

# ESSEX COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

APRIL 2023

MONTHLY REPORT

DIRECTOR - LINDA BEERS, MPH



## PUBLIC HEALTH UNIT

### Director's Message

#### National Public Health Week – April 3-9, 2023

Last week, the Essex County Health Department celebrated National Public Health Week. You may have noticed the banner outside the County Complex or our week-long social media campaign, highlighting the daily themes. We also issued a press release and created a short video to call attention to the week.



Acting Health Commissioner Dr. James McDonald addressed public health professionals in an April 3 memo commemorating the week:

*“So much of the work you do on the front lines of public health revolves around respecting the cultures and diversity of the communities you serve. You are part of the fabric of these communities. With an ear to the ground, you know where the gaps in service are, and what infrastructure exists or is lacking. You know the providers community groups that may serve as partners. And you know better than I do that building trust within the community is all about building relationships.*

*Public health has taken a hit in recent years—fueled by a global pandemic and a growing mistrust of science. But I am inspired by the work you do every day to rebuild people’s trust, and to make them safer and healthier.*

*And I am inspired by the way you respond to your community’s own set of challenges, whether that involves access to nutritious food, chronic disease screening and prevention, wastewater surveillance, care of migrant workers or the homebound elderly. The list goes on and on. Within the districts you serve—from rural areas to large, urban settings—you face your own set of challenges.*

*To address these challenges—and to do so through a lens of health equity—partnering with community-based organizations is so important. Your local expertise allows us to identify the trusted messengers of communities that face barriers to care and prevention, and to break down these barriers—whether they be physical, economic, emotional, or cultural.”*



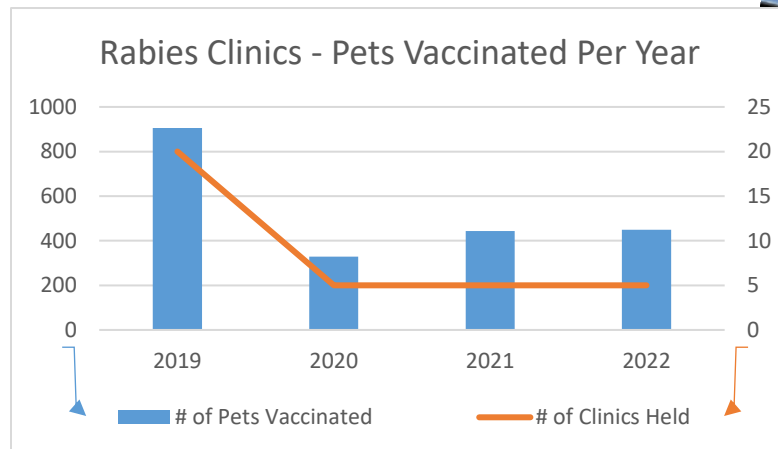
#### ECHD Hosts Combination Public Health Exercise & Real World Event in Westport

Our first Rabies Clinic of 2023 pulled double duty by also serving as a Public Health Exercise to meet our program requirements for Emergency Preparedness.

Pets Vaccinated: **146!**

Throughput: **1.2 pets per minute**

Departments/Partners Engaged: **5** (ECHD, OES, DPW, Contracted Services of the Adirondack Veterinary Hospital, and BVCS Volunteer Student)

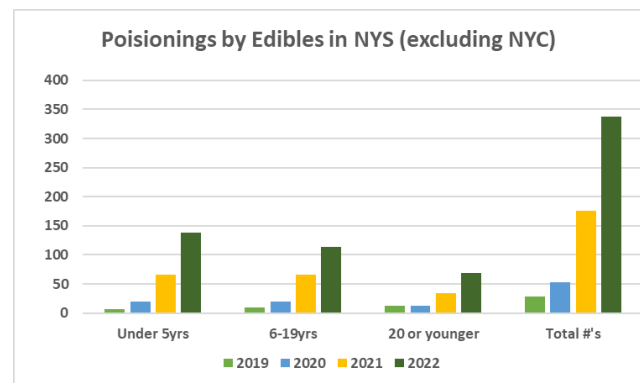


**Five** additional clinics are planned for the remainder of 2023 in the towns of **Moriah**, **Chesterfield**, **Ticonderoga**, **Lake Placid**, and **Schroon**.

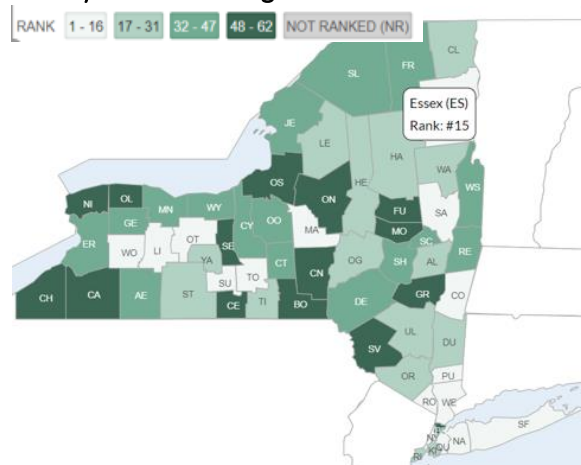
### Implications of Cannabis Legalization

The Upstate New York Poison Center (excluding NYC) has seen a sharp increase in the number of calls for children and teens who have consumed cannabis edibles. Data shows our calls increased nearly six fold from just four years ago for children and teens 19-years-old and younger who have consumed a cannabis-containing food product.

Our Public Health Director is engaged in the discussions about the implications of cannabis legalization through her work on the NYSACHO Board of Directors.



### County Health Rankings 2023



Essex County places 15 out of 62 counties when considering health outcomes. This is an improvement in standings from 2022, where the county ranked 19<sup>th</sup>.

While progress is being made, adult smoking, obesity, physical inactivity, excessive drinking, and alcohol-impaired driving death rates are all higher than NYS averages. This data informs strategies that we undertake with community based partners, as described in our [2022 Community Health Assessment](#).

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## NYSACHO Mini Grant Awarded



ECHD applied for and received a NYSACHO mini grant for **\$3K** to expand tick-borne disease prevention & education and to promote sunscreen use & skin cancer prevention efforts.



CDC's Tick Bite Bot  
Check it out on our website!

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## Outbreak Response Efforts

Since December 2022, the department has been engaged in **three** separate outbreak response events, requiring coordination between ECHD, the District Environmental Office, NYSDOH, county businesses, and the individuals impacted (both in and out of county). While these events are great learning opportunities that reveal areas for improvement, they divert significant staff time and resources away from other programmatic activities.

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## COVID-19 (CVD) Vaccination Grant – PSA Initiative

With funding from our CVD Vax Grant, we were able to harness the expertise of a local media company that produced incredible Public Service Announcements featuring trusted local health care providers and families from the region. Look for these PSAs to air soon!

Julianna and Jason:

<https://vimeo.com/812525903/dd01d5f425>



Lissa Goldstein

<https://vimeo.com/801652635/8b94d76b9d>



Dr. Michael Celotti:

<https://vimeo.com/812452493/47e2fc0ee0>



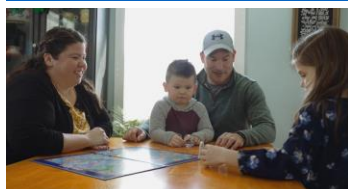
Dr. Kristin Mack

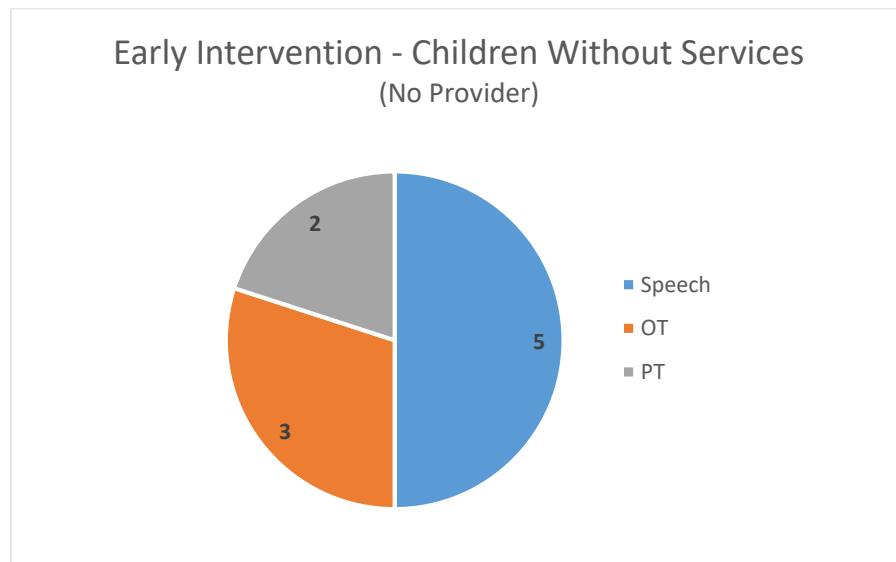
<https://vimeo.com/804414496/3bcd9bc344>



The Pulsifers:

<https://vimeo.com/812162463/d48b709bbc>



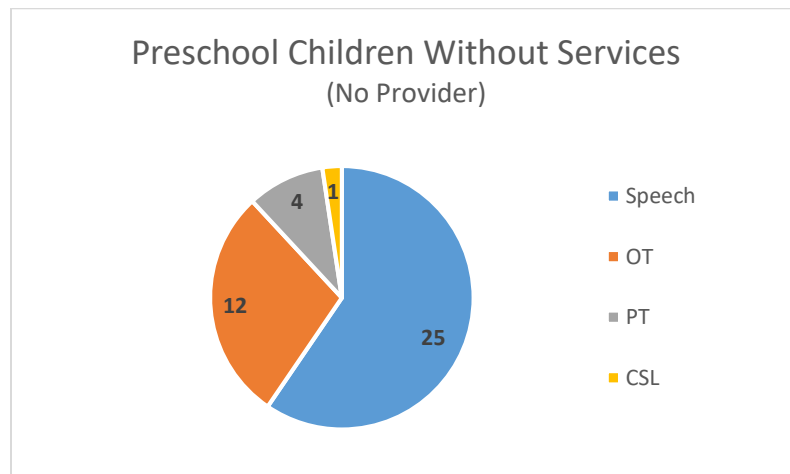


13 Children are on a waitlist to be evaluated

### Early Intervention:

Did you know?

That for all indicated cases by CPS when the child is under the age of three a referral to Early Intervention is mandated. We will work with the family to identify if there is a suspect of a delay and/or help the family identify supports and services that will be useful for the family and help support the child's development.



18 children are on a waitlist to be evaluated

### Preschool:

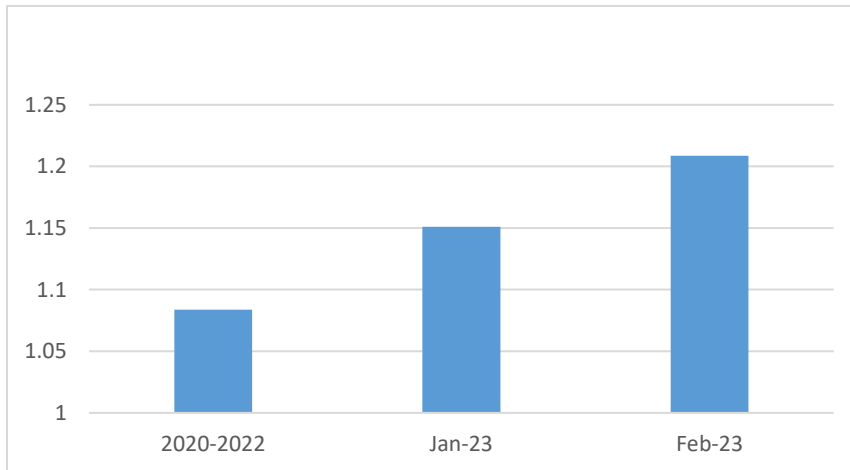
Did you know?

We have a new independent contract with a Physical Therapist who has relieved some of our preschool PT waitlist. Mountain Lake Services has also recently hired a part time Speech Therapist who has picked up some EI and Preschool Children after her school day.

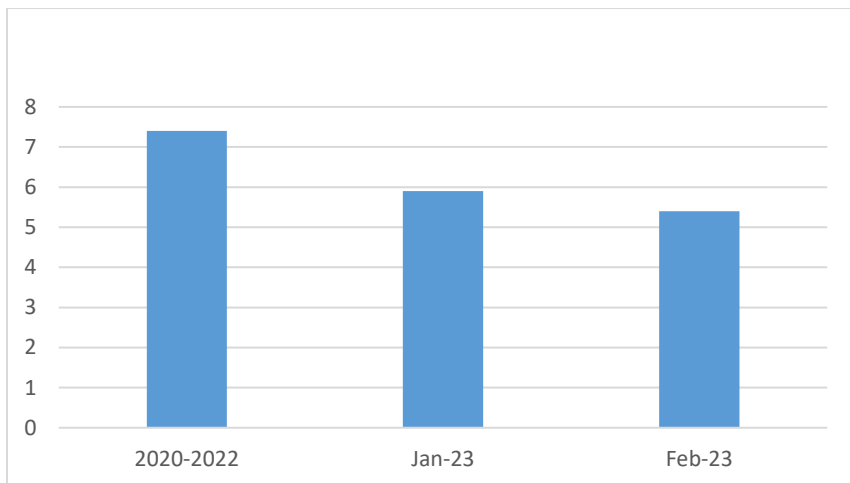
## HOME HEALTH UNIT

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### Home Care Unit Metrics 2023



Case Mix—Case mix index is a measure used by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to determine CHHA reimbursement rates for Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries. This measure reflects the diversity, complexity, and severity of patient illnesses. The numbers are not large fluctuations. Think of it as standard deviation, or deviation from the mean in math terms. Most of the time, the number will be fairly close to 1. In general, the more complex the patient the higher reimbursement.



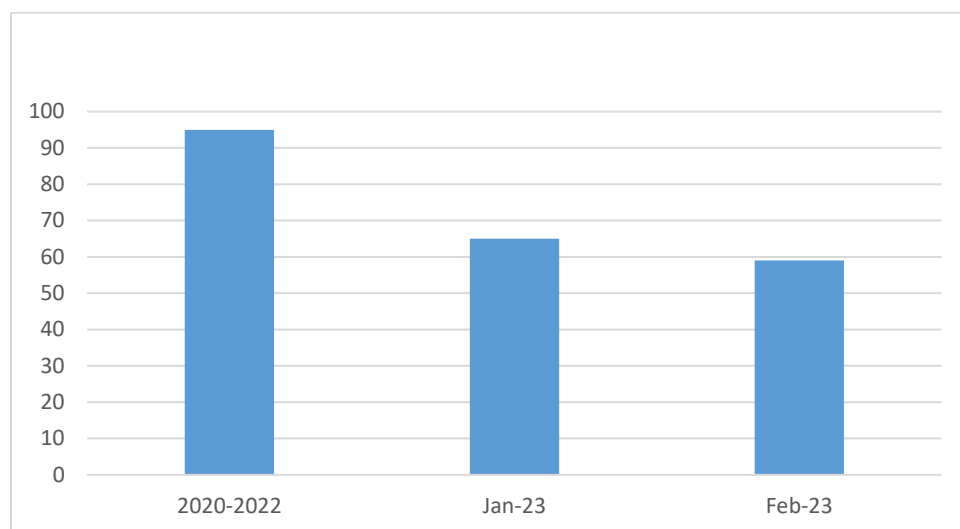
#### Number of patient admissions

In 2020-2022 the Agency had 8 FTE Registered Nurses, 3 Physical Therapists and 1 Occupational Therapist (on contract one part time physical therapy assistant and one part time speech therapist).

- Averages 12 admissions based on staffing in 2021 (8RN)
- Average 11.8 admissions based on staffing 2022 (8 RN)
- Average 11.8 admissions based on staffing in January 2023 (5.5 RN)
- Average 13 admissions based on staffing in February (4.4 RN)

In 2023 the Agency had 5.5 FTE Registered Nurses, 3 Physical Therapists and 1 Occupational Therapist (on contract one part time physical therapy assistant and one part time speech therapist).

In February one Registered Nurse 4.5 FTE was out on workers compensation which impacted our admissions. Staff worked over to absorb the increased work load this related in the increased per RN visit. And physical therapy staff performed therapy only admissions.



Therapy (Speech-OT-PT) visits per patient episode - A patient episode of care is 30 days. Previously the agency provided maintenance therapy to long term chronically ill patients. The rise in therapy referrals no longer allows the feasibility to do maintenance. When patients progress to a level they can attend outpatient therapy they are discharged to outpatient therapy. Therapy staff now admit their own patients and medications are reviewed by a nurse following the admission.

#### Did you know?

Home Care is paid by Medicare and Medicaid per episode of care, not by the number of visits or supplies utilized.

## WIC



WIC's Emily French was 1 of 2 New York State WIC staff chosen for National WIC Association Capitol Hill Advocacy Day. She spoke by Zoom with staff from Representative Grace Meng (D) NY-6, Representative Jamaal Bowman (D) NY-16, Representative Elise Stefanik (R) NY-21, Representative Joe Morelle (D) NY-13, Representative Brandon Williams (R) NY-22 about the importance of WIC and the current legislation up for reauthorization. We could not be prouder to have Emily represent us in Washington!

#### **March WIC Metrics**

Target Caseload - **700**

Enrolled - **652**

Participation in March

Women - **118**

Infants - **112**

Children - **372**

Nutrition Education Appt. - **214**

Referrals made - **68**

High Risk Participants - **39**

Breastfeeding Initiation - **79%**

WIC Food dollars spent in Essex

County - **\$34,006**

**Did you know?** Children who participate in WIC are more likely to have a dental visit and use preventive dental services and less likely to use emergency services for dental problems.

\*NWA study from 2021