

**To:** Board of Health

**From:** Susan Wheelan, M.B.A. Public Health Director

**Date:** March 2019 (reflects February 2019)

**Re:** Director's Report

**Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) Priority Areas:**

El Paso County Public Health and all public health agencies in Colorado are required by Senate Bill 194 to complete a CHIP for the community each serves. The CHIP defines the vision for the health of the community through a collaborative process with over 60 partner agencies who participate in the Healthy Community Collaborative. Community input on these goals can be viewed on a data dashboard at [www.ThrivingColorado.com](http://www.ThrivingColorado.com). These are EPCPH's activities:

**Healthy Eating and Active Living**

Reverse the upward trend of obesity across the lifespan by addressing its root causes

- The Women, Infants and Children (WIC) February 2019 caseload was 12,871. Staff are continuing efforts to reach those in our community who are eligible but not enrolled.
- Office of Communication and WIC are developing targeted social media messaging and "Refer a Friend" promotion efforts to highlight innovative services and reach clients who are eligible but not enrolled, funded by the Colorado Health Foundation.
- WIC continued monthly outreach at the Deerfield Hills food pantry, and presented to Peterson Air Force Base Personnel twice in February.
- Maternal Child Health (MCH) staff distributed 9 Ways to Grow Healthy Colorado Kids materials related to Healthy Eating Active Living to Pikes Peak Library District.
- MCH educator was trained on *I am Moving I am Learning*, an evidence-based curricula to integrate physical activity into early learning environments that serve children 0-5 years of age. This training is a core component of the MCH work plan and part of the on-boarding process for this FTE.
- Healthy Environment Planner represented EPCPH at the Pikes Peak Foodshed Forum at University of Colorado, Colorado Springs on February 22 on the panel, "From Local to Federal: How Residents Can Make a Difference with Food Policy" highlighting findings and intended outcomes of the El Paso County food system assessment.

**Mental Health and Substance Use Prevention**

Decrease the incidence of poor mental health and substance use and misuse

- The WIC program works with pregnant and post-partum women to identify depression and refer for behavioral health treatment.
- Tobacco Education and Prevention Partnership (TEPP), Environmental Health, and Office of Communication staff collaborated to hold three community events to educate the public about how the presence of radon and cigarette smoking can dramatically increase the odds of developing lung cancer. Smoking and radon are the two most prevalent causes of the disease. Events were held at Ruth Holley, Sand

Creek and Fountain libraries. Approximately 200 citizens attended the events and received a free radon detection kit for their homes.

- EPCPH referred 16 clients to the Colorado QuitLine Fax Referral program for tobacco cessation assistance.
- EPCPH led the February Youth Suicide Prevention Workgroup meeting. The agenda focused on recent youth suicide fatality data, sub-group work, and a crosswalk activity aligning the Community Action Plan with recommendations from the Community Conversations to Inform Youth Suicide Prevention study.

## **Surveillance, Epidemiology and Emergency Preparedness**

### **Hepatitis A Outbreak (2018-2019)**

- Emergency Preparedness and Response Team continues to support a public health response to a hepatitis A outbreak affecting people experiencing homelessness and/or using street drugs within El Paso County. Specifically, the Emergency Preparedness and Response Team is facilitating the development of the incident action plan and conducting meetings in accordance with the principles of the incident command system. The Emergency Preparedness and Response Team is also providing technical support and guidance to the command and general staff on incident management principles.
- As of February 28, 2019, the case count remains at 13 in El Paso County, with three additional cases reported in Colorado (two in Pueblo County, and one in Fremont County).
- EPCPH staff have conducted or participated in 22 outreach clinics and have administered over 500 vaccines.
- The Communicable Disease Team continues surveillance for new cases of disease.
- Office of Communication provided an update on response efforts to members of CHAP, El Paso County's homeless advocate coalition.

### **Influenza Season 2018-2019**

- Cases of hospitalized influenza for this season (September 30 through March 2) include 259 adults and 82 children.

## **Foundational Public Health Services**

Foundational public health services include: communicable disease prevention, investigation and control, environmental health, maternal, child, adolescent, and family health, chronic disease and injury prevention and behavioral health promotion, and clinical care.

### **Laboratory**

- Performed 485 Bacteriological water tests, 301 for public water systems and 184 for private wells. Forty-one water samples were assayed for inorganic anions.

## **2018-2022 Strategic Plan Goals**

The goals selected for each strategic plan topic area represent broad achievements EPCPH plans to reach by the end of 2022. The goals are expressed at a high-level in order to capture all possible forward movement across the agency and within specific programs. The strategies selected represent the most important ways in which EPCPH can focus its agency and programmatic objectives to meet each goal.

**Workforce Development:** strengthen EPCPH's workforce to improve public health and environmental quality.

- The Interim Agency Grant Writer submitted a detailed letter of intent to apply for one year of workforce development funding through Telligen Community Initiatives. Funds would be used to evaluate leadership capacity of current managers, supervisors and select staff; send staff to leadership development trainings through Colorado Springs Leadership Institute, the Centers for Creative Leadership, and the Regional Institute of Health and Environmental Leadership; send staff to educational conferences such as Public Health in the Rockies and the National Institute of Public Health's annual Quality Improvement Conference; send Board of Health members and staff to the National Association of Local Boards of Health annual conference; and help provide educational events to Board members and local legislators. Selected applicants will be invited to submit full grant applications in early April.
- WIC developed a new position, WIC Educator/Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Specialist. In addition to WIC Educator duties, this position will assist with caseload management, provide high-risk and complex breastfeeding consults, conduct chart reviews, and assist with training and mentoring Breastfeeding Peer Counselors.
- EPCPH managers and planners attended training provided by EPC Information Technology staff on the Kronos timekeeping application focused on hyperfinds and running reports.
- EPCPH nurses provided a Basic Live Saving (BLS) skills and CPR in accordance with the American Heart Association guidelines. Participants included EPCPH staff, staff from other county departments and business partners.
- Emergency Preparedness and Response Coordinator attended the Master Exercise Practitioner course, which is designed to enhance skillsets in exercise design and implementation. This will greatly benefit EPCPH and the South Central region as future public health emergency preparedness grant deliverables will include a mass vaccination exercise series.
- Emergency Preparedness and Response Coordinator participated in the first teleconference of the 2019 Roadmap to Ready program sponsored by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO). This yearlong training and mentoring program provides a selected group of emergency preparedness coordinators throughout the nation with the skills, connections, and resources needed to successfully lead and coordinate public health preparedness and response activities.
- Emergency Management and Response Coordinators attended the three-day Colorado Emergency Management Association Conference co-hosted by the Colorado Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. This conference focused on bringing stakeholders and multiple disciplines together from throughout the state to improve Colorado's homeland security and emergency management.

- Youth Substance Use Prevention Planner attended Coaching Skills for Leaders. This training supports skills building for individuals who have Leadership roles within the agency. Planner also attended Getting Government Grants Workshop. All Maternal Child Health staff were trained in BrainWise, an evidence-based curricula that teaches children, youth and at-risk adults emotional, social and cognitive skills.

**Technology, Informatics, Data Analysis:** strengthen EPCPH’s capabilities to collect, analyze, share, and use data to make timely and information-driven decisions.

- EPCPH staff proctored three Rocky Vista University medical students conducting research in the following areas: “Factors Contributing to Youth Incarceration and Interventions to Prevent the Cycle of Juvenile Recidivism,” “Youth Suicide Programs: an Overview and Discussion,” and “Human Immunodeficiency Virus Transmission Rates at National, State and Local Levels: Identifying Vulnerable Populations in El Paso County Colorado.”
- Teen Suicide Prevention Planner and Youth Health Development Planner met with representatives from RAD (Real Alternatives to Drugs and Drinking) to discuss youth suicide prevention efforts, RAD programming, and possible evaluation support EPCPH can provide to RAD as they seek to grow their programming.
- Youth Health Development Planner met with regional Safe Kids Coordinator from Children’s Hospital Colorado to discuss accidental injury prevention efforts and opportunities to increase collaboration and data sharing with the Child Fatality Review Team and other EPCPH programs.

**Communication:** Strengthen EPCPH’s capabilities to provide information on public health issues and public health functions to external partners, and strengthen EPCPH’s internal communication capabilities.

- Youth Substance Use Planner was selected to speak at the Shared Risk and Protective Factors Conference in Keystone in May. The presentation is titled “Beyond the Coalition: Building a Brand for Your Community’s Prevention Work.” Youth Substance Use Community Health Educator and the CTC Teen Advisory Board were also selected to speak at the conference. Their presentation is titled “Youth Are the NOW: A Presentation by Teen Leaders to Help Adult Leaders Gather and Amplify Youth Voice.”
- TEPP provided an interview on KRDO radio on youth vaping with an emphasis on addressing the parent perspective. This segment aired twice in February and is posted on the KRDO website.
- TEPP presented to numerous community organizations and partners regarding youth vaping topics reaching 765 members of our community, including:
  - Five schools in four school districts reaching 670 in fourth through eighth grade.
  - Parent nights in Colorado Springs School District 11 and Academy School District 20, reaching 60 parents.
  - Community groups in Manitou Springs and Calhan reaching 35 people.
- Maternal Child Health staff conducted outreach to community partners serving youth with special health care needs to describe and promote care coordination services and referrals. Outreach included UHealth Memorial Hospital and Penrose-St. Francis Health Services neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) staff and social workers, El

Paso County Department of Human Services case workers and a Pikes Peak Library District social worker.

- Completed interviews about influenza for KKTV and KOAA.
- Completed interviews about southeast Colorado Springs medical clinic for The Southeast Express.
- Completed interviews about teen vaping for The Gazette and The Tri-Lakes Tribune.
- Initiated work on the 2018 Annual Report, which provides a yearly summary of key public health issues to both internal and external community partners.
- Initiated work on a new digital agency newsletter that will be sent quarterly to internal and external partners. This is part of an effort to increase EPCPH's ability to provide timely information in a convenient and easy-to-use format.
- Total estimated earned media value for television interviews: \$11,746; estimated number of viewership: 122,547.

**Community Partnerships:** develop and maintain strong relationships with key community partners to support public health or assure the provision of health care services.

- Emergency Preparedness and Response Coordinator assisted Park County with updating their Medical Countermeasure plan and completed the Medical Countermeasure Operational Readiness Review forms for both Park and El Paso counties as part of the cities readiness initiative grant deliverable for FY 18-19.
- Emergency Preparedness and Response Team attended the Regional Working Breakfast. This meeting is used as a means to discuss emergency preparedness and response efforts within the South Central region, to include grant deliverable support.
- Environmental Health staff is collaborating with the Pikes Peak Association of Realtors to develop industry training related to the Onsite Wastewater Treatment System (OWTS) program and the Transfer of Title program. This partnership will be designed to educate the realty industry as it relates to public health. Topics will include OWTS best practices, wellhead maintenance, recovery efforts after a flood or fire, and solid and hazardous waste management.
- Environmental Health staff convened the quarterly Food Safety Advisory Group meeting and discussed the recent changes to the newly adopted Food and Drug Administration Retail Food code. This topic is intended to educate the Retail Food Operators in El Paso County to keep them informed of any changes that occur.
- In partnership with the Colorado Springs Housing Authority, Tobacco Education and Prevention Partnership (TEPP) facilitated two orientation trainings for Resident Cessation Connectors. As part of an innovative grant, TEPP is training residents to become "Resident Cessation Connectors" trained in basic patient navigation and tobacco cessation techniques.
- TEPP collaborated with partners in Teller County to support tobacco control efforts and provide QuitLine resources at the Woodland Park Parent Night. Parents and school administrators came together to discuss the issue of vaping in their community and the resources available to help youth quit.
- The bi-monthly meeting of the Tobacco-Free Alliance of El Paso County was held February 7. Forty community members, to include medical professionals, military, teachers, students and others, attended to learn about recent tobacco prevention and

education efforts at the local and state levels. This meeting highlighted the work of Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) clubs in five local schools, which are sponsored by TEPP. Sand Creek High School students presented information about electronic cigarettes and its prevalence among youth.

- Healthy Children and Families educator partnered with DHS staff to conduct 16 new assessments and home visits to DHS-involved families for the purposes of engaging at-risk families in services and supports to prevent child abuse and neglect.

**Funding for the Agency and Community Partners:** increase funding for EPCPH from diverse sources to support core public health services, programmatic services, and innovative strategies, and provide technical support for funding to key community partners.

- The Interim Agency Grant Writer and other staff are developing an application for a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) grant to prevent the onset and reduce the progression of youth alcohol and marijuana use. Alcohol and marijuana are two of the top three substances used by youth in El Paso County (the third is tobacco/vaping, which is being addressed through EPCPH's Tobacco Education and Prevention Partnership (TEPP) program). The grant would fund up to five years of prevention work and would allow EPCPH and community partners to focus on these prominent issues that are not currently being addressed on a community-wide basis.
- Youth Substance Use Prevention Planner partnered with Alliance for Kids to submit an application in response to a Request for Proposals for a Transforming the Workforce Innovation Grant to help support the Fountain Valley CTC Strategy of *Build Public Support for Quality Childcare Early in Life*.

**Health Equity:** increase public awareness of health equity issues, its systemic causes, and opportunities to foster health equity, and remove barriers to health care and community resources to improve health outcomes among health disparate populations.

- Family Planning served 81 walk-in clients, and Immunization Clinic served 107 walk-in clients, in addition to scheduled clients.
- Emergency Preparedness and Response Coordinator attended the Access and Functional Needs Committee sponsored by The Independence Center. This committee focuses on the safety and security of those individuals in our community with access and functional needs in order to ensure a whole community approach to emergency preparedness, response and recovery. This meeting allowed city, county, and regional stakeholders to discuss multiple response plans and how they could be enhanced to better serve the needs of this population.
- The Nurse-Family Partnership program served 116 families, and nurses completed 202 home visits.
- The Nurse-Family Partnership Community Advisory Board, in partnership with March of Dimes, is working on building a community effort to address the high rates of low-birth weight babies in El Paso County. The advisory board and Peak Vista's Prenatal Network joined in February to discuss ways to launch a community response.

- Healthy Environment Planner presented to Colorado College students participating in Leadership Pikes Peak's *Experience The Springs* program on February 14 about evidence-based strategies to address social determinants and socioeconomic factors to improve health outcomes including examples from the RISE Coalition and Healthy Places in Southeast Colorado Springs.