

The Public Health Herald



This month we had UI College of Nursing camped out in Oxford recording a podcast on the subject of Diabetes, risk factors, & prevention steps. The students interviewed local experts & worked to edit their podcast as part of their final project. All three students, Jeffrey, Mayrin, & Libby will be graduating in the next few weeks!

We're back for our 2nd issue of the Public Health Herald. Our goal is to be a touchpoint for communication between divisions/managers every two weeks. Two weeks after all-staff monthly, you'll receive the newest issue of the Herald. We hope that you feel that this is valuable & that you're more in the loop for what is going on across the department.

You asked & they listened! The management team has reviewed the survey about All-Staff meetings. Here are the changes:

- Meetings will be 1 hour on zoom.
- Format will include Director, BOH, & Division updates with more open discussion
- Quarterly: At least 30 minutes of open discussion time. More during retreats.
 - March (in person retreat)
 - June (Zoom)
 - September (in person retreat)
 - December (Zoom)
 - Reports from the department will be limited to 30 minutes so we have time to discuss.

Have a topic to discuss? [Submit this form](#). Kristin or Danielle will follow up & add to the agenda for All-Staff. ***If you'd like to make December's all staff please submit by December 9th.***

Holiday Closures:

Christmas - December 23 & 26

New Years - January 2

Martin Luther King Jr. Day - January 16



SPOTLIGHT: WATER TESTING

Between historic low water levels, reports of “forever chemicals” & arsenic in well water, and evergreen concerns about nutrient and bacterial contamination, public interest in water quality seems to be reaching a level not seen in perhaps decades. It's good to know what is in your water and that it is being protected. JCPH's Watershed Protection Program (WPP) is responsible for just that: protecting the quality of water to ensure optimal health in the County. Taking a complete watershed approach, the largest focuses of the WPP include wells, septic systems, water quality testing, strategic planning, & mosquito surveillance.

The most direct connection between public health & water quality is drinking water. In contrast to public water supplies, private water wells are unregulated; testing or treatment is done at the owner's request. Groundwater functions like a river with measurable flow, constantly changing conditions, & migration of contaminants. Sinkholes & abandoned or improperly maintained wells provide an entry point for surface contaminants to reach groundwater. The WPP permits water supply wells in the County & administers a state-funded program that provides free well water quality testing as well as subsidizes rehabilitation & plugging.

Proper treatment & disposal of wastewater is imperative to ensuring surface & ground water quality. Improperly maintained or failing septic systems risk contaminating both surface & ground water with harmful bacteria & excessive nutrients. The WPP requires that all dwellings outside of municipal sewerage districts have a properly designed septic system. It affirms the appropriate design, grants permits, oversees the construction, & verifies the mid-life inspection of all septic systems in the County. JoCo is one of the fastest growing counties in the state of Iowa. The WPP collaborates with other County departments like Planning, Development, & Sustainability to ensure that existing wells & septic systems & new rural subdivisions abide by County water quality protection regulations. We also inspect wells that serve campground & other rural gathering places.

Our other programs include the surveillance of the number & species of mosquitos in JoCo for viruses including Zika, West Nile, & La Crosse Encephalitis. This monitoring conducted every spring through fall in collaboration with Iowa State University & the surveillance sites are mainly in public recreation areas throughout the County. In addition to these responsibilities, the WPP also oversees pool & spa inspections.

The Watershed Protection Program is a 3-person team consisting of James Lacina, Jasmine Putnam, & Ethan Turben-Fuhrman.

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NEW STAFF



Name: Veronica Bair
Division: Maternal, Child & Adolescent Health Coordinator- Clinical Services
About Me: I'm a dietitian, and I'm very excited to join the Johnson County team!
Pets: I have two dogs, a border collie mix and a pitbull mix, who I do dog sports with including agility, nosework and herding.



Name: Rachel Quinn
Division: Disease Prevention Specialist- Community Health
About Me: My husband & I recently adopted a dog named Atlas. I'm excited to be back at JCPH after being a contact tracer!
Hobbies: Rock Climbing, Soccer, Reading, Anime, & Marvel

Community Health Updates

Qualtrics Day!

Several Community Health staff presented to local public health, Board of Supervisor's staff, county CIOs, alongside Qualtrics' government Liaison on the benefits & uses of Qualtrics in public health. Jamie presented on the community health assessment, Rebecca & Karrey presented on mass vaccination clinics & scheduling, & Jennifer & Amelia presented on case investigation & contact tracing. In addition Deputy Director Sarah Reisetter from Iowa Health & Human Services also presented on how HHS is collecting feedback from state staff on their thoughts & feelings on the alignment. The day was overall informative but primarily a testament to the dedication to innovation & investment in improving public health practice.

HealthyJoCo

The HealthyJoCo team has closed the health status assessment & will work toward analyzing & compiling the results. Stay tuned! Overall, over 500 respondents partially or fully completed the assessment. The team will also be preparing to review the new assessment and improvement plan framework through the NACCHO Award, recently accepted.

School Immunization Audits Complete!

The Disease Prevention Specialists & the student epi team completed the annual school immunization audits. In total, 20,923 student records were audited. Rob Sand would be proud!

Mpox (Monkeypox) Clinics

Rebecca and Karrey continue to provide Jynneos vaccine clinics to the public and expanding outreach along with our partners in Linn County Public Health. Future clinics and various methods of outreach were discussed.

Admin Team Update: Moving Edition

Physical plant & IT have been making great progress to getting the new desks & technology all set up to reorganize the offices in Clinical Services to accommodate our Admin team moving downstairs. Tentative timeline:

- CS staff should be moved & settled by December 8th
- Admin staff will move starting December 12th
- Soft opening of Flagpole Entrance as main entrance December 27th
 - We'll be working on directional signage, social media, & other news releases to steer people to the flagpole entrance.
- Grand Opening celebration of new entrance February 3rd, 2023

There will be a floorplan distributed with new office assignments to the entire department when everyone gets settled.



Sick Policy Clarifications:

Holiday Pay & Sick Leave

Should you need to call in sick the day before or after a Holiday, JCPH requires a doctors note for you to be considered Excused & eligible to receive your holiday pay. Please turn this note into your manager.

-This applies to personal & family sick

COVID-19 Sick Policy

Johnson County provides 80 hours total of COVID-19 sick leave. This is a finite amount & does not replenish. If you are unsure of the balance of COVID-19 leave time you have remaining, you can check with Kristin or HR directly.

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PMQI

PM – The PM team is proud to announce that 100% of all key performance indicators (KPIs) have been updated for the month of October and annual goals have already been achieved. Kathryn and Cristina have successfully distributed over 34,000 condoms and prophylactics, which is well past their goal of 30,000/year with two more months of distribution! Susan V. has also eclipsed her goal of seeing three tobacco related policies adopted in Johnson and Iowa counties, whereas she has noted five already this year! New KPIs are in the works and always remember to reach out if you have any questions or want to talk about proposing a KPI. One final note, please remember to complete the [PM training](#) in NEOGOV and provide your manager with a copy of your certificate.



QI – The QI team would like to announce they are OPEN FOR BUSINESS and are excited to take on project proposals. Over the past months there has been substantial work done on creating an SOP for submitting project proposals and an overhaul was done on the scoring rubric to get projects up and running faster. On a positive note, almost everyone (who needed to) has completed their online QI training! These initial trainings are crucial to building the foundation for a culture of QI and PM that will help elevate the already stellar work we do.



JCPH is reintroducing Sarah Noll Wilson. She was our keynote during our Spring 2022 all-staff retreat. Management has been reading her book, "Don't Feed the Elephants!" & will be featuring excerpts from the book over the next year!

Sarah Noll Wilson is on a mission to help leaders build and rebuild teams. She has 15+ years in leadership development, Sarah earned a Master's Degree from Drake University in Leadership Development and a BA from the University of Northern Iowa in Theatre Performance and Theatre Education. Sarah creates a safe, honest environment, preparing people to deal with real-world conflict, have more meaningful conversations, and create purposeful relationships. Working with CEOs, Human Resources leaders, and organizations that care deeply about their employees and understand the connection between development, satisfaction and organizational success.

- from sarahnollwilson.com

If you're interested in reading along, talk to your manager or if you have an audible subscription, it's free with your subscription.

Holiday Traditions from JCPH

"We listen to John Denver and the Muppets "A Christmas Together" while we decorate the Christmas tree." - Kelly Smith

"My family passes around the oplatek, or Christmas wafer, before we eat dinner. Its kind of like a communion wafer, but we each break off a piece & say what we're thankful for & what we hope for the new year." - Sarah Grunewaldt

"My nephew is gluten intolerant & has lots of allergies. Our tradition is to serve Asian foods for Christmas so everyone can enjoy the holidays." -Kristin Meyer

Sam Jarvis also submitted a lengthy essay with his family tradition that included too much food, American football, & a political argument with a conservative uncle. Due to space constraints we were unable to print, but a copy has been secured to his office door for your reading pleasure

OEC Corner

Insights:

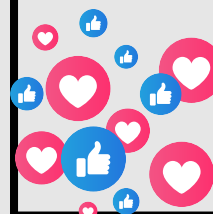
Dark Blue October 1-31. Light Blue September 1-30, we're up in followers & engagement on Facebook. Instagram is down a little.



Our twitter is chugging along. You'll notice no graphs as hootsuite didn't track all our posts. It shows we posted 2x in the month of October & we posted over 30 times.



Remember our feel good Friday posts are the Pets or Plants of Public Health. If you haven't emailed me pictures of your dog, cat, bird, fish, rabbit, reptile, plants, pet rocks, etc. Please do so with something quirky about them. I'd love to keep this going!



If you have print, website, or media needs please let me know. Email works for now.

We're working on a better process for tracking. Social Media posts should use the form [Click Here](#)