

South Heartland District Health Department

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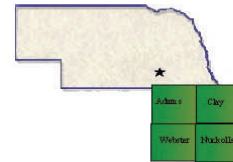
Toll Free: 1-877-238-7595

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Annual Report 2007



Back Row: Denise Ferguson– Administrative Assistant/Office Manager. Janet Staehr– Public Health Outreach Nursing Educator (P.H.O.N.E.), Joyce Crawford– Executive Director, Dixie Zoucha– Wellness Coordinator, Front Row: Michele Bever– Public Health Risk Coordinator, Anita Sullivan– Preparedness & Response Assistant, Rosa (Guia) Infante - Minority Public Health Educator



Mission Statement:
Dedicated to preserving and improving the health in Adams, Clay, Webster and Nuckolls Counties.

South Heartland Staff: Visibility and Public Health Leadership

South Heartland staff members are holding public health leadership positions across the state and nationally.

Executive Director, Joyce Crawford, was accepted into the first class of the Great Plains Public Health Leadership Institute, is a continuing member of the Public Health Association of Nebraska (PHAN) Board, and was selected to represent local public health on the NACCHO National Pandemic Committee. Joyce is also committee member of the Nebraska Disaster Mental Health Steering Committee and is the treasurer of the Tri-City Medical Response System (TRIMRS) Steering Committee.

Public Health Outreach Nurse, Janet Staehr, because of her experience, is frequently requested to train new PHONE nurses across the state. She is also a member of the State Public Health Nursing Emergency Response Team and the Nebraska Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Team and can be called out to assist with debriefing of responders.

Wellness Coordinator, Dixie Zoucha, is providing leadership for public health educators across the state and has been instrumental in proposing a new PHAN section specifically for public health educators. Dixie is co-chair for Action for Healthy Kids (AFHK) and Vice-President elect for the Health section of the Nebraska Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (NAHPERD). Dixie is also a member of the Nebraska Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Team and can be called out to assist with debriefing of emergency responders.

Minority Health Educator, Rosa Guia, had the honor of being selected to represent minorities in Health Professions on the State diversity poster and is the Coordinator of the Sonrisa Program. Rosa is a member of the Minority Steering Committee for the 3rd Congressional District. Rosa is a Trainer for the Psychological First Aid through Region III Behavioral Health Services.

Public Health Risk Coordinator, Michele Bever, is the current elected chair of the Emergency Response Section of Public Health Association of Nebraska PHAN, and represents the section on the PHAN Board. She is serving on a Center for Biopreparedness Education workgroup to develop Just-in-Time Training curriculum that will be presented at workshops across the state in August 2006 and continues to serve as secretary of the Tri-City Medical Response System (TRIMRS) Steering Committee.

Wellness Activities

“Healthy people in healthy communities” This is the vision of the South Heartland District Health Department. With this vision in mind, SHDHD’s Wellness program is very active in the development, implementation and evaluation of programs that promote healthy lifestyles, including those that address physical inactivity, nutrition, safety, health education and disease prevention.



Nebraska On the Move Kids Fitness and Nutrition Day —Over 500 students and 60 teachers/school staff from Adams, Clay, Nuckolls and Webster Counties attended this event held on the Hastings College campus on Sept. 30, 2005. Students participated in 16 physical activity stations and six nutrition education stations. A healthy sack lunch was served and all students received a pedometer and t-shirt. Joining the SHDHD and Nebraska On the Move as sponsors of the event was Hastings College, the Hastings Family YMCA, the University of Nebraska at Kearney and the All Recreate on Fridays (ARF) Movement of the Nebraska Health & Human Services System (NHHSS). Funding for the event was provided, in part, by the Nebraska Beef Council and the Cardiovascular Health Program of the NHHSS.

Salud Para Su Corázon—Health for your Heart is a joint Minority Health Initiative with Mary Lanning Health Care Foundation and South Heartland District Health Department. This initiative seeks to promote healthy lifestyles and reduce the prevalence of overweight/obesity and cardiovascular risk factors by implementing culturally relevant strategies among the Latino population. Currently there are approximately 50 families in the program with more than half of the families enrolled at the YMCA.

Scrubby Bear— In cooperation with the Mid-Rivers Chapter of the American Red Cross. SHDHD has taken Scrubby Bear on the road to health fairs, elementary schools, preschools, daycares and Head Start facilities throughout the District. During the 2005-06 school year. Scrubby Bear and his helpers educated over 1,586 children and adults to prevent the spread of germs by practicing proper hand-washing techniques.

All Recreate on Fridays (ARF) Movement - The SHDHD conducted three workshops to educate elementary and middle schools, daycares, pre-schools and youth organizations about the ARF program. Children participating in ARF, sponsored by the Nebraska Cardiovascular Health Program, aim to be physically active for at least 60 minutes through school, family, and community activities every Friday. The workshops resulted in 776 youth joining the ARF Movement.



Students participate in NOM Kids Fitness & Nutrition Day

Physically Active Communities Excel (P.A.C.E.) Challenge - From February 1st through June 30th, all residents of Adams, Clay, Nuckolls and Webster Counties were invited to participate in the P.A.C.E. Challenge. Together, the four counties competed against Gage County, North Central District Health Department, Loup Basin Public Health Department and Chadron to log the most steps per capita. Although SHDHD did not win the Challenge, residents logged a total of 462,585,162 steps or 9,778 steps per capita. Approximately 2,300 pedometers, as well as a variety of items promoting physical activity and healthy eating were given away to South Heartland District Health Department residents. The Challenge was funded by a grant sponsored by the Peter Kiewit Foundation, Blue Cross Blue Shield, Well Workplace Nebraska, Welcom, the First National Bank and Union Pacific.

Public Health Risk Activities



Pandemic Planning Activities

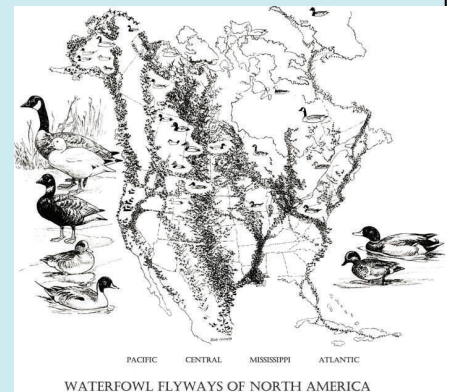
In an effort to prepare the citizens it serves, the South Heartland District Health Department is providing educational presentations about pandemic influenza and emergency planning to individuals, businesses, agencies and organizations throughout the district. Resources available through the Department include emergency preparedness kit guides, fact sheets and brochures, and planning checklists (most materials are available in English and Spanish). Educational liaisons for each county assist with presentations.

South Heartland prepared a draft Pandemic Flu Plan for the district to address how we will respond to a pandemic, including protection of critical infrastructure and essential services, as well as social distancing measures. South Heartland's plan is consistent with the Nebraska Health and Human Services System (HHSS) state response plan. The details of the district plan are being fine-tuned by county-wide planning through steering committees in Adams, Clay, Nuckolls, and Webster Counties. These committees are addressing specific planning issues at the county level – including identification of critical infrastructure entities, vulnerable and hard to reach populations, and the planners for gatherings. The committees are also developing proposals for prioritizing their citizens for vaccine or antiviral medication. Committee members include responders, government officials, business leaders, human and essential services providers, and interested community members.

Be Aware. Be Prepared.

Birds and Avian Flu

In April, South Heartland planned and hosted a regional workshop on birds and avian flu for public health staff and the agencies that focus on wild and domestic birds. Participants included representatives of local health departments, UNL extension, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, veterinarians, Nebraska Department of Agriculture, US Fish and Wildlife Services, Western Nebraska Ducks Unlimited, USDA Wildlife Services, Audubon Rowe Sanctuary, Platte River Whooping Crane Maintenance Trust, and Nebraska Health and Human Services. The goal of the meeting was for participants to learn to know other stakeholders and to become familiar with the avian flu response plans or education that each agency or organization is developing. Our health district is in the central flyway for migrating birds.



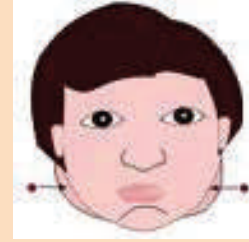
COOP Plan – in progress

The South Heartland staff is developing a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) to serve as a framework for operations during circumstances which disrupt normal operations. This plan will provide policy and guidance to ensure execution of essential functions in the event that agency operations are threatened. For example, the document is meant to serve as a guide when staffing changes unexpectedly (i.e., loss of staff due to circumstances as mundane as extended jury duty or vacation or as severe as illness or death), when public health emergency response dictates refocus of staffing functions, or when the agency facility is adversely impacted and can no longer serve as a functional headquarters. Because of today's changing threat environment, the plan is designed to address the all-hazard threat.

Disease Investigation and Infection Control

South Heartland Health District is Epicenter of Nebraska's Mumps Outbreak

On March 20, 2006, South Heartland received the first report of a mumps case in the district. This case would eventually be the first confirmed case in Nebraska. The outbreak, which began in Iowa in December 2005, involved 11 states by the end of May. The Department's Local Health Alert Network was utilized heavily as we sent information, updates, alerts and advisories to many of our external partners in the district. Our local health care providers were important partners in managing this outbreak; we relied heavily on their diagnosis of clinical symptoms and their swift reporting of suspected mumps cases. By the end of June, there were a total of 355 confirmed, probable and suspect cases in Nebraska with 25% (88) of these residing in the South Heartland district. South Heartland staff investigated 123 reports of mumps between March 20 and June 30, 2006.



Monitoring and Investigating Disease:

July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2006

During the 2005-6 school year, 100% of the schools in our district who were eligible participated with us in the "school illness surveillance" program. The Health Department contacts schools on a weekly basis to gather reports of absenteeism due to illness. We monitor local trends and respond as needed to assist schools with concerns, for example, unusual numbers of influenza-like illness or gastroenteritis, suspected meningitis, or head lice. These reports are also submitted to Nebraska Health and Human Services for analysis of statewide illness trends.

Community surveillance for communicable disease (including reports from health care providers and self reports from citizens) resulted in the investigation and follow-up of 123 reports of mumps and 103 reports of other diseases, including food borne illness, scabies, pertussis, rabies, West Nile virus, legionellosis, bacterial meningitis, hepatitis, Q fever, and rickettsia (rocky mountain spotted fever). South Heartland uses the National Electronic Disease Surveillance System (NEDSS) to report diseases to the State.



South Heartland Infection Control Group

The South Heartland Infection Control Group met quarterly for educational sessions and training.

- July 28 - *Update on Hepatitis* (Kathy White, Nebraska Hepatitis C Coordinator, HHSS),
- October 24 for *Pandemic Influenza* (Dr. Tom Safranek, State Epidemiologist, HHSS),
- January 26 for *Trends in TB* (Pat Infield, Tuberculosis Program Manager, HHSS),
- April 27 for *Mumps Outbreak Update* (Michele Bever, SHDHD Public Health Risk Coordinator, on local mumps outbreak and Dr. Anne O'Keefe, HHSS Epidemiologist, on multi-state mumps outbreak).

Participants included infection control practitioners from hospitals and clinics, educational facilities, long term care facilities, and public health. Nurses were offered continuing Education Units for some sessions.

Emergency Preparedness Planning and Exercises

Technology: Staying Connected

South Heartland staff has continued to develop competency with the **TacPak**, a wireless, portable, multi-faceted communications system in a briefcase that was provided previously to each of the local health departments by HHSS. The equipment includes laptop computer, satellite phone, cell phone, fax machine, copier, GPS unit, GIS system, internet, etc. to stay connected in the field. This equipment was useful to us during the May 11 storms of 2005, and was offered for use in other states during the response to Hurricane Katrina. This year, several staff participated in local training and statewide exercises to enhance Departmental capabilities with the equipment.

The Health Department's capacity to stay connected to hospitals, other local health departments, and the State during emergencies was expanded with the addition of **Telehealth video conferencing equipment** and a T-1 line. Since its installation in 2005 this equipment has been used frequently for "meetings and conferences", saving much mileage and driving time. In addition, South Heartland participated in statewide exercises of the system that were coordinated by HHSS.



Emergency Preparedness

NIMS Compliance

The South Heartland District Health Department became NIMS compliant during 2005-2006. This means that all staff have completed training and passed the appropriate National Incident Management System (NIMS) exams provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Based on Homeland Security Presidential Directive #5, NIMS provides a consistent framework for incident management at all jurisdictional levels and among various agencies. By the end of June, 2006, nearly all of South Heartland's Board of Health members had also completed at least the basic NIMS training.



Statewide Exercises: TERREX 5 and 5.5

On March 16-17, South Heartland participated in a joint, large-scale exercise to test Nebraska's readiness to respond to a public health emergency. Named "Terrex 5.5," the purpose of this exercise was to identify areas where our response could be strengthened if we ever face a disease outbreak that puts Nebraskans at risk.

During the exercise, all 20 local health departments across the state worked with the Nebraska Health and Human Services System (HHSS) to test emergency responses and identify potential problems. Several additional state and local agencies, and the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) were involved, as well.

Terrex 5.5 was a continuation of a statewide exercise (Terrex 5) that took place in Nov. 2005 when participants responded to a hypothetical outbreak of pneumonic plague. Terrex 5.5 was a "full-scale" exercise where command groups met to make decisions and actual equipment and medical resources were mobilized. In South Heartland, 29 staff and volunteers participated in a test of command and control at the Local Emergency Coordination Center exercise; 17 staff and volunteers participated in a drill of the notification, communication, and transportation of the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) supplies; and 22 staff and volunteers participated in a tabletop exercise of the Sub Hub for storage and distribution of SNS supplies. After Action reviews of the exercises were used to improve the Department's emergency response plans.



Automatic External Defibrillator

An Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) is a portable device that analyzes the heart's rhythm and, if necessary, allows a rescuer to deliver an electric shock to a victim of sudden cardiac arrest. This defibrillation shock causes the heart's electrical pattern to be interrupted and hopefully reset to a normal rhythm.

This year SHDHD received 42 AEDs in a one year grant, 17 AEDs were received from a grant from HHSS, and 33 from Central Nebraska Public Access Defibrillator Coalition grant. A total of 92 AEDs have been placed in the four-county district over three years at a cost of \$159,277.



Public Health Outreach Nursing Education

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services System (HHSS) contracts with South Heartland District Health Department to provide outreach and assistance for Medicaid and Kids Connection clients. The Nurse working with the **Public Health Outreach Nursing Education Program (P.H.O.N.E.)** assists clients to obtain health care and provides information and referrals to those in our health district.

During the fiscal year of July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006.– Approximately 3,275 **referrals** were made. They included: Health Care, Dental Visits, Vision Examinations, Lead testing. Car seat checks, Immunizations, WIC and Commodities program, Food Coop, Every Women Matters, Clinic of Good Health, and Community Services Coordinators to name a few. Medical homes were found for 13 clients, 81 clients found new dental homes and 84 found vision homes. 844 missed dental appointments were followed up. Emergency room visits from one regional hospital for persons on Medicaid or Kids Connection were reviewed and patients were contacted for possible case management.

Clients are encouraged to have Medical, Dental, and Vision homes as well as seeking medical care for their children

During the past fiscal year booths were at **health fairs** in each of the four counties: Adams, Clay, Nuckolls & Webster



Mini-Grants

South Heartland District Health Department has received requests to fund health related projects and programs. **Mini-grants** were awarded to 13 organizations for Dental Services, Mental Services, Diabetes Programs, Vision Programs and for the purchase of Educational materials to promote healthy and safe life styles in the amount of \$44,326.00



Mini-Grant Application

Board Of Health Members

County Officials

Charles Neuman
(Adams County Supervisor)

Gene Arnold
(Clay County Supervisor)

Michael Combs
(Nuckolls County Commissioner)

Mary Delka
(Webster County Commissioner)

Public Minded Citizens

Judy Reimer
(Adams County)

W. Michael Kearney
(Adams County)

Jan Baird
(Clay County)

Sam Townsend
(Clay County)

Peggy Meyer
(Nuckolls County)

Perry Freeman
(Nuckolls County)

Barbara Sprague
(Webster County)

Robert Sheckler
(Webster County)

Community Representatives

Kathy Anderson, MD
(Medical Representative)

Jessica Meeske, DDS
(Dental Representative)

John Waddell, DVM
(Veterinary Representative)



Financial Report

South Heartland District Revenues	
State Revenue– LB692	198,674
Bioterrorism Health Alert Network	4,541
Emergency Response	101,750
State Oral Health	6,250
State & Local Grants	23,892
Kids Fitness & Nutrition Day	163
Material Child Health	3,464
Public Health Outreach Nurse Educator	40,900
TRlcities Medical Response System Administrative Fee	5,500
Other Income & Interest	14,078
Deficiency of Revenue	50,468
Total Revenues	449,680

South Heartland District Expenses	
Salary & Benefits	261,202
Mini-grants	44,326
Other Expenses	144,152
Total	449,680

TRlcities Medical Response System	
Revenue	227,500
Expenses	170,600
Change in Assets	56,900

