



PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION
Office of the State Public Health Director

Kate Brown, Governor

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Health
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July 30, 2021

The Honorable Kathy Schwartz
Wasco County Commissioner
Chair, North Central Public Health District Board of Health
511 Washington St, Ste 302
The Dalles, OR 97058

Dear Commissioner Schwartz:

The triennial onsite agency review of North Central Public Health District (NCPHD) was conducted between February 13, 2020 and December 16, 2020. (Completion of reviews and review reports was delayed due to the focus on the COVID-19 response.) The Oregon Health Authority Public Health Division reviewed NCPHD's public health programs for compliance with state and federal public health laws and compliance with the Intergovernmental Agreement for the Financing of Public Health Services and the Intergovernmental Agreement for Environmental Health Services.

The triennial review included the appraisal of items in 15 program areas, listed below. Program areas with compliance findings are indicated with an asterisk.

Administration	Public Health Emergency Preparedness
Babies First! and Perinatal	Reproductive Health Community
Civil Rights	Participation & Assurance of Access
Communicable Disease*	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
Drinking Water Services*	Tobacco Prevention and Education
Fiscal	Tuberculosis
Food, Pool and Lodging Health & Safety*	Vital Records
Health Officer	
Immunizations*	

An overview report is enclosed, which includes a list of specific compliance findings, descriptions of programs, and areas of strength identified throughout the review. We urge you to review the report as it contains important information about your public health programs and their requirements.

Please note that the results of this triennial review are very good. Our team worked closely with Shellie Campbell, Local Public Health Administrator, to resolve all findings.

A full report with all documentation from the review will be sent to Shellie Campbell. We think the report will be of assistance to your public health staff in their continuing efforts to provide quality public health services to your community.

Overall, reviewers find NCPHD to be composed of a committed team of professionals who deliver quality public health services to your community. The citizens of Gilliam, Sherman and Wasco Counties are very fortunate to have this agency providing comprehensive public health services.

At this time, all findings noted in the report have been resolved. Thank you for your support for the strong public health work NCPHD is providing.

Sincerely,



Andrew Epstein
Public Health Systems Consultant

Enclosure

cc: David Anderson, NCPHD Board
Joan Bird, Sherman County Commissioner, NCPHD Vice-Chair
Jayme Mason, NCPHD Board
Pat Shannon, Gilliam County Commissioner, NCPHD Board
Dani Sperry, NCPHD Board
Taylor Steen, NCPHD Board
Roger J. Whitley, NCPHD Board
Shellie Campbell, Public Health Director and Local Public Health Administrator



July 30, 2021

North Central Public Health District Triennial Review Report

This is an overview report of the triennial review of North Central Public Health District (NCPHD), which was conducted between February 13, 2020 and December 16, 2020. This report is a summary of individual reports from participating programs compiled by the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) Office of the State Public Health Director. Detailed individual reports will be sent to Shellie Campbell, Public Health Director and Local Public Health Administrator. We urge you to review this document as it contains important information about your public health programs and their requirements.

NCPHD received from OHA Public Health Division \$486,605 in Federal Funds for the fiscal year 2019. The LPHA also received \$449,151 from State General Fund Support and \$129,822 Other Funds for the same period.

Report Prepared by: Andrew Epstein, Public Health Systems Consultant, Office of the State Public Health Director

COMPLIANCE FINDINGS SUMMARY

Administration

The Local Public Health Authority (LPHA) is in compliance with all program requirements.

Babies First! And Perinatal

The LPHA is in compliance with all program requirements.

Civil Rights

The LPHA is in compliance with all program requirements.

Communicable Disease

The LPHA must do the following to comply with program requirements:

1. Review the LPHA's Bloodborne Pathogen Protocol annually. **Resolved: 7/29/2021**

2. Complete case investigations within required timeframe and enter dates completed. For cases that are unable to be interviewed, update the date of completion to the date of first interview attempt. **Resolved: 7/29/2021**

Drinking Water Services

The LPHA must do the following to comply with program requirements:

1. Immediately following acute Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) alerts (E.coli, Nitrate, and Arsenic), consult with and provide advice to the water system operator on appropriate actions to ensure that follow-up sampling is completed, applicable public notices are distributed, and that appropriate corrective actions are initiated. **Resolved: 11/20/2020**
2. Submit level two coliform investigation forms to OHA within 30 days of triggered investigation date. **Resolved: 11/20/2020**
3. Follow up with a failure to take corrective action letter if deficiencies from water system surveys are not corrected by the specified timeframe. **Resolved: 11/20/2020**

Fiscal

The LPHA is in compliance with all program requirements.

Food, Pool and Lodging Health & Safety

The LPHA must do the following to comply with program requirements:

1. Provide justification as to why inspection rates were low in 2019. Submit an implementation plan explaining how licensed facility workload will be prioritized when staff return to conducting field work. **Resolved: 12/11/2020**
2. Completely fill out Inspection reports and obtain signatures on the inspection report that is given to the operator. Completely fill out handwritten temporary restaurant inspection reports and licenses. **Resolved: 12/11/2020**
3. Complete inspections within 45 days of opening for a restaurant or bed and breakfast facility. **Resolved: 12/11/2020**

Health Officer

The LPHA is in compliance with all program requirements.

Immunizations

The LPHA must do the following to comply with program requirements:

1. Have the current influenza standing order and the Guidelines for Managing Adverse Events standing order signed by Health Officer Mimi McDonell.

Resolved: 3/2/2020

Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP)

The LPHA is in compliance with all program requirements.

Reproductive Health Community Participation & Assurance of Access

The LPHA is in compliance with all program requirements.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases

The LPHA is in compliance with all program requirements.

Tobacco Prevention and Education Program

The LPHA is in compliance with all program requirements.

Tuberculosis

The LPHA is in compliance with all program requirements.

Vital Records

The LPHA is in compliance with all program requirements.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW AND STRENGTHS

Administration, Civil Rights and Health Officer

North Central Public Health District (NCPHD) provides an array of public health services within the foundational program areas of communicable disease control, environmental public health, prevention of injury and disease and health promotion, and access to clinical preventive services. The NCPHD Board of Health, which includes commissioners from Wasco, Sherman and Gilliam Counties, is the Local Public Health Authority (LPHA) governing body. Shellie Campbell is interim Local Public Health Administrator and Dr. Mimi McDonell is the Health Officer. An internal leadership team consisting of the Public Health Director, Fiscal Manager, Officer Manager, Clinical Programs Manager, Environmental Health Manager, and Health Officer meets regularly to guide NCPHD's work.

Program strengths:

- NCPHD has a strong leadership team and staff that go above and beyond for the public. The Public Health Director shared as an example that while environmental health staff understand the need to ensure local establishments comply with health

and safety regulations, they provide as much education and mentoring as possible to ensure that businesses can continue to operate if they can do so safely. They balance community safety with empathy for people's livelihood.

- In an environment where LPHAs have limited resources to meet public health needs, NCPHD has successfully leveraged funding opportunities to fill gaps. NCPHD has established itself as a leader through efforts including the Eastern Oregon Modernization Collaborative, which includes 11 LPHAs, the Eastern Oregon Coordinated Care Organization (CCO), and Mid-Columbia Health Advocates. As the lead on this project, NCPHD uses public health modernization funds to employ a regional epidemiology team and has engaged organizations to decrease rates of sexually transmitted infections education and targeted interventions.
- NCPHD received health department accreditation from the Public Health Accreditation Board in 2017 by demonstrating its use of modern standards for public health practice and a commitment to accountability and quality improvement.
- NCPHD maintains strong relationships with both of the CCOs serving community members within its jurisdiction and has worked with the CCOs to elevate the importance of population health approaches, particularly regarding maternal and child health.
- Relationships have been built between NCPHD and law enforcement and corrections, resulting in greater access to reproductive health services and education for those at highest risk, as well as efforts to provide the overdose reversal drug naloxone to people with a history of drug use upon release.

Babies First! And Perinatal

OHA's Maternal and Child Health (MCH) section works to address health promotion issues across the lifespan of individuals and families. The MCH Section provides support to LPHAs to implement Title V activities, the Babies First! Home Visiting Program and the Oregon Mothers Care Program.

NCPHD has prioritized Title V funding to support access to well-woman care through Family Planning Clinics and increase understanding of NEAR science (Neuroscience, Epigenetics, ACES and Resilience), and the impact of childhood adversity on lifelong health. Between 7/1/2019 and 6/30/2020, the Babies First! Public Health Nurse Home Visiting Program served a total of 96 clients (75 infants/children and 21 perinatal/caregivers). Pregnant women are provided with assistance to access health insurance and other services through the Oregon Mothers Care Program.

Program strengths:

- NCPHD has been able to maintain support for families through the Babies First! program despite many shifts to staffing and the need to provide services by telehealth during the pandemic.
- Interim program supervisor is supporting new home visitor by providing orientation and regular reflective supervision.
- Regular Babies First! team meetings are being held and team describes supportive team culture.
- Successful implementation of electronic medical records for home visiting services that provides appropriate documentation of home visiting and targeted case managements services.
- Building partnerships with rural clinics in Sherman and Gilliam Counties to address education, outreach and access to clinical services for adolescents
- Training WIC and Home Visiting staff in food insecurity questions and referral options. Participation in Gorge Grown Food Coalition.
- Support to the COVID-19 response work starting in March 2020.

Communicable Disease

NCPHD's Communicable Disease (CD) program is extremely committed to CD control and prevention with Jeremy Hawkins at the helm. Grace Anderson also does some case investigation, and they had assistance from Callie Lamendola-Gilliam, the Eastern Oregon Modernization Epidemiologist. They have eight active Orpheus (state CD data system) users, though Jeremy does most of CD investigations for the health district. During the review period, Feb 2017-Jan 2020, NCPHD received 193 disease reports, 46 of which required case interviews.

Jeremy Hawkins is extremely knowledgeable about CD prevention and control and answers questions in a timely manner. Jeremy is experienced and reliable, asks questions of state epidemiologist staff as needed, and is a strong partner in Oregon's public health infrastructure. Jeremy is very engaged in protecting public health and has a very collaborative spirit. NCPHD participates leads the Eastern Oregon Public Health Modernization Collaborative and understands the importance of community collaboration including efforts to maintain relationships with providers and local area hospitals.

Drinking Water Services

The drinking water program provides technical services and support to public water systems. These services include responding to water quality alerts, requests from water system operators, drinking water contamination events, responding to spills, emergencies,

and inspection of water system facilities. The drinking water services provided to water systems result in reduced health risk and increased compliance with drinking water standards. The drinking water program reports data to OHA Drinking Water Services (DWS) as necessary for program management and to meet federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Safe Drinking Water Act program requirements.

NCPHD's Drinking Water Program is in the hands of professional and hardworking Environmental Health Specialists. The program works cooperatively with state Drinking Water Services staff to help assure safe drinking water for the 61 active public water systems it supervises.

Fiscal

The finance division of NCPHD is charged with all fiscal matters, including developing, maintaining, and monitoring the NCPHD budget; monthly revenue and expenditure reporting and reconciliations to managers/supervisors; and managing federal and state grants and awards. The finance division is also responsible for contract development, monitoring/oversight and implementation; human and administration resources services; and contractually-required fiscal and data collection, analysis and reporting.

NCPHD has sufficient internal controls to adequately safeguard assets, and to detect and prevent errors in a timely manner. The operation is well organized, monitored and efficient with a commitment to quality, fairness and accuracy

Food, Pool and Lodging Health and Safety

NCPHD's Environmental Health Program works in partnership with OHA and the industry to protect public health by licensing, inspecting and enforcing health and safety regulations in food, pool and lodging facilities. These facilities include restaurants, mobile food units, temporary food booths at events, public pools and spas, hotels and motels, bed and breakfasts and organizational camps.

North Central Public Health District (NCPHD) Environmental Health staff are doing a good job of providing environmental health services to the community. Due to several staff changes/retirements in 2019, the overall average inspection rates for the 2017-2019 review period dropped in some licensing categories. As of the time the review was conducted, NCPHD was fully staffed, which will enhance the LPHA's ability to achieve required inspection frequencies going forward.

OHA understands the need for flexibility during the COVID-19 pandemic and does not expect LPHAs to meet inspection quotas during this time. After the pandemic and/or the Governor's Emergency orders have ended, a timeline will be established by OHA to determine when LPHAs should be back in compliance for inspection rates in all licensed facility programs.

Immunizations

North Central Public Health District's immunization program has been implemented by a long-term Immunization Coordinator, Dianne Kerr, who is now considering retirement. Rebecca Swora, the new coordinator, has been with the district for a couple of years but is new to the position. Having an experienced mentor to assist with the transition is a significant benefit. The LPHA should consider encouraging cross-training to develop additional depth to the program.

North Central PHD is committed to improving immunization access in their community. They have recently taken on additional delegate agencies in Maupin and Moro. They have worked with CareOregon to assure patients are assigned to primary care providers that provide vaccines and they encourage patients to be vaccinated in their medical homes.

Public Health Emergency Preparedness

NCPHD's Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) Program is currently coordinated at 1.0 FTE, by Tanya Wray, who serves as PHEP Coordinator among other duties, including coordinating the Wasco County Medical Reserve Corps. The Emergency Preparedness Program – Program Element 12 contract also funds the following positions/FTE: CD Control Investigator (.40 FTE) and Health Officer (.02 FTE). The PHEP program receives the following in-kind support from NCPHD: Environmental Health Supervisor (.10 FTE), RN's (.05 FTE), Admin/Admin Support Staff (included in indirect charges).

NCPHD's Emergency Preparedness program demonstrated many notable strengths, including the following examples:

- NCPHD maintains a robust All-Hazards base plan and supporting planning documentation.
- NCPHD's PHEP Program develops a comprehensive Annual Work Plan and Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan, which contribute to program success.
- All NCPHD staff receive emergency preparedness training, including FEMA's IS 100 & 700 courses at a minimum.
- NCPHD regularly conducts routine and emergency communications with the community at large.
- NCPHD has demonstrated aptitude in responding to emergencies such as the COVID-19 Pandemic response (2020-present), and numerous large-scale wildfire responses including White River Wildfire (2020) and Substation, Long Hollow, and South Valley Fires (2018). Wildfire response has involved supporting widespread evacuations, addressing impacts to a long-term care facility and other

vulnerable populations within the community, support to Fire IMT for COVID-19 response in camp, public information and warning, etc.

- NCPHD supported enhanced community readiness by participating in the Statewide Operation OX Medical Countermeasures exercise.
- Participation in efforts such as the Region 6 Health Care Coalition (HCC) supports working relationships with local Emergency Management and the larger response community. These relationships leverage enhanced opportunities for coordination in planning, training, exercise and response activities.
 - NCPHD is recognized for outstanding effort in hosting of the Regional ESF-8 quarterly meetings and facilitating subcommittees.
- NCPHD is commended for leading or participating in a variety of special projects, including:
 - Facilitation of Wasco County Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), including organization of the annual Wasco Co. MRC Blanket Drive (8th annual) to benefit local homeless shelter.
 - “Step It Up Students”, a special grant funded project, which partners schools and MRC.
 - 2018 State Homeland Security Grant: First aid training for Wasco County MRC members and citizens.
 - Active member of “Get Ready The Dalles” planning committee.
 - Participation in Wasco County Crisis Response Committee and School Reunification Committee.
 - COVID response: NCPHD has worked to coordinate with partners throughout the duration of the COVID-19 response.

Reproductive Health Community Participation and Assurance of Access

NCPHD provides clinical services within their community and works with at least six local partners to improve access to reproductive health services. They have created and implemented a local program plan to help ensure access to reproductive health services.

NCPHD is doing a good job meeting across their three-county region to ensure community members and organizations understand how to access reproductive health services within their community. For example, NCPHD conducted focus groups with young people to better understand how to incorporate social media into reproductive health outreach. As a result, they have created several social media tools and campaigns to increase their online presence.

In addition to the relationships with community members, NCPHD developed several relationships with local organizations to expand access to reproductive health services. For example, they developed a relationship with the local corrections agency, NORCOR,

and was able to leverage grant funds to begin providing reproductive health services in the correctional facility.

NCPHD has done a great job developing and nurturing partnerships with community-based organizations across the region. One relationship that stands out is with The Next Door, a social services organization that provides a multitude of services including foster-care, OHP enrollment assistance, and economic development trainings. OHP Enrollment Assistants at The Next Door were interested in conducting outreach and education to the LatinX community about reproductive health services available within their community. Together, NCPHD and The Next Door developed messaging for radio and social media. They also organized efforts to conduct outreach at community meetings and events.

Another partnership that stands out is with the Gorge Urology clinic. NCPHD did a great job developing this relationship, finalizing the MOU, and working to provide referrals for vasectomy services within their community. There is a lot of enthusiasm among providers and community members around these expanded services. This community partnership is a great example of improving access to reproductive health services.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD)

NCPHD provides STD testing, treatment, and partner services for Wasco, Sherman, and Gilliam Counties out of its location in The Dalles. The district's STD morbidity is concentrated in Wasco County. The county's chlamydia rate in 2019 was 463 per 100,000 people, slightly higher than the statewide chlamydia rate of 451.9/100,000. The county's gonorrhea rate in 2019 was 84 per 100,000 people, much lower than the statewide rate of 144.1/100,000. The early (i.e., infectious) syphilis rate in 2019 was 7 per 100,000 people, lower than the statewide rate of 11.4/100,000. By comparison, the 2017 rates for chlamydia, gonorrhea, and early syphilis were 284.1, 51.7, and 3.7 per 100,000, respectively. Across the district, there were just seven early syphilis cases and four late syphilis cases in the review period. The district's gonorrhea case count rose from 15 in 2017 to 26 in 2019.

Program strengths:

- The NCPHD team consists of extremely dedicated staff working on STD case investigations and in STD clinical services. Orpheus documentation is excellent.
- The NCPHD's informative website includes helpful information related to STD services, including what happens during an STD visit, what to do in case of adverse effects to STD medications, and how to inquire about costs of care.
- NCPHD conducts educational outreach about STD prevention through presentations in schools and community outreach through fliers and social media posts.

Tobacco Prevention and Education Program

NCPHD's Tobacco Prevention and Education Program (TPEP) takes a comprehensive approach to tobacco prevention. The program facilitates community partnerships, creates tobacco-free environments, promotes quitting among adults and youth, and works to reduce the burden of tobacco-related chronic diseases. NCPHD has fulfilled all local duties and activities related to enforcing the Oregon Indoor Clean Air Act.

NCPHD's TPEP works with community partners and decision-makers to protect people from secondhand smoke by promoting local expansion of the Indoor Clean Air Act (ICAA) and establishment of tobacco-free spaces. The program works with decision-makers across three counties through regular presentations and engagement efforts, and has cultivated strong partnerships with other tobacco, alcohol and other drug prevention staff to create a regional prevention approach. NCPHD's TPEP promoted the Oregon Tobacco Quit Line by integrating information into presentations with community members, decision-makers, medical offices, and through their regional work to create and improve closed loop referral systems for tobacco cessation.

Tuberculosis (TB)

NCPHD is low incidence for TB. There were no cases of TB disease since the last review period. There were B waiver immigrant TB referrals and probable TB cases during the review period.

NCPHD tests for and treats latent TB infection (LTBI). This exceeds expectations as described in the TB program element. Testing and treating LTBI provides staff with valuable experience managing TB when there are no cases of TB disease. NCPHD allows staff time to attend training about TB and staff are knowledgeable about TB. NCPHD has all the needed lab services available to care for TB patients.

Vital Records

A total of 336 deaths and 237 births occurred in Sherman and Wasco Counties between November 3rd 2019 and November 3rd 2020. (Gilliam County provides its own vital records services separately from NCPHD.) The office of vital records serves their community by offering a local office where certified copies of birth and death records are available to order by authorized individuals. The district is limited to providing this service for the first six months after the event, whether birth or death. Orders placed in this office are completed within one day.

NCPHD's Office of Vital Records consistently provides excellent customer service to their customers and partners in the community. Productivity reports show strong marks, and customer orders are properly entered and processed per statute. Staff members in the

state office who work with the county staff report a similar high regard for the work of this office.

QUALITY ASSURANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Administrative

1. Continue the excellent work of building foundational capabilities including epidemiology, health equity and leadership for NCPHD and Eastern Oregon through ongoing participation in the Eastern Oregon Modernization Collaborative.

Babies First! And Perinatal

1. Work with MCH Nurse Consultant to regularly review ORCHIDS program data to improve quality of data.
2. Consider changes to EMR that prompt all areas of nursing assessment to be documented.
3. Use of prenatal weight gain grid is recommended. Use validated screening tools for substance use disorder, IPV and mood disorders (see Babies First! clinical guidelines) required. Recommend standardizing parent-child interaction assessment and intervention (see Babies First! clinical guidelines).
4. Support supervision for all home visitors that includes two hours of reflective supervision per month, four charts reviewed per nurse per year, and one observed home visits per year.
5. Develop and implement a procedure to ensure regular review of program policies (at least every three years).

Communicable Disease

1. Create and post online an annual report of communicable disease reports for counties within NCPHD that is posted online. Link to the state's communicable disease monthly reports posted on OHA's website.
2. Check vaccine status on all cases of chronic hepatitis B cases. This can be done by the internal button to query alert.
3. Create cases from ELRs and eCRs within one working day of being reported.