

# ESSEX COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

JANUARY 2024

MONTHLY REPORT

DIRECTOR - LINDA BEERS, MPH



## Happy New Year!

Welcome to our newest Town Supervisors/members of the Essex County Board of Supervisors!

The start of a new year is a great time to review our department's governance; budget; mandated programs, services and activities; and highlight the ways that Town Supervisors might interface with our leadership and staff.

### Governance

ECHD convenes a Professional Advisory Committee/Public Health Advisory Committee (PAC/PHAC) that meets quarterly with the following responsibilities:

- advising the agency on professional issues,
- participating in evaluation of agency programs and services,
- serving as liaison with other health care providers and coordinating with other agencies and organizations,
- reviewing agency policies and recommending approval by the governing body (Board of Supervisors),
- offering recommendations on adequacy and appropriateness of services,
- assuring the agency's capacity to serve the community's needs.

The committee structure is defined by ECHD policy and includes defined positions:

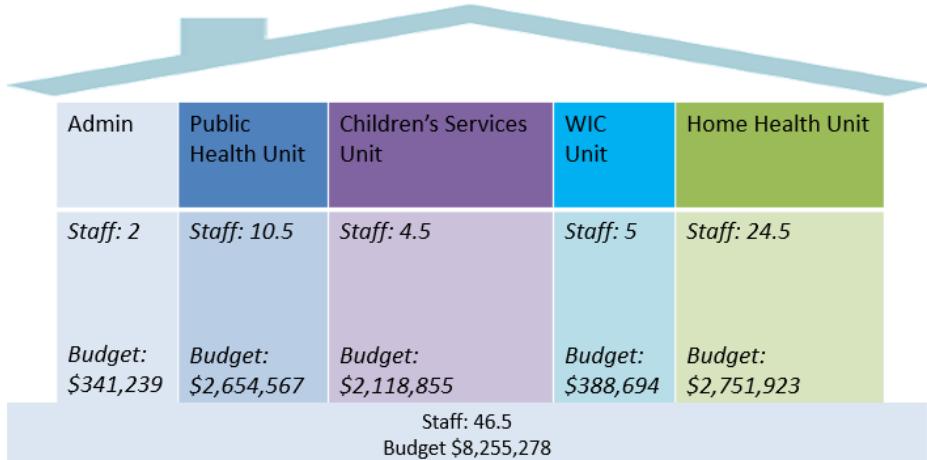
- Agency administrators
- Practicing physician
- One or more members knowledgeable about the health care needs of the county
- One or more consumer representatives
- One or more professional nurses of the agency staff
- Representative professional service and therapy providers.

**The Essex County Board of Supervisors serves as the Board of Health in Essex County.**

ECHD functions through the Human Services Committee of the Board of Supervisors.

### Budget

#### 2024 Health Department Overview



## Mandated Programs, Services, and Activities

New York State Public Health Law describes performance standards and minimum requirements for Core Public Health Services required of a local health department to be eligible for State Aid in the areas of:

- Community Health Assessment
- Communicable Disease Control
- Emergency Preparedness & Response
- Chronic Disease Prevention
- Family Health
- Environmental Health

Our Department also operates programs following NYS Public Health Laws and in meeting our community needs.

- Children's Services
- WIC
- Homecare

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## Community Health Assessment

New York State requires its local health departments to conduct Community Health Assessments and develop Community Health Improvement Plans with their local hospital partners and other partners on a periodic basis in conjunction with the New York State Prevention Agenda.

A Community Health Assessment examines the demographic and health status indicators for a given population to identify key problems and assets in a community. The goal of a community health assessment is to guide the development of strategies to address the community's health needs.

A Community Health Improvement Plan is used by the local health department and other governmental, education, and human service agencies, in collaboration with community partners to set priorities and coordinate and target resources.

Ongoing data collection, analysis and deeper dives serves to guide and target all the work of the Department and how we interact with other Departments of the county, healthcare providers and community based programs and services.

Standards of excellence we meet include ongoing

- internal data collection & analysis and sharing findings with stakeholders;
- engaging in with regional partners that represent various sectors of the community;
- identifying at-risk subpopulations such as by age, gender, risk factors or sub-communities of the county;
- identifying community assets and resources that can be mobilized to address health disparities and improve health;
- planning, implementing & evaluating interventions, strategies, programs & services targeting health improvement.



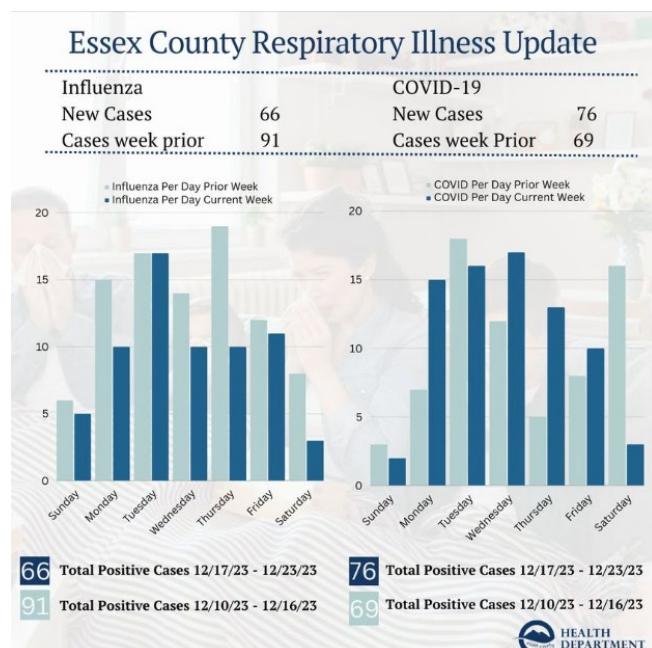
## Communicable Disease

The Communicable Disease program includes:

- General Communicable Diseases;
- Rabies prevention and control;
- Arthropod (tick and mosquito-borne) diseases;
- Immunizations (for vaccine-preventable diseases);
- Sexually Transmitted Disease (including HIV and Hep C); and
- Tuberculosis.

Mandated services we conduct daily include:

- Maintain capacity for electronic disease surveillance for all diseases identified as reportable in NYS;
- Retrieve electronic lab reports for all reportable diseases daily;
- Accept all reports from labs, providers and the public about potential disease risks or outbreaks;
- Investigate each report to ensure diagnosis and treatment and prevent spread or outbreak;
- Coordinate with medical providers and laboratories to ensure testing, diagnosis & patient care;
- Conduct outreach and education about communicable diseases and incidence of diseases in Essex County;
- Promote prevention strategies including immunizations for vaccine preventable diseases and serve as the safety-net provider for vaccines; and
- Provide updates regarding communicable disease risks , local data and prevention for stakeholders and the community at large.



An example of such communications is our Facebook posts of Respiratory Illnesses during cold months as shown here (left).

Follow us on Facebook!

Rabies prevention and control is typically the program that generates the most interaction with our department and your towns. When dog bites occur, we reach out to your Animal Control Officers and sometimes your town clerks to assist with the bite investigation. We investigate reports of altercations between potentially rabid wild animals and people/pets, with the goal of ruling out rabies exposures, sometimes through capture and testing. We also work closely with towns to secure and staff a suitable location when we hold Rabies Vaccination Clinics.

Rabies Clinics are popular events that tend to be an overwhelmingly positive experience for our staff, your residents, your town employees, and the vet staff who attend.

Look for our 2024 Rabies Clinic Schedule – coming soon!

## Emergency Preparedness & Response

A component of local health department responsibility to promote and protect the health of their residents is the planning for and responding to health emergencies. Emergencies may be naturally occurring, accidents or deliberate acts. Examples include storms, power outages, floods, disease outbreaks, the intentional release of hazardous substances, etc.



Our program ensures the:

- maintenance of an All Hazards Preparedness and Response Plan;
- readiness to provide medical countermeasures to the public;
- training & education of staff and community partners;
- participation & implementation of drills & exercises; and
- response to actual public health emergencies and support of other emergencies as appropriate.

ECHD accomplishes this work largely through partnerships with Government – local, state & federal; hospitals; and Community Based Organizations. Our Emergency Preparedness and Response staff also works closely with our Communicable Disease staff due to the interrelated nature of the two programs. ECHD vaccination clinics have served as controlled real world events to drill and further refine the emergency response procedures we already have in place, as well as strengthen our partnerships with community agencies and practice our incident management system.

## Chronic Disease

Chronic diseases (cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, arthritis, asthma, etc.) are among the leading causes of disability and death in NYS and right here in Essex County. As a local health department we are required to conduct an evidenced-based chronic disease prevention program that focuses on the prevention of these chronic diseases and their associated risk factors:



- Nutrition
- Physical activity
- Tobacco

We do this by:

- Generating information for action
- Building health-promoting public policy
- Creating safe and supportive environments
- Strengthening community action
- Promoting delivery of clinical preventive services
- Reorienting health care to emphasize prevention and quality of care
- Promoting individual chronic disease self-management skills
- Organizing health care and community resources to provide on-going self-management support for patient populations

**#GETFITESSEXCOUNTY 2024**

# Jump Start January

Jumping jacks, Jump rope, or Jump Squats - It's Your Choice!!!

**Week One**  
Complete 1 minute of your choice  
Jumping jacks, jump rope or jump squats

**Week Two**  
Complete 2 minutes of your choice or mix it up!  
Jumping jacks, jump rope or jump squats

**Week Three**  
Complete 3 minutes of your choice  
Jumping jacks, jump rope or jump squats

**Week Four**  
Complete 4 minutes of your choice  
Jumping jacks, jump rope or jump squats

**Week Five**  
Complete 5 minutes of your choice  
Jumping jacks, jump rope or jump squats

**jump** or **step**  
**jump** or **knee raises**  
**jump** or **squat**

**HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

Follow our #GetFitEssexCounty campaign on Facebook to stay on track with physical activity!

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## Family Health



The Family Health program includes:

- Maternal and Infant Health
- Child Health
- Reproductive Health

Mandated services & activities we conduct are:

- Use data to identify populations at risk & understand the local factors influencing the health of women, children & people of reproductive age;
- Develop or adapt public health marketing and communication educational messages, materials and campaigns to promote healthcare access, promote healthy behaviors & reduce risk factors for poor health outcomes or unintended pregnancy;
- Assist women and families in accessing health information, health insurance, health care and additional programs and services (such as early intervention, WIC, support groups and parenting classes);
- Conduct outreach for health and human service providers to share local data, identify populations experiencing disparities share information about local resources, programs & services to support families;
- Promote policy, environment and systems changes in early childhood education programs, schools & colleges; and
- Assist people in accessing health insurance enrollment and comprehensive health care services.

We also conduct these programs under Family Health:

- Lead Poisoning Prevention and Control
- Injury Prevention & Control

### Lead Poisoning Prevention

Mandated services include:

- Ensure access to blood lead testing and serve as a safety provider for children under 2;
- Coordinate case care for children and pregnant women identified with elevated lead levels;
- Support renovation, reparation or removal of lead sources in the environment.

### Injury Prevention

Mandated services include:

- Implement activities to reduce hazards and risk factors for injuries, poisonings, drug overdoses & violence, (including gun violence);
- Facilitate distribution of safety devices (such as helmets, car seats, naloxone, etc);
- Support implementation of local laws, policy & environmental changes that prevent injuries; and
- Conduct education and awareness campaigns to reduce risk of injury.

*Because of the many overlapping aspects of Children's Services and WIC programs with the Family Health program – and often the same target population - it simply makes sense to discuss these programs together.*

## Children's Services

### Early Intervention:

The New York State Early Intervention Program (EIP) is part of the national Early Intervention Program for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. First created by Congress in 1986 under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the New York State Department of Health administers the EIP through the Bureau of Early Intervention. In New York State, the Early Intervention Program was established in Article 25 of the Public Health Law and has been in effect since July 1, 1993.

To be eligible for services, children must be under 3 years of age and have a confirmed disability or established developmental delay, as defined by the State, in one or more of the following areas of development: physical, cognitive, communication, social-emotional, and adaptive.

At this time:

- 32 Children found eligible and currently enrolled in the Early Intervention Program.
- 14 children waiting to be evaluated for the program
- 10 children waiting for Speech Provider
- 5 Children waiting for Occupational Therapist
- 5 Children waiting for Physical Therapist
- 6 Children waiting for Special Instruction Services



### Preschool:

The Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) is responsible for evaluating and identifying children ages 3-4 for disabilities and then arranging for the delivery of special education services.



At this time:

- 93 Children are enrolled in the Preschool Program
- 27 Children are in referral process.

### Children & Youth with Special Healthcare Needs

The Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs Program (CYSHCN) seeks to improve the system of care for children and youth with special health care needs from birth up to 21 years of age. The Program helps to shape public policy so families can get the best health care for their children.

Children served by the CYSHCN Program have an illness or condition for which they need extra health care and support services. These children might have a serious or long-lasting physical condition, intellectual or developmental disability, and/or behavioral or emotional condition.

Conditions include, but are not limited to, ADD or ADHD; allergies; anxiety; arthritis/joint problems; asthma; autism or autism spectrum disorder; behavioral/conduct problem; blood disorders; Cerebral Palsy; Cystic Fibrosis; depression; developmental delay; diabetes; Down syndrome; epilepsy/seizure disorder; genetic or inherited condition; head injury; hearing problem; heart problem; intellectual disability; learning difficulty; migraines, other mental health condition; muscular dystrophy; sickle cell anemia; speech or language disorder; substance use disorder; Tourette syndrome; or vision problems.

At this time:

- 19 Children and their Families are currently enrolled.

## WIC

Did you know? According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, seven of the ten (7/10) leading causes of death in the United States are linked to poor diets. That's why the federal government, NY and our Department invest strongly in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children known as WIC.

Every WIC Program offers

- Nutrition Education,
- Breastfeeding Support,
- Referrals, and
- Nutritious Foods.

Our WIC Program does even more!

**Nutrition Education and Counseling**-We work with families from pregnancy to age 5 to ensure quality nutrition for both low and high-risk participants.

**Breastfeeding Support**- Lactation consultants are on staff to promote and maintain breastfeeding. We offer pumps and supplies for working moms. Essex County WIC also has a weekly virtual breastfeeding support group.

**Referrals**- We make referrals to pediatricians, dentists, Head Start, Early Intervention, and other services.

**Nutritious Foods/Food Packages**-We provide an EBT card for benefits that can be used for formula, whole grains, fruits & veggies, eggs, peanut butter, and more!

**Health Monitoring**- We track the growth of our participants, check iron status, complete nutrition assessments, address substance use, and track developmental milestones to perform participant-centered counseling.

**Free Veggies**- Essex County WIC receives a weekly supply of local vegetables from Juniper Hill Farm to distribute to our participants!

**Events**-Essex County WIC has events to bring families together and promote healthy nutrition, including our WIC n' Pick events over the summer, which give families a chance to visit local farms and pick produce.

**Support for Families**- We connect families to resources that help them thrive including--Thanksgiving meals, Christmas gifts, car seats, coats, diapers, clothes, food prep tools, books, and other necessary supplies.

This holiday season, WIC in collaboration with Adirondack Health, Essex County Sheriff's and NYS Police, helped 121 families with Christmas gifts. Through generous donations, WIC was able to provide 20 hams and shared 18 cases of local yogurt with families in our county.

Betty Sue, our kid of the week (right) was very happy to enjoy some yogurt!



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## Environmental Health

A NYSDOH District Office (covering Essex, Franklin & Hamilton Counties) conducts most required Environmental Health services for Essex County under the categories:

- Community Environmental Health and Food Protection
- Environmental Health Exposure Investigation, Assessment and Response
- Environmental Radiation Protection
- Individual Water and Sewage Systems
- Public Water Supply Protection
- Public Health Nuisances
- Realty Subdivision
- Tanning Facilities

The Environmental Health Services we conduct are:

- Communications/Updates on Air Quality, Blue Green Algae Beach Closures, Boil Water Orders
- Investigation of Foodborne Illnesses
- Mold & Health
- Climate & Health

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## Home Health Care

Our Certified Home Health Agency (CHHA)/Home Health Unit is dedicated to providing unparalleled home care services to Essex County residents. Home health care is a wide range of health care services that given in homes for illness or injury. Our staff members are committed to quality, compassion, individualized care, and patient satisfaction. Dedicated clinicians look forward to helping patients get better, regain independence, and supporting each patient in becoming as self-sufficient as possible.

Admission to this Agency must be made under the direction of a physician, nurse practitioner, or other approved provider, based upon the patient's identified needs and the type of services required. We have adopted the most advanced remote monitoring platform focused on changing patient behavior to reduce hospitalizations and improve clinical outcomes.

The Essex County Health Department provides services to all residents of Essex County without regard to age, race, color, sexual orientation, religion, marital status, sex, national origin or sponsor. We're dedicated to promoting the physical and emotional health of the community as well as our patients. We work with several other agencies in the county and can assist you in obtaining other services such as home delivered meals, heating assistance, and transportation.

Our Certified Home Health Agency (CHHA) can provide a service or combination of services in your home, all under the direction of your physician or approved provider. Working with your doctor or approved provider, our qualified staff will plan, coordinate and provide care tailored to your needs. Our services include Skilled Nursing, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy and Home Health Aide.

A Skilled Nurse is an RN with training and experience in providing care in the home. The nurse communicates frequently with patient doctors or approved providers to update patient plans of care. Services may include evaluation of needs, performance of skilled nursing procedures, education to

patients and family members on your condition, teaching self-care and prevention strategies, and coordination of patient care and services with other organizations.

Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapy services are provided by a licensed therapist. Therapists provides an evaluation of needs and specific information about the services and treatment specific to each patient. They can establish an exercise program to help improve patient strength, balance and prevent injuries due to falls.

Home Health Aide services are delivered under the supervision of the nurse or therapist. We contract with North Country Home Care Services for Aides. The Aides have experience and training in providing care in the home. An aide is assigned when there is a specific need for personal care assistance on a part-time basis at home. Any care provided by the Aide will be planned by patients and the nurse or therapist and will be documented on a written plan of care that will be left in the home. Typical duties include bathing, shampooing hair, changing bed linen and assistance with other activities of daily living.

Medical supplies and therapy services may be required to carry out patient plans of care. All medically necessary and reasonable therapy services and medical supplies must be coordinated by the Agency while patients are receiving Medicare covered certified home health services. Medicare will not reimburse patients or suppliers for services or supplies initiated by patients on their own while under our plan of care.

such as wheelchair, walker, hospital bed, etc., is covered separately and may be supplied by an outside vendor of the patient's choice.

This is a percentage of total patients served as a percentage of the town population over the past 10 years. For example, we served 220 residents in Newcomb; a community with a population of 418 people.

