

**MISSION: TO PROMOTE, PROTECT, AND IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF THE COMMUNITY BY ASSESSING AND RESPONDING TO NEEDS, ASSURING SERVICES, DEVELOPING POLICIES, AND FOSTERING COLLABORATION.**



## IN THE MIDST OF A GLOBAL PANDEMIC, WE ARE STILL **CARRYING ON THE MISSION**

Fiscal year 2019-20 has brought with it unprecedented challenges, and Catawba County Public Health has risen to the occasion, continuing to carry on the mission of public health through both our transformative community work, alongside our response to a global pandemic that has dramatically altered how we operate as an organization and as a community.



**Jennifer McCracken**  
Catawba County  
Public Health  
Director

Despite the demands of responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have continued to offer a high level of service to our county's residents who deserve no less than our best. We have found innovative ways to deliver our regular services while supporting our county's residents, institutions and businesses to prevent rapid spread of this new illness.

In the midst of all this, we welcomed a familiar face to our highest leadership position, with Jennifer McCracken taking the helm in the midst of the pandemic.

This fiscal year, with the support of more than 40 community partners and broad participation from the public, we were able to assess our community's top health needs and identify ways to collaboratively address our county's top three priorities: chronic disease, behavioral health and healthy foods/healthy weight. These collaborative efforts between staff and community partners will pay off dividends for many years to come — through improved health for Catawba County's residents.

In this Annual Report, you will find just a few examples of the many ways in which we are advancing health in Catawba County through innovation and collaboration — from service delivery to strategic partnerships that amplify impact, and how we use data to drive our decision making. We applaud our Public Health team for their commitment to this work, and we thank all of our partners for helping make initiatives like these possible. With their support, we can continue to lead the way to a healthier community.

**VISION & VALUES: LEADING THE WAY TO A HEALTHIER COMMUNITY THROUGH COLLABORATION, PEOPLE, RESPECT, INNOVATION, TRUST AND EXCELLENCE**

# CATAWBA COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

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**A Special Thanks to the  
Catawba County Board of Health  
for their service during the  
2019-20 Fiscal Year**

- Dr. David C. Hamilton, Jr. (Chair)
- Ms. Gloria Costin
- Dr. Matthew Davis
- Mr. John Dollar
- Dr. Dana H. Greene
- Dr. Gail Hamilton Brandon
- Mr. Dan Hunsucker
- Ms. Susan Knowles, RN
- Dr. Sharon Monday
- Mr. William Pitts
- Mr. Brian Potocki

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# Employee of the Year

## DORI MALTBA SELECTED FOR INNOVATION IN MEETING COMMUNITY’S NEEDS

**Nine employees were nominated for this year’s Employee of the Year. After careful review of the nominations, the Employee Committee selected Dori Maltba as the 2019 Employee of the Year.**

From her nomination: Dori Maltba has been employed at Catawba County Public Health for only two years, but in those years, she has consistently gone above and beyond in her position as Charge Nurse in our Immunization Clinic. Immunizations are a vital part of a healthy community and Dori plays a huge role in making sure that patients have convenient access to vaccines. Dori’s clinic is extremely organized and runs like a well-oiled machine.

Not only does Dori handle regularly scheduled Immunization appointments, every August-September the public scrambles to get the required immunizations for school. Dori makes every possible accommodation to ensure as many children get vaccinated as possible. She works closely with the WIC department and its participants to give vaccinations to children while they are in the building. In addition, Dori also works with CVMC Maternity Services to vaccinate their pregnant patients while they are in the building for prenatal appointments. These patients are vaccinated even if the Immunization Clinic is scheduled to be closed.



Dori thinks outside the box when trying to make access to immunizations easier for our patients. In years past, our RHA patients would have to board vans and make a trip to Public Health to have their flu shots administered. This process was very time consuming for the RHA employees and sometimes very stressful and unpleasant for the patients. However, this season Dori felt that the process would be more productive if the flu vaccines were taken to the RHA facility and administered there. RHA employees were more than willing to give this new process a try and they were not disappointed. By implementing this change, the vaccination process was substantially more efficient, and the patients got to stay in their familiar environment, remaining stress free (aside from receiving a shot!). It was a total WIN for all involved parties! RHA employees were very appreciative of the process change and are hopeful that the process will remain the same in the future.

Coworkers like Dori Maltba are what make working at Catawba County Public Health rewarding. Even though she is stretched to the max with running her own clinic, participating in “pop-up” vaccination clinics at the soup kitchen or the Salvation Army, providing back up services to TB/CD staff, and preparing for COVID-19, she still graces us daily with her smiling face and humble attitude. Her tireless drive to give top notch service to this community is priceless. Catawba County Public Health is a better place because Dori is here.

# Finance

Catawba County Public Health strives to meet the needs of the community through the responsible and effective use of monetary resources.

## Budgeted Revenues

STATE/FEDERAL .....	\$1,866,442
FEES.....	\$2,003,183
COUNTY .....	\$3,820,945
OTHER .....	\$1,842,536

## Budgeted Expenses

ADMINISTRATION .....	\$998,026
CASE MANAGEMENT .....	\$796,970
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH .....	\$1,397,733
SCHOOL HEALTH .....	\$2,007,818
CLINICAL/PROGRAM SERVICES .....	\$4,332,559
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>\$9,533,106</b>

# Service Areas

- » **FAMILY PLANNING** — Provides services related to family planning and birth control to teen and adult women
- » **SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASE** — Confidential services for teens and adults to prevent the spread of common sexually transmitted diseases
- » **BREAST AND CERVICAL CANCER CONTROL PROGRAM (BCCCP)** — Provides cancer prevention services to older adult women
- » **WOMEN, INFANTS AND CHILDREN (WIC)** — Serves children from birth to age 5 and pregnant, postpartum and breastfeeding women
- » **IMMUNIZATIONS** — Offers all required immunizations for children, travel and other vaccinations for adults, and flu shots for all ages
- » **COMMUNICABLE DISEASE** — Monitors disease reporting and provides management and treatment of communicable diseases (including tuberculosis)
- » **SCHOOL HEALTH** — Ensures children in grades K-12 have access to preventive and acute health care
- » **EARLY CHILDHOOD SUPPORT TEAM** — Provides health services to children, staff, and families in child care centers
- » **CARE MANAGEMENT FOR AT RISK CHILDREN (CMARC)** — Supports healthy development of children ages birth to 5
- » **CARE MANAGEMENT FOR HIGH RISK PREGNANCY (CMHRP)** — Connects pregnant women with resources during pregnancy and after childbirth to help ensure healthy birth outcomes
- » **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH** — Provides inspection and plan review services to ensure clean water, sanitary septic services, and works with facilities and restaurants to encourage the use of procedures that protect the public

### ASSURANCE PARTNERSHIPS

- » **CATAWBA VALLEY MEDICAL CENTER - MATERNITY SERVICES** — Prenatal care for women, including those with high-risk medical conditions
- » **KINTEGRA FAMILY DENTISTRY - HICKORY** — Provides family dental services to children and adults who qualify
- » **CATAWBA PEDIATRIC ASSOCIATES, PA** — Comprehensive medical care and immunizations for children

# Who We Serve

## Clinical Services

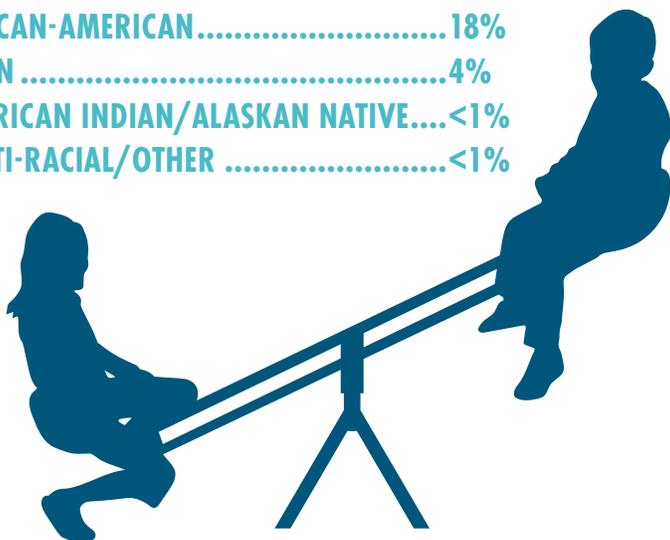


FEMALE: 74% MALE: 26%



### RACIAL BREAKDOWN

WHITE .....	77%
AFRICAN-AMERICAN.....	18%
ASIAN .....	4%
AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKAN NATIVE....	<1%
MULTI-RACIAL/OTHER .....	<1%



## Women, Infants & Children (WIC) (average month)

### RACIAL BREAKDOWN

WHITE.....	72%
AFRICAN-AMERICAN.....	14%
ASIAN .....	10%
AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKAN NATIVE....	<1%
MULTI-RACIAL/OTHER .....	4%



### AGES

INFANTS .....	26%
CHILDREN AGES 1-5.....	50%
WOMEN .....	24%

# ASSESSING & RESPONDING TO COMMUNITY NEEDS

## TAKING ACTION AMID A PANDEMIC

A new threat to health — COVID-19 — emerged shortly before the new year, bringing with it a brand new set of challenges for Public Health staff.

For most people, the disease causes minor symptoms and can be managed at home; but for some, it can lead to hospitalization or death. As COVID-19 arrived in the U.S., we began ramping up preparations for its potential spread to Catawba County.

Our preparations included communication with community partners across many sectors: area physicians, congregate care facilities, organizations that work with vulnerable populations, the business community, child cares, schools, and state health leaders.

Our in-house Epi Team began meeting to plan for responding to local cases, and we organized informational sessions for people who lead our community's most vulnerable populations to begin preparing for a coordinated response.

After weeks of preparations, Catawba County's first positive case was identified on March 20 and was followed 10 days later with our first



COVID-19 death. By the end of the fiscal year, only a little over four months later, there had been nearly 2,000 cases identified in the county.

Staff members from across the organization have stepped up to the challenge by manning a COVID-19 hotline 7 days a week, providing testing services 2 days a week, and conducting case investigation and contact tracing 7 days a week.

The crisis has also been an opportunity for us to build on existing partnerships, as we provided support to Catawba

Valley Medical Center's respiratory clinic, and kicked off testing with the support of Kintegra Health. We have also utilized partnerships with Emergency Services and Social Services as they have filled personnel gaps and assisted with testing logistics.

Although the pandemic is far from over, we continue to work alongside these and other partners to ensure that people who need tests can get them, especially those who do not have ready access to a medical home or who may not have insurance coverage.

## ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

### Inspections

- » Total number of food, lodging and institutional establishments to inspect: 1,027
- » Well, septic and water sample applications: 974
- » Food service and lodging complaints: 108
- » Septic and well complaints: 77

### Lead Exposure Investigations

Environmental Health Specialists conducted 4.



### Environmental Health Staff Addition

Catawba County Environmental Health added an Environmental Health Administrator in FY 2019-20. The position provides guidance to supervisors responsible for the Food, Lodging and Institution Sanitation and On-site Water Protection sections, monitors programs within each section, manages outcomes, and develops and maintains the Environmental Health budget.



## POINTING TOWARD WELLNESS

Catawba County Public Health and key community partners served more than 90 people at an outreach event at the Hickory Soup Kitchen in February. The event, called Pointing Toward Wellness, included participation from Catawba Family Care and Kintegra Health, Catawba Valley Medical System, ALFA and Greater Hickory Cooperative Christian Ministries. Public Health staff administered Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B vaccines, and gave out information on the services we provide. Our partners connected people to appointments for Hepatitis C treatment and primary care, and provided harm reduction and other needed supplies.



## COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT

The Health Promotion and Strategy team completed the 2019 Community Health Assessment (CHA) in March. Development of the CHA is a rigorous process that takes more than 18 months from start to finish.

The team worked alongside more than 40 community partners to compile and analyze health data, then use that analysis to determine the county's health priorities for the next three years. The CHA draws data from many agencies and partners, and relies on extensive input from community members as decisions were made on content, format and priorities.

Once completed, the CHA is an invaluable resource for the community, using evidence rather than assumptions to guide

improvements to our community's health. Ultimately, the CHA is a guide that allows us to know more and do better to impact the health of our community, and In the upcoming months, we will continue to collaborate with our partners to develop our Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP).

### THE 2019 HEALTH PRIORITIES SELECTED ARE:

- » Chronic disease
- » Behavioral health
- » Healthy foods/healthy weight

There will also be a focus on two foundational components, housing and transportation.

**READ MORE:** The CHA is available online at [https://catawbacountync.gov/site/assets/files/2488/2019\\_catawba\\_county\\_cha.pdf](https://catawbacountync.gov/site/assets/files/2488/2019_catawba_county_cha.pdf).

## GRANT PROMOTES BREAST HEALTH



Through our partnership with Catawba County United Way, we increased our Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program (BCCCP) outreach to African-American women through a Lay Health Advisor program.

Supported by her lived experience as an African-American woman and breast cancer survivor, the Lay Health Advisor worked to educate more than 100 at-risk women about breast cancer and the importance of regular screening, and

linked these women to our BCCCP program.

The program's goal was to increase the number of African-American women who receive screening services, as this population has an increased breast cancer mortality rate.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD SUPPORT TEAM

1,007 children learned about healthy habits and behaviors such as nutrition, physical activity and dental hygiene in 35 classes.



ECST nurses transitioned 10 children with chronic health conditions to the schools nurses for entry into kindergarten.

## WOMEN, INFANTS & CHILDREN



At the end of the 2019-20 fiscal year, there were 33 WIC-approved vendors in Catawba County.

3,502 average clients per month



## COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Flu death.....	7
Pertussis .....	0
Hepatitis B .....	30
Hepatitis C.....	135
Animal Control Reports...	292
Rabies in Animals .....	9

### Gastrointestinal Disease:

Catawba County saw a downward shift in gastrointestinal disease in 2019. This is the first year since 2015 where the number of cases decreased.

**Legionnaire's Disease:** There was a multi-state outbreak of Legionnaires' Disease following the Mountain State Fair. Three cases were identified in Catawba County residents but they were unrelated to the fair outbreak.

## ADULT HEALTH

### Number of Patients Seen

Breast and Cervical Cancer Control (BCCCP).....	141
Family Planning .....	826
Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD).....	1,061
Other Adult Health Services .....	122

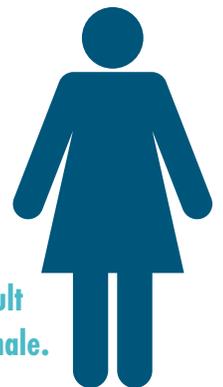
### Long-Term Contraceptives

Intrauterine Device .....	75
Nexplanon Implant .....	97



### STI Diagnosis

Chlamydia .....	637
Gonorrhea .....	276
Non-Gonococcal Urethritis .....	12
Pelvic Inflammatory Disease .....	12
Syphilis.....	18
HIV & AIDS .....	18



4 out of 5 clients seen in the Adult Health clinic were female.



## PUBLIC HEALTH FARMERS MARKET

» The market made a local financial impact of more than \$13,000 in non-cash purchases, with 1,739 WIC Farmers Market Vouchers redeemed here.

» Catawba County was once again the highest county in the state for the percentage of redeemed vouchers in 2018 (numbers released in FY 2019-20). WIC participants here redeemed 60.87% of issued vouchers. By comparison, the second-highest county had a 48.66% redemption rate. These voucher redemptions brought an additional \$8,020 into the local economy.

## CARE MANAGEMENT FOR AT RISK CHILDREN

- » 4 care managers (2 social workers, 2 registered nurses)
- » Worked with WIC to increase families' access to WIC services by referring 35 case managed families to WIC

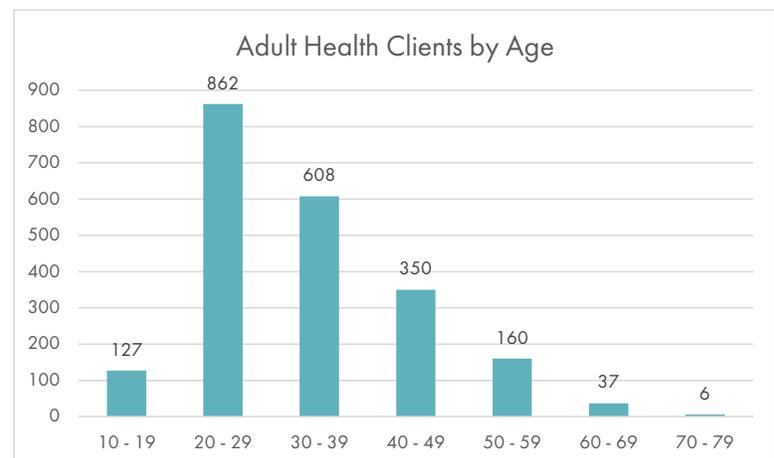
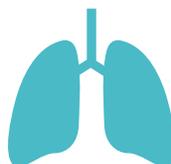
## IMMUNIZATIONS

2,735

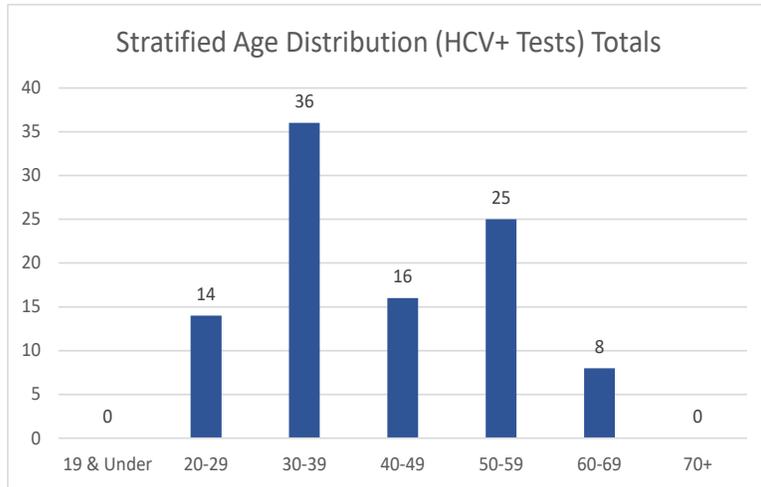
vaccines given to 1,337 immunizations clients at Public Health. These include both childhood and adult vaccines.

440

flu shots given during the 2019-20 flu season



# FOSTERING COLLABORATION & ASSURING SERVICES



## HEPATITIS C COALITION

The Catawba County Hepatitis C Coalition has continued to address the coordination of testing, treating and reporting Hepatitis C in Catawba County. The coalition continued to make progress through targeted testing events, provider outreach, and the development of a universal reporting tool that allows the group to identify local Hepatitis C trends and identify areas of opportunity.

Coalition participants were able to link 46 people who tested positive for Hepatitis C to care, and 21 people were able to complete Hepatitis C treatment and are considered cured based on negative lab results. Another 26 completed their medications and are presumed to be cured, but have not obtained confirmatory lab results yet.

Coalition collaborators include agencies involved in testing and treatment, mental health care providers, and organizations that provide ancillary services, such as public transportation, Medicaid transportation and syringe exchange.

## CARE MANAGEMENT FOR HIGH RISK PREGNANCY

- » Worked with WIC to increase pregnant women's access to nutrition services by referring 108 case managed women to WIC
- » 5 full time care managers (4 social workers, 1 registered nurse)
- » 1 care manager (social worker) serves only at-risk pregnant women who are not eligible for Medicaid



## LIVEWELL CATAWBA COALITION

LiveWell Catawba's Coalition continued to meet virtually despite the challenges COVID-19 presented. LiveWell Catawba staff trained a diverse group of Coalition members on Results-Based Accountability, a framework that has the end outcome in mind throughout the decision-making process. It is a data-driven way to move past talking about problems and spurs action. LiveWell Catawba will be using the process to address the county's top health priorities.

LiveWell Catawba continues to receive support from The Duke Endowment's Healthy People, Healthy Carolinas Initiative.

## LIVEWELL AT WORK

LiveWell at Work recognizes Catawba County workplaces that are committed to improving employee health and wellness. LiveWell Catawba recognized 25 companies that met evidence-based work site wellness standards in tobacco control, physical activity, nutrition, prevention and screening, and policy and organizational supports in FY 2019-20.

## LIVEWELL SCHOOLS

LiveWell Schools aims to create and support a culture of wellness in schools by promoting the use of best practices for policies and environments that promote health. Part of this is accomplished through Healthy Schools Program assessment and action plans. In FY 2019-20, 23 out of 42 Catawba County, Hickory and Newton-Conover schools completed Healthy Schools Program action plans.

Of the schools that completed the Healthy Schools Program assessment, 88.9% showed improvement from the 2018-2019 to the 2019-2020 school year (16 of 22 schools). Improvements have been made across all three school districts in the areas of policy environment, nutrition services, and employee wellness. School action plans for the 2019-2020 school, primarily focused on promoting healthy food and beverage choices and school meals using marketing and merchandising techniques, increasing physical activity during recess, availability of physical activity breaks, access to health assessments for staff members and programs for staff members on physical activity and fitness and health eating and weight management.



## SUPPORTING SCHOOL NURSES

Public Health School Nurses provided services to the more than 4,500 students in our county with identified conditions that affect learning, responded to emergency medical situations at schools and provided nutrition, physical activity, injury prevention and dental health classes to students.

### 2019-20 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The 2019-20 school year posed unique challenges, as schools completed the academic year through remote learning. Here is a look at some of the work school nurses were able to accomplish despite the pandemic.

- » Student office visits: 36,706
- » Students needing medications: 1,281
- » Students receiving care management services: 996
- » Health education sessions/presentations: 561
- » Vision screenings: 9,584

### ATHLETIC TRAINING

This fiscal year, school nurses taught high school Athletic Trainers how to spot a potentially deadly allergic reaction and to administer epinephrine in those types of emergencies.

The training is offered in partnership with Catawba Valley Health System, which employs Athletic Trainers for Maiden, Newton-Conover, Bunker Hill, Bandys and St. Stephens high schools and is another example of how we are improving health through innovative partnerships throughout the county. All schools in each of the county's three school systems have an EpiPen on site that can be used to treat anaphylactic shock.

### FUNDING AT A GLANCE

The work of Catawba County Public Health's School Nursing Program is made possible through collaborative support from all three local school districts, the county, the state, and especially through funding provided by Catawba Valley Health System. Public Health is thankful to have partners with the foresight and leadership to make the school health

program successful. This leadership will be felt by children and families for generations to come through improved health.

» In 2000, CVHS recognized the strong link between health and academic success, and partnered with Public Health by allocating funding for 5 school nurse positions.

» In 2005, CVHS led a successful grant proposal for Duke Endowment funds that allowed an additional 8 school nurses to be hired.

» In 2015, CVHS doubled its contribution to the school health program to a \$1 million annual investment, allowing the additional nurses it funds to continue making an impact on the health of thousands of students across the county.

## PARTNERING FOR SMILES

Kintegra Family Dentistry, located in the Public Health building and operated by Kintegra Health Services,



emphasizes early dental care by providing preventive services, dental education and treatment of dental issues. The clinic performed more than 4,000 visits for

Catawba County children and adults in FY 2019-20.

### LINKING CLIENTS TO CARE

Many of these visits were a result of the Child Health Outreach Program (CHOP), which links children in WIC with dental services and children in the dental clinic with WIC services through the work of a CHOP coordinator. The coordinator also works to facilitate visits with Kintegra Family Dentistry and Catawba Valley Medical Center – Maternity Services. In FY 2019-20, the dental clinic performed more than 200 visits with prenatal clients.

### TAKING DENTAL CARE TO STUDENTS

Kintegra Family Dentistry provides services to children on the Mobile Dental Unit through outreach efforts at schools in all three county school districts. On the mobile unit, dental staff screen children and provide preventive care, including cleanings, x-rays and sealants. Should children need restorative care, they are referred for further treatment. The mobile unit served nearly 800 Catawba County children this fiscal year.

### SCHOOL HEALTH

School nurses provide dental education to show students how to develop good dental hygiene. Children who are free of dental issues can focus on learning in class, and good dental hygiene learned in childhood and practiced throughout the lifetime helps prevent dental disease as adults.

## IMPROVING BIRTH OUTCOMES

Through a partnership between Kintegra Health and Catawba Valley Medical Center-Maternity Services and with support from our Care Management for High Risk Pregnancy (CMHRP) and Case Management for At Risk Children (CMARC) teams, we are pleased to share that more pregnant women than ever before are able to access Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) services in Catawba County. These services help women receive mental health care coupled with medications that help decrease their bodies' need for drugs.

Because of the program's success in its first year, it was expanded to include two additional prenatal provider practices this year.

This fiscal year, the program enrolled 16 patients from Maternity Services, Catawba Women's Center and A Woman's View. Birth outcomes for babies born to these mothers are dramatically improved compared to the national average. Thirteen of those women have given birth, with infants staying in the hospital 7.36 days on average, compared to 16.9 days for an average baby with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS); two additional infants were born without any symptoms of NAS. In addition, there was an average of 68.3% reduction in cigarette use at delivery.

## GRANT EXPANDS PARTNERSHIP

Catawba County Public Health was awarded more than \$123,000 in November through the Community Linkages to Care for Overdose Prevention and Response grant from the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. Grant funds are being used to partner with ALFA's Foothills-Area Harm Reduction Mission (the FARM), which

runs all aspects of a syringe exchange program that helps individuals access clean syringes, safe-injection supplies and naloxone; and provides connections to helping agencies that address social determinants of health; and referrals for substance use treatment for people who are interested in taking that step. Collaborations like this help prevent the spread of bloodborne pathogens such as HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C. This is an excellent example of how we strategically leverage resources and create partnerships to impact residents' health.



## SERVING MORE PREGNANT WOMEN

A state grant in 2019-20 allowed for an additional Care Management for High Risk Pregnancies (CMHRP) position to serve at-risk pregnant women who are not eligible for Medicaid. We now have 5 full-time care managers, each of whom carries between 45-60 clients on their case load. This fills a gap in services for pregnant women and helps promote healthy birth outcomes for both mother and child.

## FLU SHOT CHANGE WELL RECEIVED

In fall 2019, the immunizations team made changes in its administration of the annual flu vaccine that resulted in a decrease in staff time, fewer steps in the process, fewer resources needed, and increased the ease of obtaining the vaccine. With one of the most impactful changes, the team went out to RHA clients at their day center instead of clients traveling to Public Health. This small change decreased Public Health's staff time by more than half and proved to be more convenient for RHA staff and clients.

# IMPROVING THE CLIENT EXPERIENCE

## ADULT HEALTH IMPROVEMENTS

» Jennifer Isaac joined the Adult Health team as the mid-level provider in mid-February. She is a Board Certified Women's Health Nurse Practitioner.

» Whitney Looney, RN, earned her Enhanced Role Registered Nurse (ERRN) certification through UNC Chapel Hill's Gillings School of Public Health. This allows her to evaluate and treat clients with STDs, expanding access for these individuals.

» Clinic renovations were completed this fiscal year, modernizing the look of the clinic, making it more appealing for clients. The Immunizations Clinic also underwent similar renovations.

» We strive to be a trusted provider of services for everyone, and have made inroads with hard-to-reach populations through a concerted effort to promote inclusivity. We interacted with thousands of people from all walks of life at the Catawba Valley Pride event, events at Catawba Valley Community College and Lenoir-Rhyne University, Centro Latino and church-led events throughout the county to promote our services.

» We added a new pharmacy module to our existing electronic records system. This module allows us to more efficiently dispense and track prescriptions, further improving the client experience.

# USING POLICY FOR TRANSFORMATION



## QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Every year since 2017, staff have participated in an online survey to measure knowledge and perception of Quality Improvement principles and definitions here at Public Health. Developing a strong understanding of QI helps us make informed decisions, flex our problem solving muscles, and sustain improvements for the benefit of our clients and patients. Our survey results show that our knowledge has grown significantly since 2017.

### QI PROJECTS THIS FISCAL YEAR INCLUDED

- » Improving communication with staff through revamping our Monthly Update's design and delivery, and promoting staff engagement with its content
- » Equipping staff to use QI techniques: 62% of staff received one or more QI training to learn techniques
- » Using best practices to create a morning huddle for staff working the COVID triage line: We saw an immediate improvement in staff's ability to handle higher call volumes through clear communication and shared decision-making
- » Collected more client feedback than ever before through the use of surveys in multiple program areas
- » Developed a new Environmental Health permit review process that decreased the number that needed to be reviewed and highlights potential areas for growth

### BY THE NUMBERS

- » In 2017, 65% of Public Health staff felt they could define Quality Improvement; by 2020, 95% could.
- » 63% could describe the benefits of QI in 2017, and 95% could in 2020.
- » Staff also recognized that QI involves changing processes, is data-driven and requires involvement at all levels of the organization.

## TOBACCO PREVENTION AWARD

We were honored in December with the Transforming Health Achievement Award from the North Carolina Tobacco



Prevention and Control branch for our implementation of the CATCH My Breath program in middle and high schools across all three Catawba County school systems. Our school nurses embraced

the evidence-based youth tobacco prevention curriculum and have been instrumental in making the program a success.

### WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

From 2011 to 2017, e-cigarette use by high school students increased nearly 900 percent with 16.9 percent of students reporting e-cigarette use in 2017. Among middle school students, e-cigarette use increased by over 400 percent from 2011 to 2017. Use of e-cigarettes by students while in school poses health and safety risks and violates established tobacco-free school policies in North Carolina.

### OTHER WORK

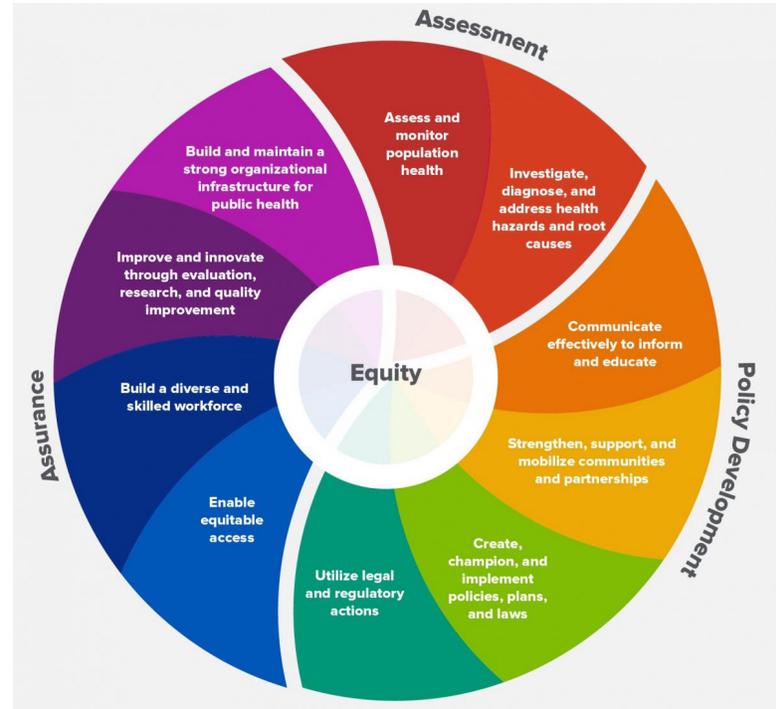
- » We worked with other county agencies to add new signage that alerts clients to our nicotine-free policy
- » We updated our "tox boxes" and created an additional box. These boxes are filled with items that contain nicotine, such as vapes, Juuls, smokeless tobacco, cigars, cigarillos, cigarettes and more. They are used by our school nurses and other community partners as an educational tool so students, parents, teachers and school administrators will know what these products look like and what dangers they pose.

# ESSENTIAL PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES REVISED

The 10 Essential Public Health Services provide a framework for public health to protect and promote the health of all people in all communities and describe the public health activities that all communities should undertake.

The Essential Services were updated in 2020 and the work of Catawba County Public Health continues to align with this revised framework.

1. Assess and monitor population health status, factors that influence health, and community needs and assets
2. Investigate, diagnose, and address health problems and hazards affecting the population
3. Communicate effectively to inform and educate people about health, factors that influence it, and how to improve it
4. Strengthen, support, and mobilize communities and partnerships to improve health
5. Create, champion, and implement policies, plans, and laws that impact health
6. Utilize legal and regulatory actions designed to improve and protect the public's health
7. Assure an effective system that enables equitable access to the individual services and care needed to be healthy
8. Build and support a diverse and skilled public health workforce
9. Improve and innovate public health functions through



ongoing evaluation, research, and continuous quality improvement

10. Build and maintain a strong organizational infrastructure for public health

## COMMUNITY IMPACT

### In their words

We strive to provide the best service possible, and our client surveys are a way to measure how well we measure up to that ideal. Here is what some of our clients had to say:

**96% of Adult Health clients were satisfied with the service they received.**

“Excellent service. This is my first experience and I felt comfortable and taken care of. Thank you so much.” — Adult Health Survey Respondent

**100% of WIC clients were satisfied with the service they received.**

“I was very satisfied with the services I received today. All staff I came in contact with are very courteous and wonderful; went above and beyond. Very helpful.” — WIC Survey Respondent

**91% of Environmental Health survey respondents felt the overall quality of our services was good or excellent.**

“I have to say I am very impressed by your staff. They have been extremely helpful and timely in helping me get my septic permit. Thanks so much! Great team!” — Environmental Health Survey Respondent

**95% of respondents said they felt the school nurse was improving the overall wellbeing of students at the school.**

“I feel our nurse does an excellent job of treating students who are in need of medical attention, informing us with information we need to know, and is kind and very professional.” — School Nurse Survey Respondent