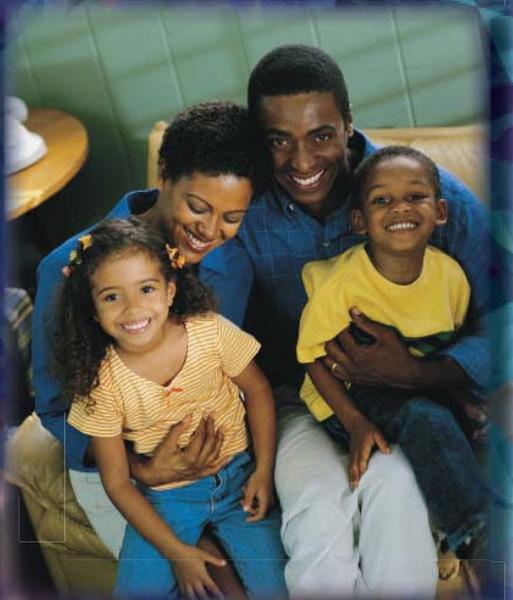




2011 Annual Report

Douglas County Health Department



Promoting and Protecting Public Health

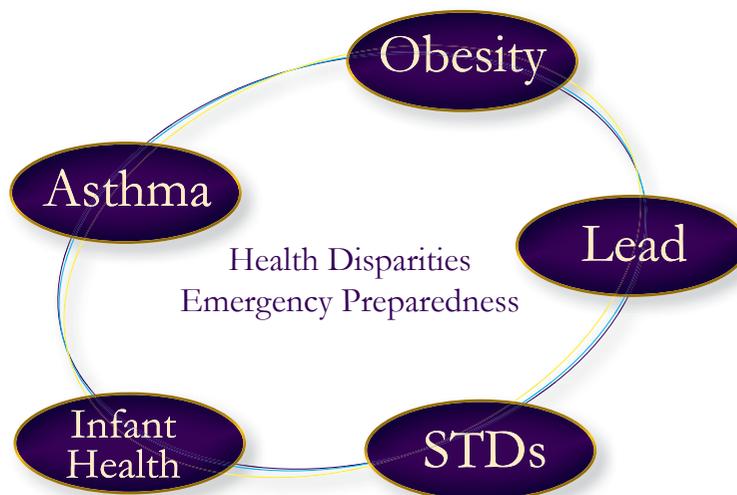


In a county of more than a half million people, mixing urban and rural, rich and poor with an ethnic diversity that matches the nation's, the Douglas County Health Department faces many challenges in addressing local public health needs. Given that more than a fourth of Nebraska's population lives in Douglas County, many of those needs are unique to the area. They also are constantly evolving.

This is the story of a year in the life of the Douglas County Health Department – a story that largely reflects the life of the community it serves.



2011 Priorities



Partnerships are in the DNA of the DCHD. For example, Health Department analysts have provided requested data for Omaha Healthy Start, Lutheran Family Services, Alegent Health, the City of Omaha Mayor's Office, Live Well Omaha, Voices for Children, and the Baby Blossoms Collaborative. Through this work, our partners have been able to obtain funding, identify priorities and direct program resources.

Working with the joint city-county Geographic Information Systems (GIS), the Health Department can map lead surveillance, WIC data, STD case distribution, Emergency Response Planning and analysis, vulnerable population identification and location, and identify health disparities. GIS also can display vital statistics data and other population characteristics in printed reports and on the department's website.

A Message from the Director



Dr. Adi M. Pour, Ph.D.
Health Director

Welcome to the Annual Report of the Douglas County Health Department. I am excited to share with you this account of the work we do on a daily basis that makes Douglas County a better and healthier place to live, work and play.

The report will highlight some, but not all, of the department's activities. This year I am extremely proud to be joined by the members of our Board of Health, who will share with you why they serve the community in this capacity. You also will find a call to action by our chairman, Dr. David Filipi.

It is my firm belief that nothing is more important to America's future, and indeed everyone's future, than our health. From a national perspective, we can look at our country's biggest challenges – increasing productivity and growing the economy, making our businesses more competitive in the international marketplace, helping our children succeed in school, reducing the national debt – and we see that improving health contributes to every single item on that list.

On the individual level, good health is fundamental to opportunity. The healthier an individual, the more freedom we have to pursue our dreams and contribute to our families and communities. A healthier community means more residents – many more residents – who have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

I invite you to join me in working with the Douglas County Board of Health for the greatest benefit and the most significant health impact in Douglas County! Please take a few moments to enjoy our annual report.

In good health,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Adi Pour".

Other Highlights

Rally for a Healthy City - The Douglas County Health Department joined community partners in celebrating the birth of a movement. A late April day was selected to share the steps already taken to improve the community's health and enlist reinforcements for the challenges ahead.

The energy could be felt by anyone close to the event. A walk through downtown Omaha followed the speeches as the hundreds in attendance displayed their resolve to make Omaha and Douglas County the nation's healthiest community.

Lothrop School Compost project - The school garden at the Omaha Public Schools' Lothrop Magnet Center taught students lessons in waste management. Items once destined for the county landfill from the school breakfast are recycled for composting. The compost materials are used in an outdoor classroom to grow fruits and vegetables, while the recycling work has reduced the number of trash bags used in the lunchroom from 20 to 2 per day.



DCHD in the Community

Radon kit give-away - The Douglas County Health Department used grant funding to promote radon education and awareness through three educational sessions held at Girls Inc. Free radon kits were handed out at those meetings, and more kits were later distributed through other agencies and the DCHD offices. The 250 kits disappeared quickly, but the demand remained, indicating a growing awareness of the problem.

DCHD moves - The Health Department traded in its long-time headquarters in the downtown Civic Center for a new base of operations at the County's Midtown Campus. Setting up shop in the former Goodwill Building allows most of the staff to be co-located. The new work space is more spacious, centrally located and a very pleasant situation in which to conduct the duties of the department.

Smoke-free for two years - The two-year mark for no smoking in public places was passed during 2011, and the movement to eliminate smoke from our lives continues to gain momentum. More and more apartments are getting into the business of being smoke-free, and a healthier community will be the result.

Teen Power - the High School Citizens Health Advisory Council was formed to bring young people into engagement with local government, especially on issues affecting their health. With our teens facing more challenges than ever, the hope is that they will be able to help devise ways to help them that adults never could discover.

Planning for Healthy Lives - where you live can make a difference in how you live. With one of six Health Impact Assessment Grants awarded nationally in hand, the Douglas County Health Department will be involved in evaluating how major community projects can have an effect on the community's health – and now DCHD will do it before they're completed.

Diagnose and investigate health problems and health hazards in the community.

The Douglas County Health Department is responsible for case managing confirmed TB cases. To many, that sounds like something out of the past, but the disease remains with us, though at lower levels. DCHD's responsibility includes an investigation to uncover the source of the disease and to locate patient contacts that may be at risk of developing TB. Testing and prevention therapy may be the next steps in a process that can last for several months.

One recent case involved a homeless man who had been in the city's shelters, putting 83 people at risk for the disease. Fortunately, the health department could use a testing method that required only one visit for those individuals, instead of the standard two-visit protocol. Still, TB case management remains a labor intensive process with no alternatives. To operate in any other manner could lead to an outbreak or the development of drug-resistant TB strains.

Mobilize Community Partnerships to Identify and Solve Health Problems.

During the past decade Douglas County has seen a reduction in infant mortality, but a gap remains between whites and the minority population. To address that situation, the Douglas County Health Department established the Baby Blossoms Collaborative with literally dozens of community partners.

Meeting quarterly, the BBC's community planning approach is supported by data analysis, current literature review and case reviews of feto-infant loss with the object of driving community health improvement responses. The goal of this collaborative is to enhance community resources and services for women, infants and families.



Link people to needed personal health services and assure the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable.

Victory cannot be claimed in the county's struggle with STDs, but an amplified effort now features an "Anyone, anytime, anywhere" approach. Nontraditional testing has become routine, with DCHD staff working to reach people where they live, work and go for entertainment.

This approach includes visits to bars and libraries, concerts and skating parties, the county jail and even churches. That means more people are being tested and more are being treated.

This past year, while the Missouri River spent nearly six months out of its banks, DCHD personnel were on constant alert to prepare for the worst. Their job included providing the solid information people need to make important decisions about their lives and health.



Enforce laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety.

Restaurants are a big part of life in Omaha and Douglas County. Around 1,000 locations big – and they offer almost every cuisine known to mankind. The Health Department has the task of making sure safe food practices are followed at all those restaurants. While it is a monumental task, the staff goes about it diligently and with consummate professionalism.

However, they are not DCHD's only inspectors. DCHD staff works throughout the community to make sure pools are safe for swimmers and well water meets the high standards required for a healthy community.

The Mid-Town Douglas County campus now includes one of 75 NCore air quality monitoring facilities, overseen by the DCHD. The site brings together several advanced measurement systems for particles, pollutant gases and meteorology.

DCHD also receives no-smoking complaints via our website. In roughly two years since a statewide smoking ban became law, the department has received 50 complaints about violations. The vigilance will continue as we work toward a healthier community.

Assure a Competent Workforce within the Healthcare Industry and Public Health Departments

Education is not an optional activity at the Douglas County Health Department. As knowledge grows, our need to put that new information to use follows. That's why employees are always working to improve their abilities.

In 2011, two disease investigators received their master's degrees in Public Health and one took the applied epidemiology training. An inspector completed work on a doctorate.

Half a dozen employees attended a two-day presentation on lessons learned from the Joplin tornado. Staff participated in annual emergency response training, including the Public Health Emergency Response Summit in Atlanta, and public information training is pursued on a regular basis. Four of our WIC staff passed the Certified Lactation Consulting exam.

DCHD staff helped plan and develop curriculum for a two-day seminar involving behavioral health professionals and the media. A medical dispensing drill was executed smoothly and a table top drill and workshop on notification and communications procedures was performed with the U.S. Postal Service.

Monthly and quarterly call-down drills maintain high skill levels, while radio tests ensure equipment and responders are able to meet emergency needs. Staff members are regularly taking advantage of webinars to improve and update their skills, and DCHD staff helped initiate Joint Information Center development in Douglas County.

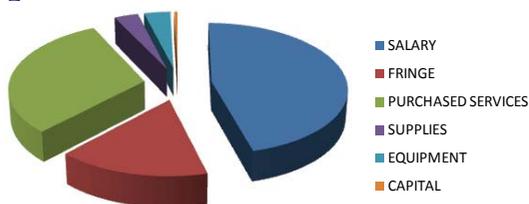
One of the most impressive accomplishments came with the staff's passing of the FEMA Incident Command System examinations, marking a new level in preparedness.

The DCHD Vital Statistics staff always looks to deliver first-rate customer service to the public when providing information, and they do it while meeting a heavy demand. During 2011, the staff sold 21,480 birth certificates and 27,668 death certificates to the public, doing so in the courteous and caring manner these situations require.

DCHD is better today than it was yesterday, but not as good as we will be tomorrow.

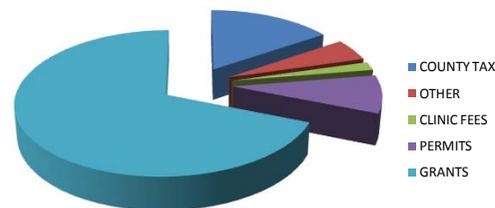
Financial Report

Expenses



Salary	6,541,563.15
Fringe	2,290,183.63
Purchased Services	4,389,172.10
Supplies	454,670.45
Equipment	501,634.40
Capital	64,149.32
TOTAL	14,241,373.05

Revenue



County Tax	2,207,700.92
Other	715,172.61
Clinic Fees	270,733.25
Permits	1,224,175.54
Grants	9,823,590.73
TOTAL	14,241,373.05



A century and a half ago, one of every 30 pioneers crossing Nebraska died of cholera and smallpox. Measles, tuberculosis and polio remained common well into the last century. Now, these diseases are

largely a thing of the past, thanks to Public Health and immunizations.

It wasn't expensive technology, but Public Health that tamed these diseases, created safe water supplies, enforced sanitation standards, encouraged vaccine innovation and drastically reduced death rates BEFORE wonder drugs. Public smoking bans have saved lives and money, maybe even yours, yet Public Health receives little credit for turning serious health risks into memories.

As talk of health care reform continues, please remember how Public Health already has lowered the cost curve. Your Douglas County Health Department has shined in the areas of food safety, inspection, epidemiology, and immunization.

Let's look at today's Public Health challenges.

- Obesity. Weight problems directly contribute to diabetes and heart disease. Tasty, healthy foods must be easily available, as should opportunities for fun, engaging exercise, or the problem will get worse every year.
- Lead. Too many children have their intellects blunted due to lead exposure that diminishes their learning capacity and their futures. Their lives must be made safe from lead contamination.
- Sexual Transmitted Disease (STD's). Douglas County youth have epidemic rates of chlamydia and gonorrhea. They must be taught, tested, treated and this plague stopped.
- Food deserts. Much of our community lacks easy access to fresh, affordable food. Without change, fatty foods and high starch carbohydrates will continue to take their place.

With Public Health leading the way, supported by engaged citizens, we can reduce diabetes, heart disease, STDs, and lead poisoning, just as we did cholera and tuberculosis.

This report documents our achievements and challenges. Join me, as I applaud the hard, often silent, but very successful work of the Douglas County Health Department.

David H. Filipi MD

David H. Filipi MD, MBA, FFAFP
Board President

Douglas County Board of Health Members



There is no greater honor than serving my fellow dentists and my fellow citizens on the Douglas County Board of Health. Representing the Creighton University School of Dentistry, the Omaha District Dental Society, and the Nebraska Dental Association, and inspired by my Board of Health colleagues, I relish the chance to set policies that directly impact the well being of all our residents.

Stuart McNally, D.D.S, Board Vice President

Being on the BOH means: Actively participating in public health policy decisions; sharing timely information about public health initiatives and programs with others; responsibility for assuring conditions in which people can be healthy.

Marlene Wilken, Ph.D. Board Secretary



I'm proud to serve on the Board of Health and witness the remarkable achievements of the Douglas County Health Department. Unending challenges are met with intelligent, efficient and successful efforts on a daily basis. It's rewarding and an honor to be associated with this dedicated service.

Lawrence S. Albert

I think it is vitally important that the county hears the actual issues and concerns directly from the people whose lives they impact on a daily basis.

Kristine Carter



Serving on the Board of Health has been an interesting and challenging journey. The greatest reward has been representing the Hispanic/Latino community through my position at UNMC/Center for Reducing Health Disparities, and to raise awareness of the importance of cultural competence in providing health services and working within a framework of respect.

Antonia Correa, MA

The privilege of representing the citizens of Douglas County's North Omaha Community on the Board of Health is one I take very seriously. Communities of color are in need of support to overcome the many challenges they face. It is my responsibility to help eliminate the health obstacles that have for too long limited the potential of these dynamic communities.

Frank T. Peak, Ph.D.



Health is one of the top issues of the next generation, and awareness of local health department's role in addressing this issue is now in the forefront. If we are going to reduce disparities and increase the overall health of the citizens of Douglas County, public health has to be part of a comprehensive solution and I want to be at the table to craft those solutions.

Chris Rodgers, Douglas County Commissioner

I am honored to serve on the Douglas County Board of Health. It is my belief that the greatest resource in any community is people. How a community takes care of people is directly related to the vibrancy of the community.

We must care for and about each other collectively.

Liz Standish, Ed.D. and MBA



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Mike Boyle Marc Kraft P.J. Morgan Chris Rodgers Pam Tusa