PHE assists with planning Overdose Awareness Day, promotes the use of Naloxbox's for businesses/organizations and implements naloxone trainings.
- **HEALing Communities Study:** The PHE Team is instrumental in the implementation of grant initiatives. They use communication methods including, but not limited to social media, billboards, press releases and in-person events/trainings to increase knowledge of fentanyl and naloxone, medication for opioid use disorder (MOUD) and the importance of MOUD retention.
- **Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs):** This PHE team is collaborating with organizations to help the GOW region become Trauma Informed. Currently, there are six members of GO

Health that are participating in the Trauma-Informed Communities Training through Ardent Solutions and the University at Buffalo. This team includes the Director of Health Promotion and the PHE.

- **Suicide Prevention:** The PHE is an active member of the Genesee County Suicide Prevention Coalition and educates residents on suicide prevention.
- **Rabies Prevention and Education:** Provides education to children and adults on the dangers of rabies, to leave wild and stray animals alone, and to get their pets vaccinated. The PHE provides assistance at rabies vaccination clinics as needed.
- **STOP DWI Education:** Educates residents on the dangers of impaired driving at community events. Posts and/or shares educational messages on the dangers of impaired driving on GO Health social media accounts.
- **Community/Organization Trainings:** Conducts training on First Aid/CPR/AED, Blood Borne Pathogens, Food Safety, Naloxone and other requested topics.

The PHE maintains, develops, consults, and encourages links with various community organizations and businesses to promote wellness and Health Department services. A few coalitions/agencies that PHE collaborates with include: GOW Opioid Task Force; Genesee County Interagency Council; the Western New York Public Health Alliance (WNYPHA); Genesee County Suicide Prevention Coalition; GOW Suicide Prevention Coalition; Perinatal Taskforce; WNY Youth Anti-Vaping Coalition; City of Batavia Community Schools Program; Genesee/Orleans Council on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (GCASA); United Memorial Medical Center; Genesee County Office for the Aging; Genesee County Sheriff; City of Batavia Police Department; City of Batavia Fire Department; Lake Plains Community Care Network; and Community Action of Genesee and Orleans.

PHE oversees and mentors interns throughout the year. On average, 3-4 students pursuing their Associates, Bachelor's, or Master's in Public Health, Environmental Health, Nursing, Human Services or another related field are provided a well-rounded experience. The department has affiliations with universities including, but not limited to, SUNY Brockport, University at Albany, University at Buffalo, Nazareth University, Cornell University, and Genesee Community College.

PHE is responsible for communicating with the media and the public on public health matters, including emergencies. This role was heightened in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The PHE team has been instrumental in keeping the public and media abreast of respiratory disease activity in Genesee County (including Flu and COVID-19). This information is shared weekly on the GO Health website. Additionally, the PHE team writes press releases and articles to inform the public on various public health issues.

### **2023 Accomplishments:**

- Successfully submitted the 2022-2024 Genesee, Orleans and Wyoming CHA and CHIP. This is the fourth tri-county iteration of this important population health initiative, which is required of local health departments every 3 years under the NYS Prevention Agenda. There were 605 Genesee County residents that completed the CHA survey and eight community conversations were conducted with 108 residents. To improve this process, the Steering Committee created

a CHA Community Work Group to increase and foster greater involvement with stakeholders and the public. This iteration also conforms to the national standards set forth by PHAB.

- In efforts to comply with PHAB Standards and with the addition of the recently created Director of Health Promotion position in early 2023, the PHE team has made progress in aligning PHE activities, priorities and processes across Genesee and Orleans Counties.
- A regional conference was held to educate 138 partners across the GOW region on the intersection of ACEs, substance use and suicide.
- The Director of Health Promotion along with other county representatives participated in a twelve week Walkability Virtual Academy. As a result, the PHE team in partnership with the City of Batavia implemented a pop-up demonstration on Bank Street between Main Street and Washington Avenue in the summer of 2023. The pop-up aimed to collect feedback from the public to improve street walkability/movability and receive input on the street/landscape design, crosswalk placements and overall mobility of the proposed design.

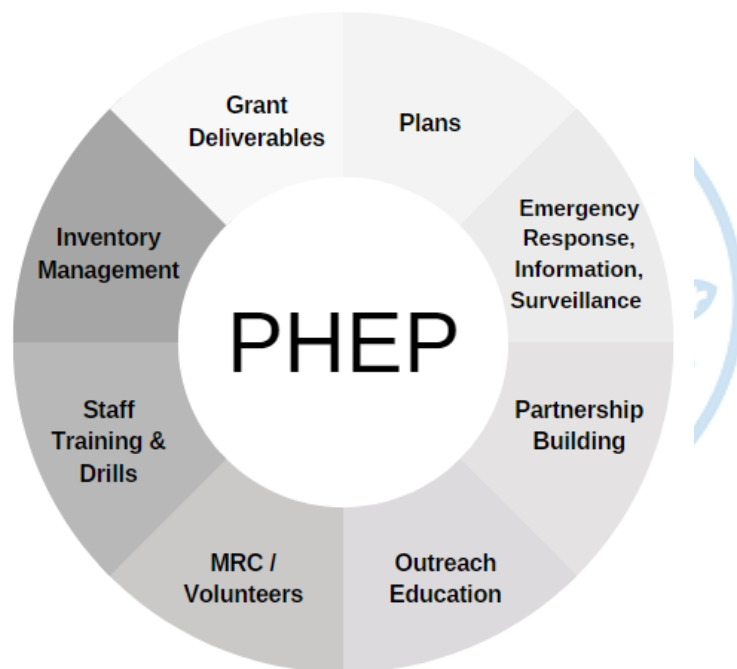
### **2024 Objectives:**

- The PHE Team will continue to move in a direction of becoming programmatically aligned to bring unification and continuity across Genesee and Orleans Counties. The Director of Health Promotion and PHE team will work together to create a cross-jurisdictional health education work plan that focuses on the Strategic Plan, PHAB, CHIP, Branding and Communications Plan, Health Promotions Plan grant, and work plan deliverables. The work plan will:
  - Ensure CHIP deliverables are met by tracking on the performance management system;
  - Expand implementation of evidence based programs and strategies, including the National Diabetes Prevention Program and work in conjunction with an Epidemiologist(s) to develop appropriate evaluation methods;
  - Increase community engagement and seek feedback on public health issues, materials, the development and implementation of strategies/programs, policy change, etc.;
  - Identify ways to increase access to care efforts among the departments;
  - Identify ways to expand on and advocate for policy change on public health issues;
  - Expand community engagement, with an emphasis on the outskirts of each county;
  - Expand community engagement, with an emphasis on special populations, including the Tonawanda Seneca Nation and migrant population.
- Continue and expand the GOW Veteran's Taskforce aimed at ensuring access to quality healthcare, mental health care and other related public health services for veterans, service members, and their families.
- Work collaboratively to begin a GOW Healthy Equity Workgroup to help address health inequities and disparities that exist throughout the GOW region.
- Continue working towards becoming a Trauma Informed Organization and Trauma Informed GOW Region.
- Implement Year 12 of the Local Health Department Performance Incentive Program, which is specifically aimed at promoting physical activity.
- In response to the GOW CHIP priority areas, plan a vaping summit to educate youth, parents, teachers, administrators and community members on the dangers of vaping in the fall of 2023.

## PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Intense COVID-19 response persisted for Public Health Emergency Preparedness until almost the end of 2022, when COVID-19 immunization clinics were returned to the management of Public Health Nursing as part of routine immunization coverage. Although significant grant management, asset distribution, and inventory impacts associated with COVID-19 response persisted until May of 2023, the relative reprieve allowed Public Health Emergency Preparedness to rebuild and re-expand in scope utilizing lessons learned from COVID-19 response, once again developing core responsibilities areas beyond emergency response mitigation. Unfortunately, within one week of disassembling public health asset distribution tables meant for COVID-19, these distribution tables returned with need for N95 masks and information about hazardous air quality from the Canadian wildfires, offering a reminder of how quickly preparedness priorities can shift back into the immediate “response” mode. Nevertheless, “emergency response” continues to be just a portion of one of the 8 core priority areas for Public Health Emergency Preparedness, as seen below.

### **Summary of Core Responsibility Areas with Notable Achievements:**



**Grants and Grant Deliverables:** CDC deliverables coordinated through NYSDOH to maintain preparedness funding, as well as deliverables for any other concurrent grants.

- All preparedness deliverables for budget period 4 (BP4) for 2022-2023 were completed on time, and accepted as written. This included updating pandemic response plans, continuity of operations plans, active utilization of ServNY, and a full-scale exercise, among other deliverables.
- Completion of COVID-19 Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity for Prevention and Control of Emerging Infectious Diseases (ELC) funding acquisition and distribution for schools and daycares in July 2023, with ongoing utilization of generalized COVID-19 response grant funding until end of 2023.
- Receipt of two separate MRC RISE grant awards totaling \$67,500, with grant purchase acquisition and deliverables completed in June 2023.

**Planning Documentation:** creating and maintaining effective preparedness plans.

- Almost all plans consolidated into single documents and combined as “GO Health” plans
- Regular annual revision to the overall GO Health Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response (PHEPR) Plan, along with all hazard or function specific annex plans.

**Emergency Response, Information, Surveillance:** adapting and utilizing preparedness planning during times of actual emergency response, while managing communication, data, and epidemiological surveillance at all times to better identify any new or evolving emergency response needs.

- Ongoing emergency response to COVID-19, including public distribution of assets such as test kits, sanitizer, and various masks
- Emergency response to Winter Storm Elliot 12/23-25/2022, including establishment of two public shelters in Orleans County
- Emergency response to hazardous air quality from Canadian wildfires during June 2023
- Other active threat surveillance as needed, particularly in conjunction with efforts for wastewater analysis overseen by Community Health Services

**Partnership Building:** facilitating greater response collaboration with county Emergency Management, local EMS councils, healthcare networks, school districts, VOADs/COADs, and other key response partners either locally, in contiguous counties, in relevant regions, at state levels, within local tribal authorities, or within federal agencies.

- Diverse departmental collaboration to assist with county-level plans, particularly for continuity of operations (COOP) plan, shelter plans, and overall comprehensive emergency management plans (CEMPs)
- Collaborating with Emergency Management for MRC grant purchases to be strategic with overlap, particularly with response equipment involving sheltering needs

**Public Education and Outreach:** creating wider emergency preparedness awareness for local public residents through education, service, and relevant training opportunities.

- Ready Genesee and Orleans Aware Public Health Preparedness Apps
  - New apps prepared by OCV completed April 2023
  - Each app with dual menus for Emergency Management and Health Dept.
- Summer outreach attendance for Genesee County Game Night, the 4H County Fair, and Batavia Police Community Night Out

**Medical Reserve Corps:** leading and managing an organized, vetted, equipped, and well-trained medical reserve corps that allows for rapid public health surge staffing needs, including staff borrowed from other county departments as well as true volunteers

- Updated application, policy handbook, training and outreach materials, and events calendar

**Staff Exercises, Drills, and Training:** organizing and overseeing public health emergency preparedness training needs for all LHD staff and immediate partners, including appropriate levels of exercises, drills, and training skills.

- Established individual staff curriculum for 1:1 preparedness training sessions (includes ICS and other required trainings, record keeping, MRC involvement, PPE, evacuation plans, hazard notifications)
- Annual PHEP Drill completed 8/31/2023
- Two drone pilot trainings completed (pending final exams)
- One Spanish medical interpreter training scheduled
- Participation in the 2023 Preparedness Summit and in the 2023 MRC Regional Workshop
  - Poster presentation at 2023 Preparedness Summit

- Panel talk at the 2023 MRC Regional Workshop

**Inventory and Critical Resource Management:** leading oversight, new acquisition, and maintenance for all physical preparedness inventories for emergency response logistics and material needs

- New 25' mobile medical RV with driving and operational course created for staff planning to use the vehicle
- New 24' trailer for storage, outreach, and emergency response (with purchase to be finalized in September 2023)
- New Harris Radios (with use and allocation plan)
- New personal radiation detector with radiation frisker to allow the Health Department to support a community reception center in the event of a radiological public health emergency
- 50 new cots with reorganization of mass shelter supplies
- Reorganization with updated inventory for all preparedness inventory spaces
- Use of Sortly as an inventory management system combined with county-specific Emergency Management

### **Objectives and Needs Looking Ahead:**

Significant momentum has been created out of all 8 preparedness core responsibility areas, with goals to continue this momentum throughout 2023 and 2024. In particular, another full substantive revision is needed on almost all GO Health preparedness plans, with assistance requested for county-level preparedness plans as well. As for other needs, long-term indoor storage will need to be arranged for the new mobile medical RV and emergency response trailer in order to better preserve this equipment. Additional help, such as a 2<sup>nd</sup> full-time Emergency Preparedness position anchored within the Genesee County Health Department, will be necessary to maintain stability of the program following the conclusion of the NYSPHC Fellowship Program in July 2024.

All training goals and deliverable requirements were met in 2021, and continue to be met in 2022. Genesee County Health Department (GCHD) personnel received training and real-world experience in a variety of disciplines including Incident Command System (ICS), County Staging Site (CSS) Operations, Hazardous Materials, Bio-Safety, Mass Countermeasure (MCM) Distribution, Planning for Large Events, Hazard Vulnerability Assessments, and various data management and emergency response platforms associated with COVID-19 contact tracing, testing, and vaccine operations.

All deliverable activities were completed on time, and accepted as written. All relevant plans were reviewed and updated as needed. We continue to facilitate the updates to plans by normalizing the documents between the two counties. Within the past year, the Mass Countermeasure Clinical Operations (MCM-ClinOPs) Plan was rewritten, a COVID-19 Mass Vaccination Plan was created, and the overall Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response (PHEPR) Plan is currently under review for a general update.

Throughout the year, connections were reinforced between GCHD and the Emergency Management Office (EMO), Sheriff's Office, Mental Health and the Office for the Aging. Connections are also being maintained and enhanced between the Health Department and other agencies such as United Memorial Medical Center, Genesee Community College, Oak Orchard Health, The Arc of Genesee and Orleans, Community Action of Orleans and Genesee, various assisted living or regulated residential facilities throughout the county, public and private schools throughout the county, and hotels willing to support GCHD with necessary measures for quarantine and isolation in response to COVID-19. Many partnerships and collaborations have been greatly enhanced through COVID-19 vaccine and testing efforts. This includes mass vaccination clinics being maintained at Genesee Community College from January 20<sup>th</sup> through May 2021, collaborative vaccination clinics with both

as United Memorial Medical Center and Oak Orchard Health, vaccination clinics at select schools, and support for COVID-19 testing in many diverse contexts.

As part of disseminating guidance and enforcing regulation for COVID-19 response, the Emergency Preparedness program has been engaged in diverse outreach activities with other Genesee County departments and businesses including farms, sports and recreation facilities, charity organizations, faith-based organizations, gym and fitness centers, restaurants, and other local businesses seeking further guidance or clarification on the COVID-19 safety regulations or requirements, as well as assistance for vaccination or testing.

All training and interagency connections have been strongly tested and enhanced as a result of COVID-19 response. In order to conduct effective emergency response for COVID-19 or other emergencies in the future, in addition to underlying expectations for general emergency preparedness, full-time support under the Preparedness Coordinator specific to Genesee County remains essential.

COVID-19 response has also increased collaboration between Emergency Preparedness with other health department programs, such as assisting Environmental Health with drive-through rabies clinics, consistent with emergency protocols for Mass Countermeasure (MCM) distribution and safety protocols for COVID-19 including social distancing and necessary crowd management. The Emergency Preparedness program continues to assist with other aspects of general health department management under COVID-19 conditions, including oversight of the employee daily health screening as necessary, development of new protocols for essential response operations, and management of forms and process associated with contact tracing and isolation or quarantine for COVID-19.

### **Looking ahead:**

COVID-19 has increased volunteer interest, which we will continue through the MRC. Ensuring adequate time for volunteer management, with opportunities for volunteers to become active in meetings, trainings, and response operations continues to be a priority. We have a new logo and branding associated with GO Health, and we are intending to use this momentum to revitalize the Emergency Preparedness program in the context of volunteer participation.

With GO Health establishing a new website, the Emergency Preparedness program is working diligently to maximize its role and value within this website. The webpages devoted to Emergency Preparedness have been entirely redone in 2021.

The Emergency Preparedness program is currently looking at options to improve utilization and value of its preparedness apps, Ready Genesee and Orleans Aware. This will either include new uses or features with the QuickSeries, the current provider, or potentially another more competitive vendor.

Budget support is essential to support staffing and program needs, communication capabilities, preparedness app and social media effectiveness, community outreach activities, and volunteer management all continue to be top funding priorities.



## CORONERS/MEDICAL EXAMINERS

Genesee County operates with four (4) elected Coroners and. As outlined in Article 17-a of New York State County Law, the officials are responsible for responding to the scene of a death to perform the preliminary investigation surrounding the cause of death and, as necessary, refer the case for further services. The Coroners also provide assistance to Emergency Management and Preparedness Officials with preparation for any catastrophic incidents, caused by natural, accidental, criminal, or infectious means.

Serving both as an education and outreach tool, the County Coroner's have requested membership with the New York State Association of County Coroner's and Medical Examiners (NYSACCME). The association was established to better serve death investigators in the advancement of forensic science and its applications to death investigation. The Coroners note the association as the only mechanism for training and education for newly elected and existing officials. With the advancements in forensic science, and a rise of suspicious deaths in Genesee County, the responsibilities of Coroner's have dramatically increased from years ago. The District Attorney, Medical Examiner, law enforcement agents, and medical professionals all rely on the Coroner to perform a thorough investigation and secure evidence associated with the death, therefore making the resources available through NYSACCME essential to their publicly elected position.

There continues to be an increase in cases driven by the heroin and opioid epidemic sweeping across the state. The department and county are actively working to address this issue, including working with our state associations for funding to offset increased cases and testing. We currently send all ME cases to the Monroe County Medical Examiner's office and NMS for testing. Both of these contracts will continue through 2024.

At the beginning of 2023 the coroners started transporting deceased individuals to the ME's office, this will help eliminate funeral homes from transporting deceased individuals, cut down on transportation costs and will eliminate coroners trying to find a funeral home for transport to the ME's office.

## WEIGHTS & MEASURES

The Genesee – Orleans County Department of Weights & Measures (GO Health W&M) is responsible for testing all commercial devices used to weigh and measure various commodities.

These inspections are done annually at grocery stores, delis, bakeries, produce stands, laundromats, farms, manufacturing plants, distribution centers, stone quarries, recycling centers, gas stations and non-commercial locations as requested. The department is also responsible for testing the quality of fuel sold within the counties, a task that is 100% reimbursed by NYS (**132** fuel samples were taken in 2022).

2022 resulted in **470** inspections, accounting for **1,211** total devices tested between the two counties. Inspections involved pumping more than **26,000 gallons** of fuel and using more than **5.9 million pounds** of test weight.

### Tested and Approved

Our inspection seals indicate a device was tested and approved for use. Our 2023 seals incorporated two public health messages (**ADDICTION & ROAD SAFETY**) acting as reminders for residents and visitors to the area – a first in the state. The department received notice from New York State requesting our seals be more uniform with other counties going forward. Although our previous 3 years of health and safety messaging left a positive impact with consumers and device owners, we will be returning to the standard inspection seals for 2024.



### 2023 Accomplishments

#### Protected

- ✓ **Worked with fuel stations to alleviate/identify potential problems**  
*Met with Reid Petroleum to discuss how W&M can make their fuel reconciliation reports more accurate in identifying problem(s).*
  - Assists in pinpointing tank/fuel line leaks
  - Encourages more accurate fuel dispenser calibrations
- ✓ **Conducted 32 pricing accuracy audits**  
*Confirmed 3,580 items for correct prices, ensuring what was displayed as the price was the actual price at point of sale.*
  - 130 overcharges identified (Prices at checkout were higher than shelf tags)
  - 45 undercharges identified (Prices at checkout were lower than shelf tags)
  - 8 missing shelf tags

#### Engaged

- ✓ **Motivated healthy behaviors through the use of our inspection seal messaging**  
*“ADDICTION” & “ROAD SAFETY” messaging are on over 1200 weighing/measuring devices.*

- ✓ **Presented at the New York State W&M Association Conference**  
*Shared our “Thinking Outside the Box” GO Health W&M marketing strategies.*

**Communicated**

- ✓ **Voiced opinions at the Northeastern W&M Association Conference**  
*Topics of interest included Electric Vehicle Refueling Stations, various laws, regulations, specifications, and tolerances.*

**2024 Objectives**

**Provide**

**Continue preserving a level playing field for both buyers and sellers.**

**Economize**

**Maintain a shared program that continues to benefit both counties.**

**Connect**

**Stay in communication with New York State & industry leaders regarding unforeseen issues and potential opportunities for fraud.**



## FINANCE

The Health Department has four major funding streams that support its operations. GCHD is primarily funded through Article 6 of the Public Health Law with other sources of revenue for the department including grants, fees for service and county sources. Article 6 establishes the requirements for Genesee County to obtain State Aid reimbursement for general public health work. Full-service County Public Health Departments are eligible to receive \$750,000 in State Aid and the Health Department is able to get up to 50% fringe rate reimbursed through state aid. After the department has reached these base grant expenditures (reimbursed at 100%) additional state aid expenditures are reimbursed at 36%. With the increase in aid offered by State, the GCHD would not exceed its basic grant of \$750,000 until the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of the year. Approximately \$885,750 is expected in Article 6 State Aid and \$471,285 in state aid fringe reimbursement for the 2024 calendar year. This amount will vary depending upon what unexpected services or activities are required in 2024, communicable disease response and other revenue sources, e.g. Medicaid, Medicare, insurance payments, fees for services, fines, grants, etc. Additional revenue sources will offset the amount of State Aid used for core public health programs and thereby decrease County costs.

Non article 6 eligible programs for the department continue to drive local county share. Preschool and Early Intervention remain on the state's list of most costly mandated programs. In addition, the coroner's and Weights & Measures budgets continue to be 100% county dollars. We continue to apply for grants to offset all programs that are not offset by article state aid.

Program Budget		2023 Adopted County Appropriation	2024 Expense Adopted	2024 Revenue Adopted	2024 County Appropriation	2023-2024 \$ Variance	2023-2024 % Variance
Dept. 1185	Medical Examiners & Coroners	174,442	181,194	-	181,194	6,752	3.87%
Dept. 2960	3-5 Preschool Program	1,145,213	2,713,501	1,566,067	1,147,434	2,221	0.19%
Dept. 4010	Public Health	119,100	196,633	12,500	184,133	65,033	54.60%
Dept. 4059	Early Intervention Program	279,716	9,589	23,738	(14,149)	(293,865)	-105.06%
Dept. 6610	Weights & Measures	46,740	76,956	25,597	51,359	4,619	9.88%
<b>HEALTH DEPARTMENT TOTAL</b>		<b>\$ 1,765,211</b>	<b>\$ 3,177,873</b>	<b>\$ 1,627,902</b>	<b>\$ 1,549,971</b>	<b>\$ (215,240)</b>	<b>-12.19%</b>

A more detailed breakdown of the numbers of all the health department's operations can be viewed within departmental budget.