



Polk County Health Department
2016 - 2017 Annual Report

Letter from Rick Kozin

At the Health Department, it often feels like we have competing goals. We provide direct services, through our clinic, to about 15,000 people each year. But, we are “responsible” for the health of all 450,000+ residents of Polk County. As part of that responsibility we try to ensure that everyone has a medical home.

“Medical home” is the term given to a team-based health care delivery model led by a health care provider to provide comprehensive and continuous medical care to patients with a goal to obtain maximal health outcomes.

It is not our intent to be a medical home. Through our clinic we provide valuable services that include immunizations, important screenings, testing and physicals. But, we are not unique providers of these services. Nor are our services comprehensive enough to be a medical home for our patients. To whom do we offer these services so that we can meet true community needs but not undermine the goal of assisting people to have a medical home? Or, as importantly, don't tempt people away from an existing medical home.

This past year I think we struck the right balance.

We participate in a number of back-to-school health fairs. Our goal is to ensure that people who come to a back-to-school health fairs should only have to come once. In working with our partners who provided back-to-school health fairs we reached out to many of the families who attended the previous year. We worked to get them into a family physician where they could begin to establish that valuable relationship, and not need to come to a school gymnasium next year for their child's physical or immunizations. For those who do not have a doctor this option needs to be available. That is why at these events there were not only providers to deliver services but there were also intake people from provider clinics to help families take first steps toward establishing care at their clinic. And, there were resources for people without health insurance or who want more help finding a doctor or dentist. We should view this as an opportunity to get them connected for the long term.

Late last January, the Iowa Department of Public Health announced a new meningitis immunization requirement for students entering 7th grade and 12th grade. We worked closely with school nurses throughout the county to use this as



opportunity to encourage families to connect, or re-connect, with their regular doctor. We worked with our provider partners to create some flexibility in their scheduling process and appointment calendar to accommodate families' needs and challenges. For those without that medical home, or without health insurance the Health Department stepped in. On day one of the school year 95% of the students impacted by the new requirement were able to enroll in school. At the Polk County Health Department we immunized about 5% of them. This is approximately the same number as there are uninsured children in our community. (more information on page 7)

In both instances we stepped up to help meet a community need. But our approach was in support of a broader community goal.

Rick Kozin, Director





Our Mission

To create the conditions for all people to live healthy lives by engaging residents, reducing health disparities and attending to the needs of our most vulnerable families.

Our Vision

To be a leader in encouraging everyone to take responsibility for improving their own health and building the kind of society that supports and enables all of us to live healthy lives.

Board of Supervisors



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Tom Newton, Vice President of Network Engagement - Wellmark Blue Cross & Blue Shield

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HUD Grant Helps Children in Polk County

With funding from the Iowa Department of Public Health, the Polk County Health Department established the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program and began following up on lead poisoned children in 1998.

In 2006, the Polk County Board of Health adopted a regulation that requires a lead inspection be completed by a Certified Lead Inspector in properties where a child has been identified with an elevated blood lead level. The regulation further requires that lead hazards identified during these inspections must be addressed by the owner of the property to prevent further lead exposure. In addition, the Polk County Board of Supervisors began county funding to make the necessary repairs to deteriorating lead paint in homes of small children that qualified for services.

All blood lead level results for children up to age six in Polk County are reported to the Childhood Lead Poisoning Program Coordinator by the Iowa Department of Public Health. Children under the age of six are at the highest risk of lead poisoning. During these years, children tend to put their hands or other objects, which may be contaminated with lead dust, into their mouths. Children's bodies absorb lead at a higher rate. Complications of lead poisoning can lead to intellectual disabilities as a child's brain is still developing. Additional complications can include damage to their kidneys and nervous system.

Last winter, we were awarded our third grant from The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Health Department received 2.5 million dollars to remediate 150 homes in Polk and Dallas County for lead hazards and 387,000 dollars to remediate healthy home hazards over the next three years. To date, this grant has successfully made 29 homes lead safe. Fifty-two children in Polk and Dallas counties are now living in lead safe homes. Our healthy homes nurse will assess 65 of the 150 homes for additional hazards. The nurse looks for things that might need additional repairs such as radon mitigation, reduction of trip/fall hazards, installation of exhaust fans to eliminate moisture/gas, correcting electrical issues and pest mitigation. Healthy homes repairs have been conducted on 11 of those homes. We currently have four homes in the construction phase of remediation and anticipate completing those along with five others by the end of this year.

To date, almost 400 homes have been made lead safe using HUD and Polk County funding. Over 600 children have completed development milestones without long term health effects such as intellectual disabilities and damage to their kidneys and nervous system. Over 600 children are now thriving academically, personally and professionally. These children are able to fulfill dreams and goals that might not have been possible with the help of the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program and funding from the county and HUD. When you think about a house being able to help a child in all of those positive ways, that is a success.



Before



After

Meningitis Immunization Outreach Campaign

It's often quoted: "It's not WHAT you know, it's WHO you know." WHAT the Polk County Health Department knew at the beginning of March, 2017 was that 96% of all seventh graders and 94% of all 12th graders (a total of 8,400) still needed their meningococcal vaccination in the next 175 days before school began. Our question soon became: WHO would help us accomplish this herculean task? A new rule from the Iowa Department of Public Health required that all students enrolling in seventh and 12th grade have the meningococcal vaccine or be excluded on the first day of school.

We knew that Polk County Health Department lacked the labor capacity to do it all ourselves. Moreover, we knew that we, ourselves, had little leverage to attract families to show up for vaccinations during the summer recess. In order to do this, we would need everyone to work together to motivate families, and to administer the vaccinations--Public Health, medical providers, schools and families. What we needed was a robust and committed partnership, and we believed this could be built.

Our plan was straightforward: we would perform the standard Public Health functions: convene conversations with stakeholders, develop a strategy to vaccinate within the allowable time, and then evaluate and communicate results.

Beginning in March, 2017, we visited with every single school district to show them a

plan we had formulated for the remainder of the school year and the summer. The plan included a communication schedule, a list of people of influence (teachers, coaches, etc.) who could help carry informal messages, a description of a partnership among major

health systems for a formal media campaign, and targets—have 50 percent of the vaccinations completed by the end of the school year, and avoid having any kids excluded from class on Day 1.

An important piece of this campaign was the trouble

NO SHOT, NO SCHOOL

Meningitis is a life-threatening illness transmitted among teenagers.

IOWA NOW REQUIRES:
All incoming 7th and 12th graders to have a meningitis vaccination before fall 2017 classes begin.
Schedule an appointment with your health care provider today.

For more information, visit www.polkcountyiowa.gov/health



shooting service we provided. The Polk County Health Department put considerable effort into building relationships with all major medical systems in Polk County (UnityPoint, Mercy, Broadlawns, The Iowa Clinic, Primary Health Care), and were able to identify one or more key individuals within each system who could solve problems and push out best practices to many clinics. As the result of our provider relationships, we were able to communicate with school nurses exactly how many appointments were being kept open for immunizations, day by day, and provider by provider.

Finally, the formal media campaign, mentioned previously, reinforced the new meningitis requirement, to families, medical providers and schools. Assembled by Polk County Health Department and the major medical systems, the "No Shot, No School" campaign messages appeared in TV commercials, online videos, billboards and posters in schools, clinics and hospitals.

The result of all the relationships built, problems addressed, updates issued and communications sent was that on Day 1 of school, estimates of the number of students in Polk County who might be excluded was 500 - 600. In fact, according to records in the Iowa Immunization Registry Information System (IRIS), meningitis vaccinations administered locally on the first two days of school (August 23 - 24) totaled 158, a demand quite a bit lower than the original estimated number.

BD MAX Lab Probe Helps Test STDs Faster

The Polk County Health Department has been testing individuals for sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) since its inception. Testing for STDs used to be looking at the bacteria or virus under a microscope. As technology advances so does the testing capabilities.

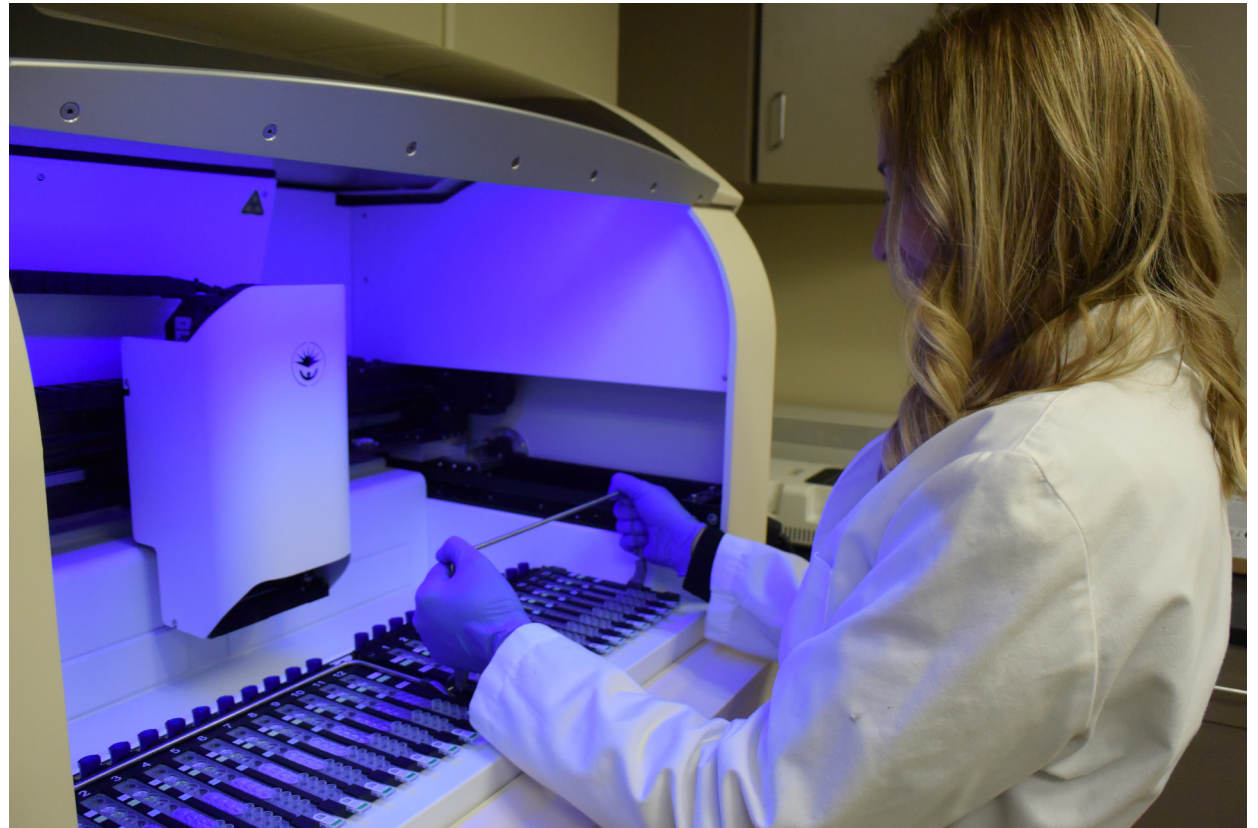
In November 2016, the Health Department started utilizing the BD MAX. The BD MAX is a laboratory instrument used in the testing for gonorrhea, chlamydia, and trichomonas. The BD MAX utilizes automated DNA extraction and real-time polymerase chain reaction (PCR). PCR testing is the duplication of targeted DNA, in this case gonorrhea, chlamydia and trichomonas. If the DNA is present in the sample, it will be targeted and duplicated. The BD MAX is then able to determine if the sample is POSITIVE or NEGATIVE for the specific organisms.

The BD MAX has been an extremely successful addition to the PCHD laboratory. Previously the Health Department laboratory used the BD Probe-Tec and the BD Viper for Gonorrhea and Chlamydia testing. Both of the preceding analyzers were prone to equipment errors and required greater manual manipulation of samples from laboratory staff. The BD MAX is run three times a week, involves minimal tech time and allows laboratory staff to focus on other tasks at hand. It should also be noted that due to the BD MAX and a successful validation study Trichomonas testing on vaginal samples as well as male and female urine samples has also been brought in house.

Our laboratory not only provides results from patients we test but patients at other testing locations. Locations include Polk County Jail, Polk County Juvenile Detention Center, Agape Pregnancy Center, The Project and Primary Health Care. Individuals can get their results within two to five days depending on what day of the week they were tested on.

Since November 2016, the Health Department has performed gonorrhea, chlamydia and trichomonas tests on 3,500 samples. The BD MAX allows more samples to be tested and faster turnaround. When we provide testing for other organizations, they do not have to send their tests out and patients can receive their results faster. Faster results can help detect STDs faster and is another way to help reduce the number of STD infections in Polk County.

To the right is a picture of a Polk County Health Department lab technician preparing the BD Max to test for gonorrhea, chlamydia and trichomonas.



Breast Cancer Billboards Reduce Health Disparities Among African American Women

Our Polk County Healthy Women Program noticed very few African American women enrolled in our program. African American women often delay seek medical care until later, are more likely to have aggressive breast cancer and more likely to die from breast cancer. The “Fight Strong, Fight Together” awareness campaign was developed to reach out to African American women.

The “Fight Strong, Fight Together” campaign was spearheaded by the Polk County Health Department and in partnership with Community Health and Wellness Consortium, National Breast Cancer Foundation, Inc. and the UnityPoint John Stoddard Cancer Center. The group consisted of African American women trying to improve the health and well-being of Polk County residents. This campaign consisted of a community publication distributed throughout the county educating women on breast cancer and reading survivor success stories. Radio PSAs and newspaper articles further pushed the campaign message along. The final piece of the campaign was a reception premiering the video testimonials from African American breast cancer survivors in our community. The evening was dedicated to promoting awareness of breast cancer screening and the importance of early detection for women in our community. The campaign also featured a short video addressing breast cancer from the male perspective.

The campaign was such a success that the Health Department wanted to keep the momentum going. We developed billboards featuring influential African American women in Polk County who are either breast cancer survivors or are currently experiencing breast cancer. Each woman was featured wearing a pink scarf to unify with breast cancer pink and they were posed behind a backdrop of Des Moines. Each billboard had its own unique breast cancer message along with the “Fight Strong, Fight Together” motto. The billboard campaign resulted in 1,989,888 impressions by people living, working and driving in Polk County (continued on page 10).



Breast Cancer Billboards Reduce Health Disparities Among African American Women



The Health Department received many reports and comments about how the billboards were bringing about important conversations in the community and within families; and not just among women. With the involvement of local survivors in the billboards, we were better able to promote awareness and are also seeing that we are overcoming the stigma of breast cancer in the African American community.

We are able to extend our reach and our ability to promote breast cancer awareness and share information about the importance of screening services for women through the involvement of individuals from our African American community. The number of African American women enrolling for services through the Healthy Women Program continues to increase and we have diagnosed breast cancers in two African American women screened through our program. With more than a 600% increase in our participation of African American women in the Healthy Women Program and now detecting breast cancers for African American women, we know that our outreach efforts through local, grassroots input and involvement is, in fact, working and more effective than traditional outreach efforts.



Program Successes

- The Nurse Case Manager was able to help a patient find some assistance that she did not know was available through her employer and the additional financial assistance she needed through community resources to meet her needs.
- Another patient enrolled in program because she had felt a lump in her breasts and did not have health insurance. Nurse case manager assisted patient with scheduling the necessary exams, imaging and was provided on-going education, support and care coordination every step of the way through her testing. Patient had a biopsy; and she was diagnosed with Stage 1 Breast Cancer.

Health Department Statistics | 2016 - 2017

Sexually Transmitted Disease Cases Investigated

Chlamydia 3,290
Gonorrhea 914
Syphilis 189
HIV 49

Total: 4,442

*These STD cases are investigated by our Public Health Investigators

Foodborne Investigations

Salmonella 1
Norovirus 1
Clostridium perfringens 2
Unable to determine 4

*90 people were treated/educated

Tuberculosis (TB) cases

20 cases of active TB contacted
20 cases of latent TB patients exposed to an active case received directly observed treatment (DOT)
355 new latent TB cases contacted
54% latent TB cases closed due to patients completed DOT
100% active and latent TB contacts to active TB cases received case management by nurses and DOT

Communicable Disease Investigations

693 cases of common communicable diseases investigated
561 contacts to pertussis identified from 45 cases and 100% of contacts were reached

Childhood Immunizations

2,672 children were immunized
88% of these children were eligible for the Vaccines for Children Program

Adult Immunizations

3,844 adults were immunizations
1,092 of those 3,844 adults were green card applicants
5,861 immunizations were given

Travel Immunizations

1,858 individuals were immunized
4,850 immunizations were given

Influenza Immunizations

7,162 individuals were immunized for the flu
107 community flu clinics were provided to Polk County residents
15.2% of children were eligible for the Vaccines for Children Program

Emergency Preparedness

Health Department staff participated in one exercise to test their skills and experience related to a public health emergency.
100% of Health Department staff completed training in incident command system to further their knowledge regarding a natural, biological or chemical disaster.

Health Department Statistics | 2016 - 2017

Sexually Transmitted Disease Outreach

Provided STD testing at 22 outreach events
At those 22 events, we provided 222 HIV tests, 96 hepatitis C tests, 1528 urine tests for chlamydia and gonorrhea and 928 urine tests for trichomonas
100% of people tested positive didn't know they were positive

Community Health Screenings

336 individuals were screened for health screenings such as cholesterol, glucose and blood pressure
7 screenings events at community settings and 2 food pantry locations (held twice a month)

Back-to-School Events

5 back-to-school events
113 students immunized and 252 immunizations were given

Education Presentations

116 education presentations were given to 1634 people

Education Classes in Spanish

One diabetes class with 17 participants
5 nutrition classes with 46 participants
11 Connections Matter classes with 18 participants

Media Relations and Social Media

10 press releases sent to the media and 7 were translated into Spanish for Spanish media
97 articles were written for the media outlets
27 media inquiries and 77% were unsolicited inquires

250 Facebook posts and 226 Twitter posts
6% increase in Twitter followers and 18% increase in Facebook likes

Healthy Women Program

268 women participated in health coaching
340 patients received case management from nurse case manager
1,693 women received services from the Polk County Healthy Women Program
13 participants were diagnosed with breast cancer or cervical pre-cancer and initial treatment in Polk County: 8 breast cancer and 5 cervical cancer cases
61.5 % of patients were diagnosed with cancer at an early stage and 1% diagnosed with cancer

Lead and Healthy Homes Program

155 patients received case management due to evaluated blood lead levels
29 homes were remediation for lead hazards
52 children now live in lead safe housing
65 homes were inspected for home health hazards such as insects, mold, radon and other environment toxics



★ HEALTH DEPARTMENT ★

NOTICE DISCRIMINATION IS AGAINST THE LAW

Polk County will provide programs and facilities which are accessible to people with disabilities and administer its programs/services in a manner that does not discriminate against any person because of race, color, religion, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin, genetic information, disability or veteran or military status.

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★ HEALTH DEPARTMENT ★

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