

Western Upper Peninsula District Health Department Annual Report 2007

INTRODUCTION

To the Residents of the Western U.P. and Our Partners in Public Health:

On behalf of our staff and Board of Health, we are pleased to present the Western U.P. District Health Department Annual Report for the fiscal period ending Sept. 30, 2007. Here you'll find information about the health of our community, and the health of our agency.

Western U.P. District Health Department is a regional unit of government which serves Michigan's five westernmost counties – Baraga, Gogebic, Houghton, Keweenaw, and Ontonagon. It is our pleasure to report on our work, because one of our core values is to exemplify the best in government – to operate effectively and efficiently, to be open and accountable.

Western U.P. District Health Department is dedicated to improving the health of our community through health education, the control of diseases, the prevention of environmental health hazards, and the assurance of certain health services to those in need. We touch the lives of every resident in our five counties, whether through hearing and vision screening for school children, home health care for seniors, safe food for restaurant patrons, or the mitigation of disease outbreaks for the community at large.

Typical of annual reports, you'll find many numbers in these pages – numbers of clients served, disease rates, dollars spent to provide programs. You'll also find stories that show how people work together to make our area a healthier place to live, play and work. In 2007, the Health Department worked with many partners to improve the health of our community, developing collaborative mass flu-shot clinics, investigating Torch Lake shoreline contamination, conducting emergency preparedness drills, and removing electronic waste from our environment. The Health Department also began a campaign to reduce citizens' exposure to second-hand smoke in buildings.

The data and accomplishments highlighted in this report represent the work of more than 110 employees, the leadership of the Board of Health, and the support of our five associated counties. We look forward to continuing to work with all our public health partners as we help our communities and their residents move toward better health.

Sincerely,

Guy St. Germain
Health Officer/Administrator

James Oliver
Board Chairperson

TOWARD BETTER HEALTH IN 2007

Public health has been increasingly visible in recent years and 2007 was no exception. Concerns about the safety of the food supply and the spread of avian influenza through the Eastern Hemisphere made national headlines last year. Locally, Western U.P. District Health Department played a lead role in disease prevention with several new or developing health programs, including:

Emergency Preparedness Planning

The Health Department works with its partners in local health care and emergency response to assure that the region is ready to face a variety of public health challenges, from disease outbreaks and natural disasters to acts of terrorism. In 2007, the agency led regional planning for response to mass casualty incidents, chemical and biological attacks, and pandemic influenza, and participated in community exercises testing inter-agency communications and capabilities.

Community Flu Shot Clinics

Local health departments play the lead role in providing mass vaccination clinics in response to pandemics and other public health emergencies. As part of ongoing preparations for that role, in October 2006 and again in October 2007, the Health Department developed and led mass influenza vaccination clinics in collaboration with local hospitals, and other community partners. In 2006, more than 2,000 people were vaccinated for seasonal influenza in four-hour clinics in Ironwood and Hancock. In 2007, more than 2,400 flu-shot doses were administered at mass clinics in L'Anse, Ironwood and Hancock.

Smoke-Free Indoor Air Initiative

With the 2006 Surgeon General's Report that there is no safe level of exposure to second-hand smoke and that the only sure way to safeguard the health of non-smokers is to prohibit smoking indoors, the Health Department developed and promoted a Clean Indoor Air Regulation requiring worksites and public places (restaurants, bars and tribal property excepted) to adopt smoke-free policies. The ordinance goes into effect in Houghton and Gogebic counties on May 6, 2008.

International Travel Vaccination Program

The International Travel Vaccine Program, established in 2003, plays an increasingly important role in disease prevention in the modern era of globalization and air travel. In 2007, 84 people traveling for business, vacations, educational and cultural exchanges, international adoptions, and medical or religious missions received services. The Health Department operates the only CDC-certified yellow fever vaccination clinic in the Western U.P. In 2007, 40 clients were saved a 200-mile round trip by getting their yellow fever shot in Hancock.

PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAMS

The Health Department provides a wide range of services to the general public and special populations. Just a few of the more than 20 agency programs are highlighted below.

WIC: In 2007, the Women, Infants and Children program provided nutrition education to parents, and supplemental food coupons for an average of 1,600 pregnant, post-partum or breastfeeding mothers, infants and children through age 4, each month.

MIHP: The Maternal Infant Health Program conducted 1,104 visits by registered nurses, registered dietitians and social workers to high-needs families with pregnancies or infants.

Hearing and Vision Screening: More than 2,145 hearing and 3,700 vision screenings were conducted in preschools and K-12 schools throughout the five counties.

Family Planning: Family planning clinics in the agency's four offices served 972 clients in 2007, providing clinical exams, education, communicable disease testing and affordable birth control.

BCCCP: Through the Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program, 418 low-to-moderate income women age 40-64 received breast and pelvic exams, pap tests, mammograms, and follow-up treatment as needed.

Senior Screening: At 17 clinics in 10 locations throughout the region, 262 residents age 60 and up received free health screenings, referral and follow-up services.

Health Promotion: In 2007, health educators and certified addictions counselors worked to prevent adolescent drug, tobacco and alcohol use through individual and group counseling programs and by presenting the research-based Life Skills curriculum. A new community walking program for adults and seniors promoted wellness and cardiovascular health.

RSVP: Western Upper Peninsula Retired and Senior Volunteer Program

RSVP is a nationwide volunteer program for people age 55 and older. The Health Department has sponsored RSVP since 2001. In FY 2007, 97 RSVP participants contributed more than 11,000 hours service to 30 community organizations and programs. RSVP special initiatives in 2007 included: SHARE, a non-profit food buying club, new to the area thanks to the efforts of 15 RSVP volunteers; and Electronics Recycling, which has provided environmentally friendly disposal of more than 48 tons of e-waste since 2005.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

Environmental health programs prevent the spread of disease from food, water and other environmental sources, through policy development, regular inspections, education and consultation with property owners, contractors and businesses, and when necessary, enforcement action.

Food Safety Program

Agency sanitarians conducted 1,000 food safety evaluations at restaurants and temporary food events in 2007. Food safety education was a program emphasis, with 210 food workers attending food handler classes and 36 completing food manager certification.

Public Water Supply Program

The Health Department continually monitors the quality of 135 non-community water supplies (such as schools, restaurants, resorts and campgrounds not connected to municipal water systems) and provides expert consultation assuring public safety.

On-site Sewage Program

The Health Department evaluated 394 proposed on-site sewage systems in 2007. Sanitarians evaluate each plan and site before permits are issued, assuring compliance with the Superior Environmental Health Code. The agency also assured that 262 new private wells met construction and water quality codes.

Septage Hauler Training

Recognizing a need to provide local training for septage haulers, Western U.P. District Health Department, in collaboration with other U.P. health departments, organized a training conference in Iron Mountain attended by 80 private septage haulers from Michigan and northern Wisconsin.

Mercury Safety

In 2007, the Health Department acquired a Lumex mercury vapor analyzer, one of two in the entire U.P., for rapid response to mercury spills. The Health Department coordinates its response to hazardous materials spills with state and federal agencies, and educates the public about the health effects of mercury exposure.

Torch Lake Shoreline Contamination Investigation and Remediation

The Health Department issued a health advisory and closed a small section of Torch Lake shoreline in northern Houghton County near the Village of Lake Linden Campground in July 2007 upon discovery of toxic chemicals, including PCBs, in shoreline sediments. The Health Department worked with Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to assure that appropriate environmental testing and timely cleanup were conducted.

SUPERIOR HOME HEALTH AND HOSPICE

In March 2007, the Board of Health changed the name Superior Home *Nursing* and Hospice to Superior Home *Health* and Hospice (SHHH), reflecting the scope of services provided by this division of the Health Department.

SHHH is the highest volume patient care program of Western U.P. District Health Department, employing some 60 people, including registered and licensed practical nurses, certified nurse assistants, physical and occupational therapists and their assistants, social workers, clerical staff and hospice volunteers. SHHH is the sole provider of home health services in some outlying regions of the five-county district.

In 2007, the agency's total home health caseload grew 17 percent to 582 clients. Hospice, an important new program licensed in 2004, served 35 clients. Therapy staffing revenues through contracts with long-term care facilities and schools grew by 12 percent.

Managers, direct care professionals and support staff worked together in 2007 to improve quality and efficiency, resulting in better patient outcomes as well as improved profitability for the division.

In May 2007, SHHH received an Award of Excellence from Michigan Peer Review Organization (MPRO) for promoting quality in 2006. Ongoing efforts of the division's quality assurance committee led to further improvements in 2007 in 9 out of 10 patient outcome measures.

Increased caseload combined with improvements in staff efficiency helped SHHH generate a net income on total revenue of \$3,811,782 in FY 2007. Home health revenue allowed the Health Department to maintain high-quality public health services in this era of diminishing state and federal support, thereby keeping the demand on local county contributions to 6 percent of the Health Department's total budget.

COMMUNITY HEALTH STATUS INDICATORS

Local public health departments track, assess and publicize rates of disease, health care access and utilization rates, demographics and other community health measures.

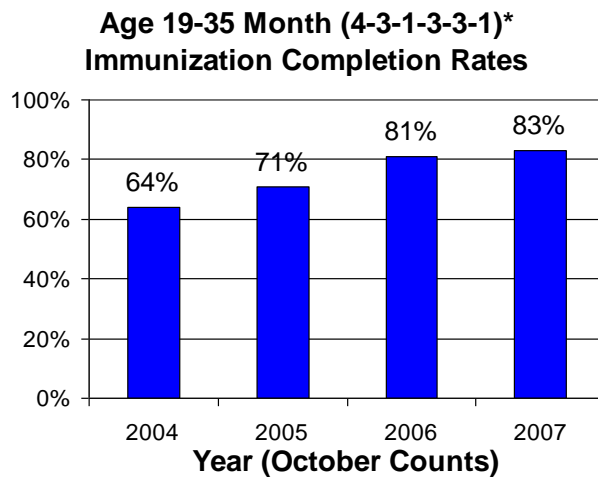
Did you know the population of the Western U.P. declined by more than 4.5 percent from 1996 to 2006, from 73,315 to 69,985? About 18 percent of the region’s people are age 65 or older, compared with 12 percent statewide.

The three leading causes of death in the Western U.P. are heart disease, cancer and stroke, just as they are in Michigan and the United States as a whole.

While local rates for low birth weight and infant mortality are generally better than Michigan rates, the Western U.P. rate for smoking among pregnant women remained unacceptably high, at 23 percent in 2006.

Childhood immunization rates have risen steadily in Michigan and in the Western U.P. over the last decade.

Spotlight: Childhood Immunization



*The percentage of Western U.P. children receiving 4 DTaP/DTP, 3 Polio, 1 MMR, 3 Hib, 3 HepB and 1 Varicella is improving.

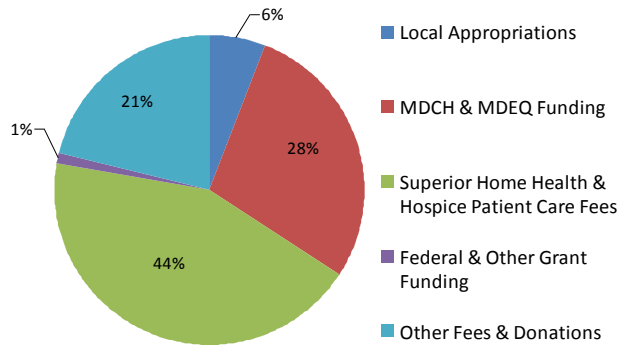
Selected Communicable Disease Reports

| Disease or Disease Group (Five-County Totals) | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Food-borne Illnesses (Including Campylobacter, Giardiasis, and Salmonellosis) | 39 | 20 | 29 | 18 |
| Flu-like Disease | 1,848 | 2,516 | 2,287 | 1,631 |
| Chlamydia | 64 | 50 | 66 | 73 |
| Varicella (Chickenpox) | 8 | 59 | 26 | 10 |
| Pertussis | 7 | 33 | 12 | 0 |
| Hepatitis C (Acute and Chronic) | 19 | 39 | 37 | 52 |

AGENCY FINANCES IN FISCAL 2007

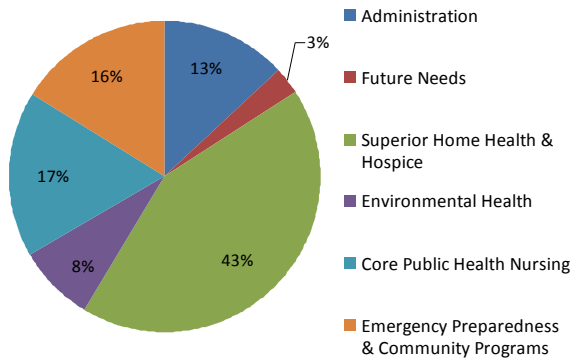
As a regional governmental unit operating across five counties, our Health Department places special emphasis on the good-government values of efficiency and accountability in its business practices. The Health Department operates some 30 health programs, some required by law and others defined by its Board of Health. Funding is provided through a mix of federal, state and local appropriations, fees for services and patient-care insurance reimbursements. The Health Department reported positive results in its financial operations for 2007.

FY 2007 Funding Sources



Major Revenue Sources: Michigan Departments of Community Health (MDCH) and Environmental Quality (MDEQ) fund core public health services and 20 other programs. Local appropriations from the five county units help fund core services. Superior Home Health revenues come from Medicare, Medicaid, insurances and therapy staffing contracts.

FY 2007 Funding Uses



Expenditures By Category

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| Personnel | \$4,986,824 |
| Supplies and Facilities | 1,729,996 |
| Travel Costs | 313,504 |
| Other | 96,500 |
| Reserved for Future Program Needs | 197,047 |
| Total | \$7,323,871 |