#### NORTHEAST COLORADO HEALTH DEPARTMENT









2021
ANNUAL REPORT



Byron Pelton, President - Logan County Commissioner

Tony Wells, Vice President – Washington County Commissioner

Terry Hofmeister, Secretary - Phillips County Commissioner

Mark Turner - Sedgwick County Commissioner

Robin Wiley - Yuma County Commissioner

Mark Arndt - Morgan County Commissioner

Samantha Mahaffey – Logan County Representative

Laura Teague - Morgan County Representative

## office locations

#### **Logan County**

700 Columbine St. Sterling, CO 80751 (970) 522-3741

#### Morgan County

228 W. Railroad Ave. Fort Morgan, CO 80701 (970) 867-4918

#### Phillips County

127 E. Denver St. Suite C Holyoke, CO 80734 (970) 854-2717

#### **Sedgwick County**

118 W. 3rd St. Julesburg, CO 80737 (970) 474-2619

#### Washington County

482 Adams Ave. Akron, CO 80720 (970) 345-6562

#### Yuma County

529 N. Albany St. Suite 1120 Yuma, CO 80759 (970) 848-3811

# traveling our road to recovery

Transition is the word I would use to describe 2021. Though we were still quite busy with Covid-19 response, NCHD staff worked diligently to return to more of a "business as usual" approach that was more sustainable than the previous year's crisis mode.

In the first quarter of 2021, we were immersed in Covid-19 related activities. Our staff did several largescale vaccine clinics, with our largest providing immunizations to close to 900 people.

We also spent considerable time working with our 21 school districts to help navigate the ever-changing guidelines for everything from sporting events to prom to graduation.

Starting in the spring of 2021, we actively began the transition away from crisis mode. A big reason we were able to do this was the creation of

our Covid division—starting in the fall of 2020, we were able to hire people to specifically focus on our Covid response. We started to see variants of the Covid-19 virus as well.

In June of 2021, the Board of Health at NCHD officially rescinded the Emergency Declaration that we had been operating under since the pandemic began.

In the fall of 2021, we started working on our review of our 5-year Public Health Improvement Plan. 2021 was year 3 of the plan and we wanted to assess our progress and

determine if we needed to make any adjustments to our focus areas of Mental/ Behavioral Health, Healthy Weight, Physical Activity and Nutrition.

We ended the year with a new variant (Omicron) but also with a renewed sense of continuing our journey back from crisis.

I hope you enjoy reviewing this report and the important work that was accomplished.

Sincerely,

**Trish McClain, BSN, RN**Public Health Director





## heading back towards normal

As the health department entered the 2nd year of the pandemic in early 2021, the COVID-19 response team saw some internal changes. Under the leadership of Kathy Reinhardt, the Director of COVID-19 Response, the health department created a team dedicated solely to the pandemic. This allowed for many staff to return to their original roles and programs that were put on pause during our initial response.

The COVID-19 division was busy continuing case tracing for all positive cases within our region. During 2021 there were several spikes in cases as new variants and reduced restrictions led to outbreaks.

With the release of the Moderna, Pfizer, and Janssen COVID-19 vaccines in late 2020 and early 2021,

investigations and contact

the health department

NCHD would like to acknowledge the following sites who have volunteered to host COVID-Check Colorado PSR testing locations weekly, for over a year, beginning in 2021.

Monday

Holyoke 9-11 Phillips County Event Center

Julesburg 12:30-3:30 Hippodorme

Akron 9-11 Washington County Fairgrounds

> Yuma 12:30-2:30 pm NJC Satellite Campus

Akron 9-11 Washington County Fairgrounds

Sterling 12:30-3:30 Northeastern Junior College (NJC)

Sterling 10-2 Banner Health, Old Sykes Building

Fort Morgan 9-12:30 Community Hospital Association Building

Wiggins 12:30-3:30 Wiggins Community Church

Fort Morgan 10-2 Morgan Community College

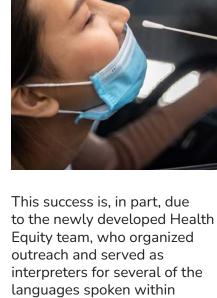


began holding COVID-19 vaccination clinics. NCHD staff helped support largescale, first dose clinics in all of the six counties throughout the spring of 2021.

#### 112 VACCINATION **CLINICS**

provided by NCHD with 6,161 doses administered.

The COVID-19 and nursing teams did an incredible job of working with local businesses and community contacts to set up clinics that were convenient and accessible for everyone in the region. NCHD's largest vaccination event was held at the Cargill meat processing plant in Fort Morgan. The nursing staff, along with community volunteers, vaccinated close to 900 Cargill employees.



the plant.

Health Equity was a major focus throughout our entire response. In 2021, NCHD was able to hire four Community Health Workers. Two based at the health department and two based at a community partner organization. This allowed NCHD to have interpreters for five different languages available for NCHD sponsored events.

### COVID-19 RESPONSE

The Health Equity team, in partnership with other community organizations in Fort Morgan, created the umbrella organization, Trusted Connections. This network is meant to help connect anyone in Morgan County with a wide range of resources, no matter which organization they originally reach out to. Under this banner, the community health workers also went out into the community to provide information on COVID-19 testing, combat misinformation on vaccines. and build trust with key stakeholders.

In addition to sharing information and improving language accessibility, the COVID-19 team also focused on health equity when it came to setting up COVID-19 state resources. Working with the

state contracted organization, COVID Check Colorado, NCHD set up a weekly testing center in each of our counties. Coordination was undertaken for the mobile vaccination buses to schedule stops in communities throughout our region and to prioritize areas at higher risk, or had less access to vaccines. This information was identified by the NCHD data team.

Through COVID-19 funding, the COVID-19 Response and the Health Equity teams have provided more resources for all of our six counties. NCHD is working on ways to make these resources permanent and to continue to expand the health equity efforts.

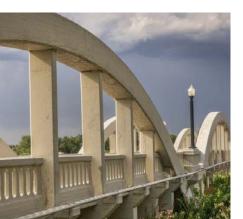
"Health Equity outreach has been a major focus throughout the entire COVID-19 response, but became more prominent during 2021."

## 6,020 REPORTED COVID-19 CASES

and 2,919 case investigations and contact tracing interviews completed

## 2,029 MOBILE VACCINATIONS

total in Northeast Colorado 940 of those were at events organized by NCHD







## let's get this show on the road

2021 marketing and media efforts were once again mainly focused on risk communications around the COVID-19 pandemic. Early in the year, there was a transition from standard mitigation strategies, such as encouraging our communities to wear masks. practice hand hygiene, and social distancing, to getting immunized as vaccinations became more prevalent. **COVID-19 Testing locations** and schedules, along with vaccination clinics and mobile bus events became standard messaging through press releases, social media, radio. and newspaper advertising.

In March, we expanded our media platform with the creation of the Northeast Colorado Health Department YouTube Channel. This was motivated by the knowledge that our communities are very diverse, and the key to expanding into those audiences would be to introduce videos into our marketing and media efforts. Our first series of videos included four community influencers of diverse ages and ethnicities encouraging vaccination. We then followed up with four additional videos around vaccinations and COVID-19 guidance in 2021.

NCHD struggled with counteracting COVID-19 vaccine misinformation. confusion, and fake news. We responded by providing factual context and offering reliable source information over the phone and through social media. Then in June and again in October. campaigns were created to negate these myths and misinformation.

Like the rest of the country.

### 30 PRESS RELEASES

14 COVID-19 related and 16 program and general services topics

#### 15 MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

consisting of a press release or blog, social media, ads, infographics, posters, etc.

12 ON-AIR RADIO

discussions highlighting public health initiatives

### For us, the key to multicultural communication lay in the creation of a YouTube channel and through video

While the team's time was mainly dominated by COVID-19 messaging and public information in 2021. there was also an initiative to increase messaging for the other programs. Compared to the previous year, we more than doubled outreach for our other programs with updates to brochures. postcards, website pages, press releases, social media, blogs, health fair displays and conventional advertising.

reached by newspaper and online with the publication of 14 COVID-19 press releases and 16 additional press releases relating to oral health, flu vaccinations, emergency preparedness, food safety, tobacco cessation, and mental health.

We also redesigned multiple program brochures and postcards for client services. Additionally each month, a staff representative went onair at two local radio stations to highlight public health initiatives with topics from nutrition to zoonotic diseases.





Our community was also





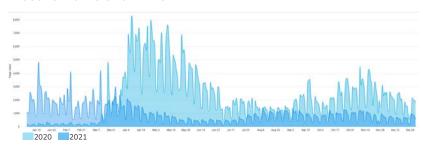




### PUBLIC INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

Throughout 2021, the communications team continued to implement and strengthened online marketing strategies and adopted new methods to provide accurate and timely information to the public. We adopted a variety of formats, platforms, and languages to reach our growing minority communities and overcome disinformation from disreputable sources.

#### Website Traffic Over Time



Left - Compared to 2020 (light blue), NCHD's website traffic has decreased by 42%.

#### 39,483 UNIQUE **VISITORS**

down by 31% from 2020

#### COVID-19 DASHBOARD

was the most visited page with 2,369 visits

#### **OF 136.8K SITE SESSIONS**

52% were from a desktop 46% from a mobile device

#### Website Audience by Location



Left and Bottom- Compared to 2020 (left), NCHD's 2021 website analysis of audiences by location (below), while targeted locally, is showing an increase in national and international interest.





#### Facebook

- 4.022 Followers (compared to 3,998 in 2020)
- Reach 99.443 (up 39.5% from 2020)

#### **Top Locations**

- Sterling-25.6%
- Ft Morgan 12.2%
- Yuma 7.3%
- Brush 6.1%
- Wray 4.3%
- Holyoke 3.8%
- Akron 3.7%

#### Gender

• 81% Women\* 19% Men

#### Instagram

- 299 followers
- (up 275.7% from 2020)

#### Top locations

- Sterling 25.6%
- Denver 7.7%
- Ft Morgan 6%
- Yuma 2.7%

#### Gender

- 26.4% Men
- \* The majority of family health decisions are made by women.

- (compared to 248 in 2020)
- Reach 556

- Aurora 2%

- 73.6% Women

- 543 Followers (compared to 479 in 2020)
- 655.1k Impressions Earned (compared to 191.1k in 2020)
- 1% Engagement rate
- 745 Link Clicks (compared to 176 in 2020)

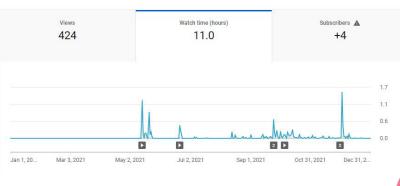
#### YouTube



- 4 Followers
- 424 Views
- 11 total watch time (hours)

Twitter

- 41% of viewers were from the U.S.
- 172 Impressions



Your videos got 424 views in 2021





3 shares

### **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

## A protection roadmap



The Environmental Health Division (EH) protects our communities from environmental hazards through focused efforts on food safety, water and air quality, and zoonotic disease. Our staff are referred to as generalists, because of their work in every program we offer, performing various inspections, licensing facilities, and providing education on a number of topics.

In 2021, EH continued to respond to businesses and child care centers with COVID-19 questions. Our staff assisted with vaccination coordination. To reduce potential exposure, staff minimized the time spent in facilities and when applicable conducted virtual inspections. In addition, we completed inspection reports in the offices and sent final reports electronically.

"Child Care Facilities had 105 Critical Violations cited for 2021."

#### 243 RETAIL FOOD

facility inspections of the 403 total establishments

The Retail Food Safety Program is NCHD's largest EH program. Within our six-county health district, staff visit and inspect each restaurant, grocery store, school, and any other facility that stores and/or serves food. Inspections are performed biannually for most facilities, or more frequently if a facility has had a history of critical violations or is the subject of complaints.

## 42 CHILD CARE CENTERS

inspected of 37 locations

Child Care Centers are inspected a minimum of once a year. Governing rules and regulations, along with the environmental health inspections, assure and maintain minimum health and sanitation requirements. Environmental Health should not be confused with the Division of Child Care in the Colorado Department of Human Services, which licenses child care facilities.

## 14 POOL INSPECTIONS

of the 7 pools in our region

The Swimming Pool and Spa Safety Program is voluntary. The licensed facilities are inspected twice each year for things such as assuring the main drains are meeting safety codes, which helps prevent chances of entrapment drowning of young children, and ensuring the water is safe to be in, lowering the incidence of water-borne disease outbreaks.

## 13 BODY ART INSPECTIONS

of the 7 establishments

Regulations governing body art addresses general sanitation and disease control which applies to every artist in the state offering services such as tattooing, branding, sculpting, scarification, and body piercings. Due to the health risks associated with exposure to blood-borne pathogens such as hepatitis or HIV, body art facilities that are licensed by NCHD are inspected at least once a year.







#### Water Testing

Water tests are done on public and private drinking water for bacterial contamination. It is recommended that private wells be tested annually for bacteria or more often if there are known problems in that area. This is especially important if events such as flooding or land disturbances have been experienced and if replacing or repairing any part of a system.

Onsite wastewater treatment system permits are required for any building creating wastewater flow that is not connected to a city sewer. Any new system or repair of an existing system requires a permit from the health department. Systems are inspected to ensure compliance with the regulations approved by the NCHD Board of Health.

902 WATER SAMPLES tested for bacteria

143 SEPTIC PERMITS issued

10 BIOSOLID inspections



Food Safety Trainin

NCHD helps keep Northeast Colorado consumers safe by encouraging all food service employees to take food safety training. With the cooperation of CSU Extension, NCHD offers two courses for facilities to choose from.

68 FOOD HANDLERS

trained through ServSafe 48 FOOD HANDLERS

trained through NCHD Training Interventions

steady as we go

#### **Vital Record Distributions**

NCHD serves as the Vital Records registrar for Logan, Morgan, Phillips and Washington Counties. We provide certificates if the individual was born or died in Colorado. Birth certificates are available for Colorado births dating back to 1906. Certain death records may require a waiting period.

Logan County	
Birth Certificates	1081
Death Certificates	1790
Free Veteran Copy	33
Morgan County	
Birth Certificates	1044
Death Certificates	2213
Free Veteran Copy	47
Phillips County	
Birth Certificates	85
Death Certificates	382
Free Veteran Copy	9
Washington County	
Birth Certificates	20
Death Certificates	25

0

Free Veteran Copy



Birth or death certificates can be obtained in our offices if the individual was born or died in Colorado.

### **CLIENT SERVICES**

#### **Specialty Clinics**

Through the Children's Hospital Colorado and CU Medicine Outreach Clinics we reduce barriers to families such as cost, lost work or school time and travel. Hosting specialty clinics at our main locations minimizes the number of trips to the Front Range for those families. Clinics are available for children ages birth through age 24.



The Colorado Children's Hospital and CU Medicine provide funding for the specialty clinics. During any specialty clinic, you can find doctors from Children's Hospital that specialize in individual needs of the patients that are on the schedule on that given day.



In 2021, many of these in-person clinics had to be canceled and transitioned to telehealth. Although this was convenient, it hindered the hands-on care many of these patients need.

## 15 SPECIALTY CLINICS with 134 appointments

4 HEALTHY CHILD CLINICS

with 75 appointments

Healthy Child Clinics

Healthy Child Clinics offer free vision, hearing, speech, social/emotional, developmental and dental screenings to all children ages six months to five years old. The goal is to identify any health or developmental issues early and refer to appropriate resources before any problems develop. Because of social distancing and concern of spread, some of these clinics were canceled in 2021.

#### School-Based Oral Health Services

#### 1818 DENTAL HYGIENE KITS

delivered to elementary students during Dental Health Month

COVID-19 directly impacted oral health screening efforts in the first part of 2021 when oral health staff were deployed to assist with vaccination scheduling and onsite clinics. During the second quarter, staff utilized a series of networking and advertisements for outreach. In February dental hygiene kits were delivered to elementary schools during Children's Dental Health Month. The kits included posters, newsletters. crossword puzzles, coloring pages and brushing calendars. Kits were delivered to Fleming, Akron, Haxtun, Holyoke, Julesburg, Yuma, Lone Star/Otis, Merino, Peetz, and Wray elementary schools.

Oral health staff continued outreach to daycare and preschool settings as more restrictions lifted in the spring and summer. However, with

#### 458 STUDENTS

at 11 schools received oral health screenings beginning in the fall

COVID-19 numbers constantly changing, a significant impact was unattainable in these settings.

Due to staff turnover, outreach slowed during the latter part of the summer. With the recruitment of new staff and Registered Dental Hygienists, we were able to schedule school screenings starting in September and were able to again provide much-needed screenings that had not been possible since 2019.

#### 225 ORAL HEALTH KITS

provided to adults and children during the Holiday Campaign

During the fall, staff began safely providing oral health screenings in schools including fluoride treatments and sealants. Students who received screenings also received oral health kits totaling \$1,623. As 2021 ended, we received donations from Colorado Department of Health and Environment (CDPHE) to reach adults and children in several counties during our Holiday Campaign.



### **CLIENT SERVICES**

#### **Immunization**

The immunization program strives to protect our communities against vaccine preventable diseases by increasing immunization coverage in the northeast region. Our program provides routine vaccination services for infants, children, teens and adults. The immunization program also provides immunization education and resources for local families, schools, childcare centers and community partners.

# NCHD implemented mass vaccination clinics across the northeast region and helped to coordinate on-site vaccination clinics.

In 2021, the immunization program expanded clinic services to provide added access to COVID-19 vaccine. We continued mass vaccination clinics across all counties and helped coordinate on-site clinics for multiple community partners and agencies.

Additionally, we partnered with CDPHE to offer mobile vaccinations for our region. Our team successfully administered a total of 6,161 COVID-19 vaccines throughout the year.

## 7639 VACCINES ADMINISTERED

6 county total administered

#### 108 TB SKIN TESTS

6 county total tests

#### 4147 PATIENTS

a total from all 6 counties



	Vaccines Administered	TB Skin Tests	Patients
Logan	1448	60	692
Morgan	4267	48	2187
Phillips	331	0	183
Sedgwick	24	0	24
Washington	564	0	320
Yuma	1005	0	627

#### **Communicable Diseases**

A core duty of public health is the tracking and control of communicable diseases. Communicable diseases are spread by physical contact with an infected person, contact with a contaminated surface or object, bites from infectious insects or animals and airborne transmission.

All hospitals, physician offices and laboratories in our health region are required to report positive communicable disease information to NCHD, per state regulations. Public health investigates illnesses and outbreaks to halt further transmission. The numbers included on this page represent the combined diagnosis totals of all six of our counties.



## 55 COMMUNICABLE DISEASES reported in 2021

Diagnosis	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Campylobacteriosis	39	56	44	31	17
Cryptosporidiosis	12	12	2	1	4
Giardiasis	8	4	2	4	2
Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome	0	0	1	1	2
Influenza - Hospitalized	48	60	62	42	7
Legionellosis	0	1	0	1	0
Pertussis	3	0	9	0	0
Salmonellosis	24	22	21	35	10
Shigellosis	7	1	4	2	4
STEC (Shiga Toxin Producing E.coli)	8	12	15	9	8
Tularemia	0	0	1	0	1
West Nile Virus	5	10	4	1	0
Total	154	178	165	127	55

## The high road to nutrition

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

WIC is a nutrition program providing supplemental nutritious foods, nutritional education, breastfeeding support, and referrals to health services and other community resources.

### 1938 ENROLLED

on average

In early 2021, there was an executive order that issued \$3 billion additional dollars to go toward funding the WIC program. As part of the American Rescue Plan Act, the WIC Cash Value Benefit (CVB) for fruits and vegetables increased by \$35 a month for each client over 1 year of age. This was in effect from June through December. The continuing resolution extended the increased fruit and vegetable benefit and adjusted the benefit levels to \$24/month for children, \$43/month for pregnant and postpartum participants, and \$47/month for breastfeeding participants.

## 1771 VOUCHERED PARTICIPANTS

on average

WIC also continued to offer all clients the opportunity to receive services remotely to reduce COVID-19 exposure. Requirements for in-person office visits for enrollment or re-enrollment were suspended providing the flexibility to postpone physical appointments and in-person pickup of Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards allowing food benefits to be issued remotely.

\$1,247,306 EBT

vendor sales

The WIC CVB improved the diets and health of WIC participants. In 2021 they were able to consume even more healthy fruits and vegetables.



### **CLIENT SERVICES**

#### Reproductive Health (Family Planning)

This Program provides quality services, helping to meet the reproductive health and birth control needs of men and women in Northeast Colorado. Services provided include abstinence counseling, physical exams, pap smears, adolescent healthy relationship counseling, pelvic exams, clinical breast exams, substance use screening, STI testing and treatment, pregnancy tests, and several forms of birth control with birth control counseling.

Our goal is to help our clients make informed decisions. allowing them to take charge of their reproductive health.

We continued Family Planning services including in-person clinic visits throughout 2021.

Patient count by county listed below:

	Patients	Office Visits
Logan	118	220
Morgan	219	423
Phillips	24	46
Sedgwick	1	4
Washington	3	3
Yuma	79	166



**Cervical cancer** screenings in 2021 were the exact same number as in 2020.

#### 45 SCREENINGS

to prevent cervical cancer (same number as in 2020)

#### 223 STI TESTS

includes Gonorrhea and **Chlamydia testing** 

# We all hit rough spots in life

#### LifeSource Project

The LifeSource Project is a program focused on preventing youth suicide in our region. LifeSource helps remove financial barriers for youth at risk for suicide to get them the help they need.



### PREVENTION SERVICES

#### **Tobacco Cessation**

The Tobacco Program, like all others, learned the importance of adaptability in 2021. The Spring school semester saw schools that were trying to finish up a challenging school year where buildings were closed to visitors, and many school employees were working to keep up with the everchanging environment. As a result, the Tobacco team had very few interactions with schools during the spring and into the summer.

The Fall semester allowed little change, but one opportunity did work out when the team partnered with Centennial Mental Health Center to safely deliver a joint presentation to one local high school. This combined effort reached 120 kids.

The tobacco team did have success in delivering "quit kits" to a variety of community partners during the year. These kits offer information and resources for tobacco cessation and can be a key resource for those interested in stopping nicotine addiction.

## 1 PRESENTATION reaching 120 students

## 316 QUIT KITS given out



The Baby and Me Tobacco Free (BMTF) program transferred to a full telehealth model starting July 1, 2021. Women interested in quitting smoking are now referred to the National BMTF Facilitator.

#### **Chronic Illness**

A new grant for NCHD in 2021, this program is focused on serving those with Medicaid coverage, as well as those that are uninsured.

The early part of this program focused on learning what we needed to know about preventable diseases that are prevalent in our area so that the team could provide helpful resources to area communities. With the help of research from CU Anschutz, the team learned about four common cancers in the region that are considered preventable and survivable with regular screenings: prostate cancer, breast cancer, lung cancer and colorectal cancer.

# Data collection results highlighted a much higher number of preventable cancers in our region.

As the year ended, the team met with Sedgwick County Health Center to start uncovering some of the challenges that providers face in working to help patients facing chronic illnesses, and learned that transportation challenges are immense since specialty doctors are located on the front range of Colorado.

Finally, to share information with the community, the program began distributing important prevention messages via health televisions that are available in clinic waiting rooms.





## ANNUAL FINANCIALS

#### Revenues

Total	\$5,046,049.35	
Insurance Billing	\$34,385.71	1%
Fees	\$384,909.43	8%
Contracts & Grants	\$3,591,485.51	71%
County Per Capita	\$697,956.00	14%
State Per Capita	\$205,933.50	4%
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$131,379.20	2%

#### Revenues by Department

Admin & EPR	\$1,410,458.77	28%
Environmental Health	\$483,471.85	10%
COVID-19	\$1,453,885.29	29%
Nursing	\$1,698,233.44	33%







### Expenditures

Salaries /Related	\$3,016,052.30	63%	
Travel	\$86,983.75	2%	
Operating	\$1,653,928.65	35%	
Tota	\$4,756,964.70		

### Expenditures by Department

Total Expenditures	\$4,756,964,70		I	
Admin & EPR	\$1,225,121.33	26%		
Environmental Health	\$484,001.16	10%		
COVID-19	\$1,355,939.65	28%		
Nursing	\$1,691,902.56	36%		

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