

ESSEX COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

MAY 2023

MONTHLY REPORT

DIRECTOR - LINDA BEERS, MPH



PUBLIC HEALTH UNIT

Director's Message

COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Transition

Based on current COVID-19 trends, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is planning for the federal Public Health Emergency (PHE) for COVID-19, declared under Section 319 of the Public Health Service (PHS) Act, to expire at the end of the day on **May 11, 2023**.

This transition is possible, in part, because the largest adult vaccination program in U.S. history has been effectively implemented, with nearly 270 million Americans receiving at least one shot of a COVID-19 vaccine.

As a result of this and other efforts, since the peak of the Omicron surge at the end of January 2022:

- Daily COVID-19 reported cases are down 92%,
- COVID-19 deaths have declined by over 80%, and
- New COVID-19 hospitalizations are down nearly 80%.

Some of the healthcare and public health specific flexibilities allowed by the declaration are ending, while others remain in place. For more information, visit: <https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2023/02/09/fact-sheet-covid-19-public-health-emergency-transition-roadmap.html>

Related Impacts – Relevant to Essex County Health Department:

Much of our funding tied to COVID-19 response activities is set to end in 2023 and 2024. We are making a final push to schools, camps, and local businesses to support all to the best of our ability with the remaining funds. This includes ensuring that these entities have materials and supplies to protect health and safety going forward.

Moriah Rabies Clinic – Another Successful Event

Our first two Rabies Clinics of the year (**Westport** and **Moriah**) have been extremely well-attended. Well over 100 pets were vaccinated at each clinic, for a total of 271 pets vaccinated so far in 2023!

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

Residents have been very engaged with our “Round of a PAWS” following each clinic, where we feature our photogenic furry friends on social media.

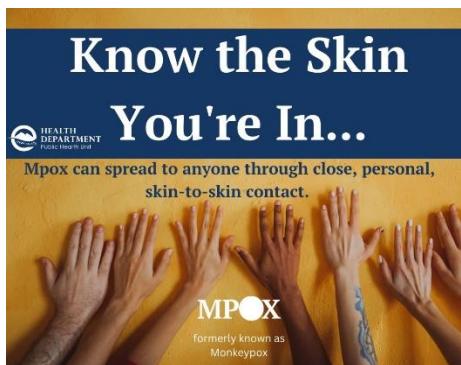


School Immunization Clinics

ECHD is partnering with schools to offer end-of-the-year immunization clinics for those who express interest or a need. The clinics will have three target areas of focus: **school required immunization** catch-up; **HPV Vaccinations** for children 9+; and **Meningitis B vaccines** for students transitioning to congregate living settings, like college. The purpose of these co-located clinics is to reduce some of the barriers to immunization, such as transportation, cost, and access.

MPOX Vaccine Availability and Clinics

ECHD is now offering mpox vaccinations (clinics and by appointment) for individuals 18 years of age and older at high risk for mpox infection.



Those interested can learn more or register for an appointment by visiting our website: <https://essexcountyny.gov/Health/>

Additionally, the New York State Department of Health, in partnership with the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, launched a multi-media campaign to encourage eligible New Yorkers to start or complete their two-dose mpox vaccine series now to help prevent another mpox outbreak. ECHD has begun incorporating these campaign materials in locally developed communications.

Simplified COVID Vaccine Recommendations:

FDA Authorizes Changes to Simplify Use of Bivalent mRNA COVID-19 Vaccines: <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-fda-authorizes-changes-simplify-use-bivalent-mrna-covid-19-vaccines>



- Everyone aged 6 years and older should get 1 **updated** Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine to be considered [up to date](#).
- People aged 65 years and older may get a 2nd **updated** Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 booster dose.
- People who are moderately or severely immunocompromised may get additional **updated** Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 booster doses.
- Children aged 6 months–5 years may need multiple doses of COVID-19 vaccine to be [up to date](#), including at least 1 **updated** dose of Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, depending on the number of doses they've previously received and their age.

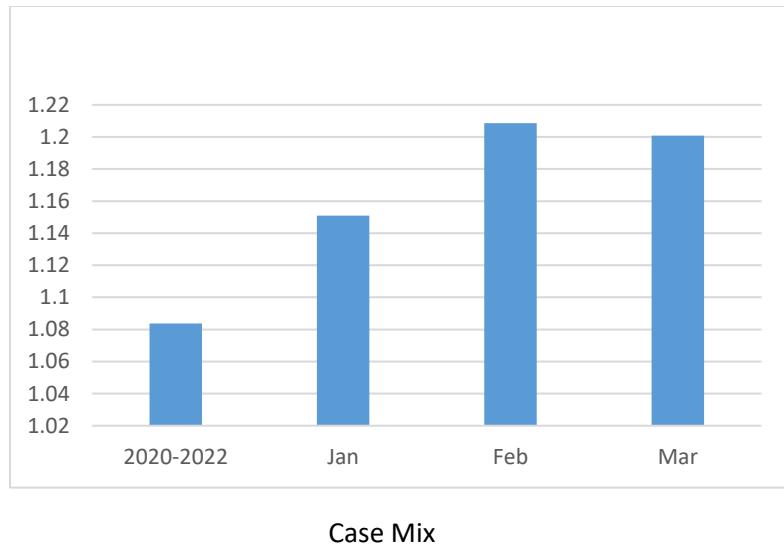
Updated vaccines

The updated vaccines are called “updated” because they protect against both the original virus that causes COVID-19 and the Omicron variant BA.4 and BA.5. Two COVID-19 vaccine manufacturers, Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna, have developed updated COVID-19 vaccines.

HOME HEALTH UNIT

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.



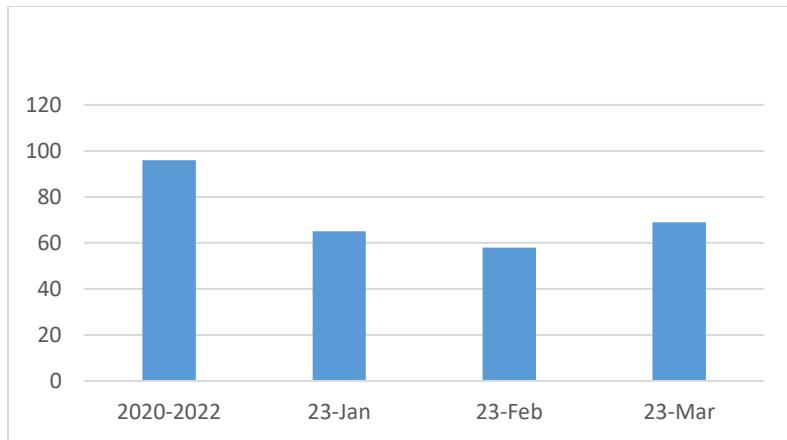
Number of patient admissions

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 (4.5 RN)

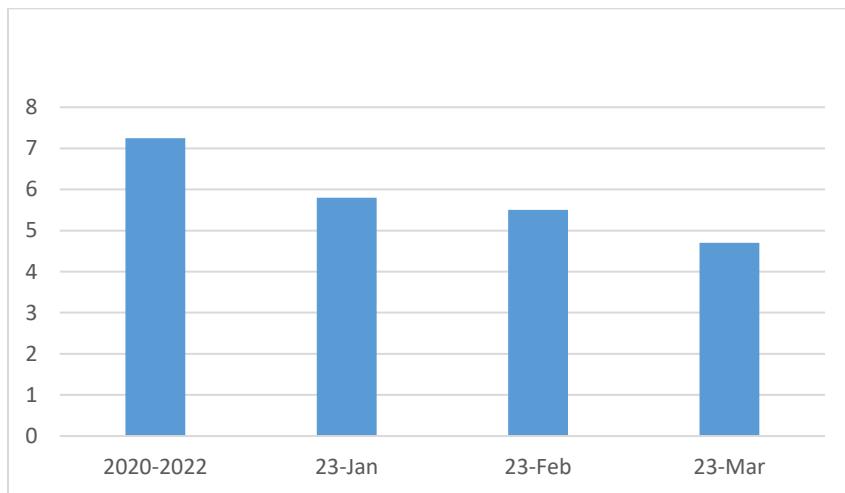
In 2023 the Agency had 5.5 FTE Registered Nurses, 3 Physical Therapists and 1 Occupational Therapist (on contract one part time physical therapy assistant and one part time speech therapist).

In March one Registered Nurse 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.



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 therapy. Currently there is a waiting list for therapy. 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.



Therapy visits each patient episode

Did you know? On average a hospital employs 20 people per patient served and home care employs one person for every 20 patients treated at home.

WIC

April

Target Caseload - 700

Enrolled - 645

Participation in April

Women - 123

Infants - 110

Children - 3724

Nutrition Education Appointments - 210

Referrals made - 59

High Risk Participants - 34

Breastfeeding Initiation - 79.4%

WIC Food dollars spent in Essex County - \$32,050

Did you know? There are 7.3 million people enrolled in WIC nationwide.

Success Story - WIC staff worked with a family (mom, dad, and infant) who were struggling to make ends meet. With hard work and money saved with WIC benefits and seconds from Juniper Hill, mom was able to finish her degree. She recently called me to tell me she did not qualify for WIC anymore because she got a job as a software engineer.

Success Story- WIC staff worked with a family (mom, and 2 children under 5) who escaped a domestic violence situation in another state. They were living in a hotel room and mom was struggling to feed her kids. WIC adopted them for Christmas and was able to help get them an air fryer and crock pot along with other basic essentials. With WIC benefits and seconds from Juniper Hill, mom said she at least felt like she could give her family healthy meals. She told us she had never felt like she was a part of a community before until then. She has been on the WIC Program for 3 years. She has been able to get her driver's license, GED, and is now close to finishing her degree to become an accountant.



Success Story-WIC staff have worked with this family for 10 years. Staff always encouraged mom to breastfeed and she never tried. This pregnancy, mom met with our Peer Counselor and Nutritionist several times throughout her pregnancy and decided to give it a try. She successfully breastfed her twins and couldn't be happier. We are very proud of her!