# LINCOLN-LANCASTER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
## CURRENT AGENDA

5:00 PM, Tuesday, February 8, 2022
Training Center
3131 O Street
Lincoln, NE 68510

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGENDA ITEM</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CALL TO ORDER</strong></td>
<td>Roll Call</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>APPROVAL OF AGENDA</strong></td>
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<td>Agenda</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</strong></td>
<td>Regular Meeting – January 11, 2021</td>
<td>Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PUBLIC SESSION</strong></td>
<td>Any person wishing to address the Board of Health on a matter not on this Agenda may do so at this time.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DEPARTMENT REPORTS</strong></td>
<td>A. Health Director Update – Lopez</td>
<td>Monthly Report</td>
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<td></td>
<td>B. Child Care Health Program/Child Care Health Consultation Services – Holmes/Rief</td>
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<td>C. Safe Kids Lincoln-Lancaster County – Humm/Baker</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CURRENT BUSINESS</strong></td>
<td>Action Items</td>
<td>Attachment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action Items</td>
<td>A. LB859</td>
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<td>B. LB1138</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CURRENT BUSINESS</strong></td>
<td>Information Items</td>
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<td>Information Items</td>
<td>A. Legislative Review</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>FUTURE BUSINESS</strong></td>
<td>Request for Information/Topics for Future Agendas</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ANNOUNCEMENTS</strong></td>
<td>Next Regular Meeting – March 8, 2022 - 5:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ADJOURNMENT</strong></td>
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Additional Information: **Glossary of Abbreviations**

This agenda will be kept continually current and will be available for public inspection within the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department during normal working hours. A copy of the Open Meetings Law is posted at the meeting site.

The City of Lincoln complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 guidelines. Ensuring the public’s access to and participating in public meetings is a priority for the City of Lincoln. In the event you are in need of a reasonable accommodation in order to attend or participate in a public meeting conducted by the City of Lincoln please contact Angel Edwards at the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department at 402-441-8093 as soon as possible before the scheduled meeting date in order to make your request.
TO: Board of Health Members, Media and Interested Parties

FROM: James Michael Bowers, President

SUBJECT: Meeting Notice and Tentative Agenda

DATE: January 26, 2022

5:00 PM, Tuesday, February 8, 2022
Training Center
3131 O Street
Lincoln, NE 68510

The tentative agenda is as follows:

I. CALL TO ORDER – Bowers
   A. Roll Call

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA – Bowers

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Bowers
   A. Regular Meeting – January 11, 2022

IV. PUBLIC SESSION

Those wishing to speak on items relating to other Board of Health business not on the agenda may speak during the public session portion of the agenda. Each speaker is limited to five (5) minutes. Time limits maybe extended or reasonably decreased at the discretion of the Board President. The public session period will be limited to one (1) hour.

V. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

   A. Health Director Update – Lopez
   B. Child Care Health Program/Child Care Health Consultation Services - Rief
   C. Safe Kids Lincoln-Lancaster County - Baker

VI. CURRENT BUSINESS – Action Items

   A. None
VII. **CURRENT BUSINESS** – Information Items

   A. Legislative Update

VIII. **FUTURE BUSINESS**

   A. Request for Information/Topics for Future Agenda

IX. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

   Next Regular Meeting – March 8, 2022 - 5:00 PM

X. **ADJOURNMENT**

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I. **ROLL CALL**

The meeting of the Board of Health was called to order at 5:05 PM by James Michael Bowers at the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department. Members present: James Michael Bowers, Katie Garcia, Dustin Loy, Stacie Bleicher, Tom Randa, Sean Flowerday, Jasmine Kingsley, and John Ward (ex-officio).

Members absent: Jacqueline Miller, Jay Jarvis, Rick Tast (ex-officio), and Candace Berens (ex-officio).

Staff present: Patricia Lopez, Gwendy Meginnis, Kerry Kernen, Scott Holmes, David Humm, Raju Kakarlapudi, Jeff Chambers, Tommy George, Lata Nawal, Justin Daniel, Christina Hitz, Rachel Johansen, and Janette Johnson.

II. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mr. Bowers asked if there were any corrections to the Agenda. No corrections were requested.

**Motion**: Moved by Ms. Kingsley to approve the agenda as printed. Second by Mr. Flowerday. Motion carried by a 6-0 roll call vote.

III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Bowers asked if there were any corrections to the Minutes. No corrections were requested.

**Motion**: Moved by Dr. Loy that the December 14, 2021 Minutes be approved as printed. Second by Mr. Randa. Motion carried by a 6-0 roll call vote.

IV. **PUBLIC SESSION**

No one came forward.
V. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

A. Health Director Update

Health Promotion & Outreach (HPO) Injury Prevention staff collaborated with City Communications to produce a road travel safety, fire prevention, and home safety video. These videos are being shared on social media and the LNKTV Health website.

The Division of Dental Health & Nutrition continues to provide hands-on experiences to dental and hygiene students from the UNMC College of Dentistry. During the Spring semester, four dental students and more than twenty hygiene students will do rotations at LLCHD.

COVID-19 vaccination data for the October/November/December period shows 26% of 5-11 year old children are fully vaccinated. January vaccination clinics have been scheduled in areas of Lincoln where vaccination rates are lower and are open to those 5 years of age and older. The Health Department continues to work with a community partner to provide vaccinations to those who are homebound. There is an increased demand for COVID testing. Beginning Thursday, January 13, a drive-through testing site will open at 1918 ‘O’ Street operated by Total Wellness. Nomi Health has also added additional capacity for testing.

Board of Health members were provided City email accounts. A short training video provided instruction on signing in and accessing these accounts.

Staff Presentations - Epidemiology

Epidemiology staff, Raju Kakarlapudi and Lata Nawal, provided an overview of their Division structure and presented on birth and death data through 2020.

Key data highlighted showed no upward trend in birth rates that could be attributed to COVID through 2020. Birth rates nationally are trending down, and the age of mother at the birth of her first child is trending up. Encouraging data for Lancaster County shows first trimester care over 90% for most racial/ethnic populations and age groups.

Key data highlighted showed COVID-19 responsible for 5.8% of deaths in Lancaster County in 2020. Additionally, prostate, colon, and pancreatic cancer death rates increased over 1-2 percentage points from 2019 to 2020 indicating a potential impact of fewer individuals seeking regular medical screenings. Encouraging data for Lancaster County shows infant mortality rate trending lower than national rates.

Discussion:

Board of Health members asked to have the presentation PowerPoint shared with them. Staff will provide the PowerPoint and also the link to the data on the Health Department’s page on the City’s website.
Staff Presentation – Dental Health & Nutrition
Dental Health & Nutrition Division Manager, Gwendy Meginnis, provided a dental program overview. Key program priorities are preventing oral disease, reducing barriers to care and socioeconomic inequalities. Limited availability of Medicaid providers for basic dental care and oral surgeons is one factor that impacts access to care. There has been a steady increase in the number of appointments which Gwendy credits to staff efforts in reaching out to vulnerable populations and continually evaluating outreach methods. Dental continues screening programs and assists patients secure a dental home. The program has also seen an increase in the number of racial/ethnic minority, non-English speaking appointments and credits staff who spent time with our in-house interpreters to reach families and secure dental appointments. Appointment times are available in evening hours to accommodate vulnerable populations, and those are the appointment times that fill up first and are scheduled out the farthest.
No discussion.

VI. CURRENT BUSINESS (Action Items)

A. Food Advisory Committee Re-appointment

Justin Daniel, Food Team Supervisor for Environmental Public Health proposed a reappointment and new appointments to the Food Advisory Committee. Of the 12 members, eight represent the food industry and four represent the general public. Kelly Knudson of daVinci’s Inc. is completing his first four-year term at the end of January 2022 and is willing to serve a second term. A second industry representative vacancy is proposed to be filled by Jason Thiele of Runza who has over 15 years in the restaurant business and is a team leader for all Runza supervisors. Lisandra Jorge, a Community Worker at El Centro de las Americas is recommended to fill a general public representative vacancy. Ms. Jorge has worked in the community for over five years.

Staff recommends that the Board of Health approve the re-appointment of Kelly Knudson on the Food Advisory Committee.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Garcia. Second by Mr. Randa. Motion carried by a 6-0 roll call vote.

Staff recommends that the Board of Health approve the appointment of Jason Thiele and Lisandra Jorge on the Food Advisory Committee.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Loy. Second by Ms. Kingsley. Motion carried by a 6-0 roll call vote.
VII.  CURRENT BUSINESS (Information Item)

A.  Legislative Review Process

    Patricia Lopez discussed the Health Department’s review process for relevant legislative bills.

VIII. FUTURE BUSINESS

    No topics were provided.

IX.  ANNOUNCEMENTS

    Next Meeting – February 8, 2022 at 5:00 PM.

X.  ADJOURNMENT

    Motion: Moved by Dr. Garcia that the meeting adjourn. Second by Dr. Loy. Motion carried by a 6-0 roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 PM.

Janette Johnson
Recording Secretary

Dr. Katie Garcia
Vice President
HEALTH DIRECTOR’S OFFICE
None.

ANIMAL CONTROL
Lincoln Animal Control will be updating our vehicle tracking system. This is a Verizon service that tracks the Animal Control vehicles real-time. There is a 60 second ping time on the map as the vehicles move around the city. This is a great tool to help assure officer safety and monitor vehicle operations such as speed and idling time. The new system will be used to pilot test forward facing video cameras in 5 of our vehicles. This is also an additional safety feature and helps provide documentation if an officer is interacting with a member of the public outside or next to their vehicle.

Animal Control staff continue to take wildlife calls from the public. Coyote activity in the Seacrest Park area and Wedgewood neighborhood are the most prevalent of the coyote calls coming in.

Animal Control responded to 1,016 bat calls in 2021. August was the busiest month with 260 calls. This is down from 1,304 in 2019 and 1,200 in 2020.

COUNT OF DISPATCHED BAT CALLS BY MO/yr
Total Dispatched BAT calls from 1/1/2021 to 12/31/2021: 1016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01/21</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>02/21</td>
<td>50</td>
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<td>03/21</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/21</td>
<td>43</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/21</td>
<td>41</td>
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COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES

None.

DENTAL HEALTH

Caseload (Participation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>3937 (-56 Dec 2020)</th>
<th>State: 34,891 (-44 Dec 2020)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main</td>
<td>2,657 (+24 Nov 2021)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornhusker Clinic</td>
<td>1,280 (+45 Nov 2021)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Enrolled with Benefits</td>
<td>88.79% (+0.94% Nov 2021)</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Participants by Category/Breastfeeding Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LLCHD</th>
<th>State of Nebraska</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Women</td>
<td>771 (19.6%)</td>
<td>7,088 (20.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Children</td>
<td>2,409 (61.2%)</td>
<td>20,370 (58.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Infants</td>
<td>757 (19.2%)</td>
<td>7,433 (21.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infants Receiving Breastmilk</td>
<td>257 (6.5%)</td>
<td>2,523 (7.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infants Exclusive Breastmilk</td>
<td>95 (2.4%)</td>
<td>877 (2.5%)</td>
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Mentoring:

(Number and school)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Interns</th>
<th>Volunteers</th>
<th>LMEP Residents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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WIC QI—No Show Rates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FFY 21 Main Office</th>
<th>FFY 21 North Office</th>
<th>FFY 21 LLCHD Overall</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
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<td>January</td>
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<td>February</td>
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<td>September</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average</td>
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• There were 22 working days in December. The December caseload was 3,937 (-56 from Dec 2020 and +69 from Nov 2021).
• No-show rates increased compared to the previous month (+0.3%).

Dental Clinic Services:

- Total number of clients served (unduplicated count): 494
- Total number of patient encounters (duplicated client count): 682
- Total number of patient visits (duplicated provider appointments/visits): 994
- Total number of Racial/Ethnic and White non-English speaking patients: 409 (83%)
- Total number of children served: 354 (72%)
- Total number of clients enrolled in Medicaid: 420 (85%)
- Total number of all clients with language barriers: 268 (54%)

(Albanian, Arabic, Burmese, Chinese, Farsi, French, Karen, Kurdish, Russian, Spanish, Ukranian, Vietnamese, Other)

There was an increase of 203 provider visit when compared to November 2021 and an increase of 20 provider visits when compared to December 2020. The failed appointment rate for December was 15%, remaining the same as November.

Community Outreach Services Total: 28

Fluoride Varnish Program: 28
Health 360 Early Head Start - 25
Malone - 3

Student Rotations: 1
UNMC College of Dentistry dental student - 1

ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH

Child Care Health Program:
Goals: Protect the health of children, childcare providers, and our community by reducing the risk of communicable disease outbreaks and injuries in childcare.

Methods/Strategies:
- provide childcare health and safety consultative services
- provide childcare staff training
- conduct uniform inspections
- conduct new and remodeled facility plan review
- issue certificates of compliance, collect fees
- provide compliance assistance
- investigate complaints and illness outbreaks
- take enforcement actions
- provide needed equipment/materials to reduce the potential spread of illness
**Indicator:** Inspect 95% of childcare facilities within established intervals. This goal was met in FY19, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was not met in FY20 or FY21. However, LLCHD staff provided extensive and ongoing consultative assistance to child care centers on COVID-19 prevention, mitigation and outbreak response throughout the pandemic.

Strategies to meet this indicator included:
- Meeting with staff to review the indicator.
- Identifying barriers that prevented staff from conducting inspections before the due date.
- Developing strategies to overcome the barriers.
- Monitoring an electronic dashboard graph showing the percent completed on time.
- Routinely tracking progress and reviewing with staff.

**Description:**

**Inspection and Enforcement**
The Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department (LLCHD) conducts annual inspections of Child Care Centers to verify compliance with the State of Nebraska and City of Lincoln Child Care regulations. Due to numerous centers having COVID-19 illnesses/outbreaks and staffing challenges to meet ratios, LLCHD inspection staff are temporarily conducting “Hybrid” inspections to minimize exposures. Hybrid inspections allow staff to conduct an abbreviated center inspection to verify key items are within requirements such as the outdoor playground, kitchen operations, sanitation, overall center conditions and handwashing practices and verify training requirements. In FY21, LLCHD inspection staff conducted 5 plan reviews, 81 phone, and 32 field technical assistance consultations/visits. Staff provide COVID-19 technical assistance which included COVID-19 prevention, mitigation, outbreak response, non-compliance complaint investigations, and guidance on isolation, quarantine, and group size/cohorting strategies. Staff continued to conduct initial inspections, plan reviews, and investigate any health and safety complaints.

**Child Care Health Consultation Services**
LLCHD’s Child Care Health Consultation Services protect the health of children, their families and our community by preventing communicable disease outbreaks that originate in child care settings. Training center staff, implementing and updating policies, and obtaining input from skilled health professionals decrease the incidence of disease and improves health and safety in child care centers.
Lincoln Municipal Code 8.14 requires health and safety training for child care center staff every two years. LLCHD’s Health and Safety training is currently offered twice a month in a Zoom format. In 2021, 1,303 early childhood professionals completed the Health and Safety training. The training focuses on illness prevention and exclusion, diapering, hand washing, child abuse and neglect, medication administration, food safety, playground safety, and specific health laws and regulations. A Standard Response Protocol (SRP) Training was provided to 35 child care professionals from 20 centers to help prepare them to implement a unified, planned, and practiced response to any incident using SRP. After the training, participants received monthly emails with SRP tabletop exercises and tips. LLCHD will hold a Standard Reunification Method (SRM) training in the Spring of 2022 to expand on participants knowledge of emergency response.

Onsite assessments of child care center environments and program operations are provided to assist directors in the development and implementation of improvement plans and improve health and safety in child care settings. Remote consultations via phone, video conferencing, and emails provide strategies for incorporating policies and procedures needed by management to improve health and safety practices. 71 facilities received consultation services related to reducing illness and injury in child settings. January 2022 will begin the distribution of NEW “Child Care Center Starter Kits” that have been developed to provide new centers and directors with health and safety best practices. 24 facilities also received “green” consultation visits in which reusable water bottles were distributed.

Child Care Illness Prevention and Reporting
LLCHD’s Child Care Health Team continues to maintain open communication and consultation to child facilities related to the Direct Health Measures (DHM’s), prevention tools planning related to COVID-19 and monthly Zoom calls facilitated by Lincoln Littles (Lincoln Community Foundation). LLCHD has provided frequent emails and COVID-19 resources and updates. In response to COVID-19 thousands of emails and calls have occurred to assist the early childhood community (In-Home and Centers) on ensuring their facilities are safe and to prevent the further spread of COVID-19. In addition, Directed Health Measures required significant amount of staff time to provide consultation to child care center and in-home providers. Staff responded to an estimated 9,000 emails/calls.

Over the past year, LLCHD has worked with almost every child care center on managing COVID-19 cases and clusters. Child care center directors are provided isolation and quarantine guidance for COVID-19 cases and exposure using the standard disease prevention protocols. These protocols have changed over time as CDC updates their recommendations. It is important to point out that every situation poses different variables related to exposure which need to be considered as we guide child care center staff and parents on quarantine requirements.
Also, local ordinance requires child care centers to report specific illnesses within 24 hours through the online illness reporting system, which is reviewed daily by LLCHD and followed up with consultation. Child care centers are required to report within 24 hours when three or more children and/or staff in a classroom or group are ill with a reportable communicable disease, diarrhea, or vomiting; or one child or staff has bloody diarrhea. The reporting system is intended to assist in the prevention of the spread of communicable diseases into the community which potentially start in childcare. One way to report is through an online illness reporting system, results from calendar year 2021 include:

- 85 reports from childcare centers indicating they had 3 or more children and/or staff that were excluded due to vomiting/diarrhea illnesses
- 441 reports of children or staff excluded with fever (100.4 Degrees or higher)
- All reports (100%) of vomiting/diarrhea and reporting illness reports were responded to on the same day the report was made. All programs that reported illnesses had follow up contact with the Child Care Health Team during the illness incubation period or until the number of illnesses were reduced. This quick response approach has the greatest potential to not only keep more children from becoming ill, but also to reduce spread of illness throughout our community.
- Four programs that reported significant illness outbreaks received on-site consultation visits from our Child Care Health Consultant and/or our lead Environmental Health Specialist for Child Care outbreaks. In collaboration with LLCHD Communicable Disease, laboratory testing was completed and confirmed that 4 centers had Norovirus, Adenovirus, or Sapovirus.
- Child care programs contacted LLCHD on 2 influenza outbreaks, 10 RSV clusters/outbreaks, and multiple reports of Hand Foot and Mouth disease. These resulted in resource and epidemiologic consultation with the child care centers.
- Over 300 letters were provided to child care programs to assist with notification to staff and families related to potential exposure to COIVD-19.
- LLCHD established a database of early childhood professionals to allow notification of priority to receive the COVID vaccine. Multiple emails were sent to providers to inform them of vaccination clinics and the importance of vaccination.
- 22 Bodily Fluid Clean up kits were provided to child care centers that were experiencing vomiting/diarrhea or as part of a consultation visit.
- Hundreds of reports of illness clusters/outbreaks were received through our online disease surveillance reporting system allowing quick interventions.
HEALTH PROMOTION & OUTREACH

**Chronic Disease Prevention**
Three HPO staff assisted with multiple listening sessions with equity groups in the community to advance both the minority health initiative and the community health assessment. Working closely with each Cultural Center partner, 11 community conversations were organized and completed in person in December 2021. These were standardized 2-hour conversations that were organized by the cultural centers and facilitated by both LLCHD staff and the cultural center staff.

**Injury Prevention**
Staff met with leaders of the Kiwanis Bike Committee on January 19 about 2022 school-based Bike Rodeos. The group discussed how to increase school participation and placing higher emphasis on bike safety at these events.

Staff coordinated a Home Safety Task Force meeting on January 14 to begin planning for the childcare focused home safety pilot project funded through Safe Kids Nebraska mini grant. This project will consistently provide best practice home safety education to families of six local childcare centers.

Staff provided a virtual child passenger safety presentation to St. Monica’s Project Mother Child on January 28. This presentation was recorded and will be shared with other moms in the program that weren’t able to attend.

**Employee Wellness**
Wellness Coordinator partnered with Parks and Recreation to coordinate a Woods Park Place Blood Drive. A total of 34 units were collected, with 18 LLCHD employees participating in the drive!

In 2021, City and County employees engaged in wellness programming 1,198 times (City: 802 engagements, 468 unique participants; County: 396 engagements, 239 unique participants). Programs where participation was tracked include Wellness Champion nominators, Wellness Champion nominees, Wellness Tips email distribution list, Heart Aware screenings, 2021 Jump Start, Heart Healthy Challenge, Hybrid Wellness Fair, Bike to Work Week, Summer Slim Down, QPR Training (May and October), Back to Basics Challenge, STEPtember, Woods Park Place Blood Drive, Gift of Health Incentive.
Tobacco Prevention Program 2021 Highlights

Partnered with local organizations to effectively reach disproportionately affected populations

Collaborated with LPS to create an original vaping prevention mirror cling campaign

REACHING 22,167 MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

TFLC WEBSITE, FACEBOOK, AND TWITTER POSTS REACHED 118,602

17 businesses
22,732 employees participated in the city-wide #GASOLenk #GASOL LancasterCoNe event

49 quit kits distributed

3 community presentations

PODCAST:
Is Tobacco Use a Social Justice Issue in the LGBTQ Community?

9 broadcasts on KZUM radio

8,775 views on LNKTV Health YouTube Channel

TFLC partnered with EL CENTRO & OUTNEBRASKA

TFLC participated in 43 in-person, virtual, and/or drive-thru community outreach events & presentations

TFLC hosted Smoke-Free Housing webinar series

124 total views on THREE weekly lunch & learn webinars

200 RETAILER ASSESSMENTS COMPLETED with assistance from our partners at EL CENTRO & OUTNEBRASKA

PUBLIC HEALTH INFORMATICS & PLANNING
None.
Child Care Health Program/Child Care Health Consultation Services

Refer to Environmental Public Health report in the Director’s Report.
Safe Kids Lincoln-Lancaster County  
Safe Kids Lincoln-Lancaster County (SKLLC) exists because unintentional injury is one of the leading causes of death for children 14 years and younger in our community. The purpose of SKLLC is to increase knowledge on causes and prevention of childhood unintentional injury, to identify and modify environmental safety hazards within our community, and to initiate and support policy development and law enforcement efforts. SKLLC is comprised of more than 40 public and private organizations (LFR, LPD, health and medical providers, private businesses) with a shared mission to protect children from suffering serious preventable injuries. SKLLC is structured into six task forces addressing the leading causes of unintentional injury to children in Lincoln and Lancaster County:

- Child Passenger Safety
- Sports Injury Prevention
- Bike and Pedestrian Safety
- Fire and Burn Prevention
- Water Safety, and
- Home Safety

Task Forces develop and implement strategic work plans each year based on injury data, and input from community stakeholders and target populations.

The Board of Health presentation will specifically highlight two Task Forces and their current efforts.

The Sports Injury Prevention Task Force recently launched a project to educate youth sports organization leaders, coaches, and families of athletes on the leading causes of sports injury: Dehydration, Concussions, and Overuse Injuries. The resources assembled include The Game Plan, an online sports safety 30min coaches training, educational videos featuring local health/medical professionals, digital and printable educational handouts and tip sheets, and posters to be displayed in gyms and at ball parks.

The Child Passenger Safety Task Force holds multiple car seat check events every month. These events offer parents and caregivers the opportunity to receive child passenger safety education from nationally certified car seat safety technicians, have their car seat checked for correct installation and receive a low-cost seat if needed. Last year the Task Force checked 305 car seats and distributed 160 to families in need. Requests for car seat checks continues to increase. The most significant challenge in meeting this need is recruiting sufficient numbers of local Child Passenger Safety Technicians to help educate families at events.

Nationally, vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among children ages 4-12 years, and second leading cause of death for children ages 1-4 years. Property installed and used car seats reduce the risk of fatal injury by 71% for infants and 54% for toddlers.

SKLLC was chartered in 1995 and is part of Safe Kids Nebraska, a network of 9 coalitions statewide, and Safe Kids Worldwide, with 407 U.S. coalitions and coalitions in 33 partner countries. The Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department serves as the lead agency for SKLLC.
March 1, 2022

Dear Senator Arch and Members of the Health and Human Services Committee:

I am writing, on behalf of the Lincoln-Lancaster County Board of Health, in strong opposition of LB 859 that would require the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department (LLCHD) to obtain the approval of the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services in issuing directed health measures (DHM). Passage of this bill would remove the legal authority of the Health Director of the LLCHD to rapidly respond to a public health crisis within the health district where a directed health measure would be in the public’s best interest.

I have had the privilege of being president of the Board of Health during the entirety of this pandemic. I am proud of the manner in which the pandemic has been handled in Lincoln and Lancaster County. From the first reports of the COVID-19 virus being identified in China, the local health department began its process of bringing partners together, implementing its Emergency Pandemic Response Plan, and setting up a continuous communication system with health care, education, City and County officials, law enforcement, city and county fire and rescue agencies, culture centers, business representatives, and others. The Lincoln-Lancaster County Board of Health has been actively engaged throughout.

Our health department, along with health departments across the country, watched the progression of COVID-19 as it spread worldwide. Measures that were used to slow the spread of the virus and protect the public were monitored. Wearing masks, limiting gatherings, changing business practices, and aggressive efforts to give the public necessary information were identified as essential practices. So were directed health measures.

I count myself as fortunate to live in a County where the Health Director can issue a directed health measure with the sole intent of protecting the public’s health in the most expedient manner based on local conditions. DHMs were not done in isolation but in consultation with all partners and with their support. Early action by the Health Director to implement prevention measures had the desired effect of limiting the spread of the virus resulting in fewer people sickened by the virus and fewer deaths.

We know there will continue to be public health crises in the future that will require a rapid response to a local health emergency. I urge you, Senators, to reject LB 859 and continue maintenance of local control of health policy in Lincoln and Lancaster County.

Sincerely,

James Michael Bowers, President
Lincoln-Lancaster County Board of Health
February 28, 2022

Dear Senator Stinner and Members of the Appropriations Committee:

The Lincoln-Lancaster County Board of Health is in support of LB 1138 to appropriate funds for local public health departments. The Board appreciates that this bill was brought forward by Senator Vargas in recognition of the need to strengthen our public health infrastructure now and into the future. An infrastructure that fully supports the efforts of public health departments translates into more effective public health service to all our state’s citizens.

The pandemic again has highlighted the need for a strong public health infrastructure to respond to current and emerging public health threats. Funding to cover costs of COVID-19 related expenses will be a welcome relief to the departments as they continue to combat the long-term impacts of the virus.

Infrastructure needs are many and varied within departments and across the state. Examples of needs to enhance the capacity of local health departments are improved technology to support disease surveillance at the local level and a secure bi-directional data access system between the locals and the state. In addition, a secure web portal to communicate findings of surveillance systems to the local health care community to increase their knowledge of existing health information and emerging threats would benefit both local health departments and health care systems.

Again, thank you for your support of this important funding bill and for your on-going support of public health in Nebraska.

Sincerely,

James Michael Bowers, President
Lincoln-Lancaster Board of Health