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Welcome from the Board President

South Heartland takes the statement, “Actions speak louder than words” to heart by demonstrating leadership in the promotion of healthy lifestyles and healthy communities. As a result of our work over the past year, SHDHD received the Governor’s Excellence in Wellness Sower Award which recognizes businesses that are sowing the seeds of wellness with their employees. Our Executive Director, Michele Bever, received the Jim Dills Distinguished Service Award for her “outstanding efforts in strengthening the public health system in Nebraska...and at the community level”. Our staff and board members actively promote health and wellness through many leadership roles and activities. We encourage all individuals to choose actions that lead to a healthier life. May this coming year be your healthiest yet!

Peggy Meyer, LIMHP, Board President

FY 2010 At a Glance from the Executive Director

“Knowledge may give weight, but accomplishments give luster, and many more people see than weigh.” ~ Herodotus

South Heartland’s accomplishments from this past year are many. Our Assistant Director, Cindi McDowell, and I each completed Master’s Degrees - Cindi’s in Counseling and mine in Public Health. The successes of our expert, dedicated staff- frequently in partnership with other community organizations and agencies - included encouraging radon-testing in hundreds of homes throughout the district and a successful effort to revise the City of Hastings building codes to include radon-resistant new construction. We were rewarded with nearly 100,000 hits to our website during a contest for schools to develop a Public Service Announcement about public health. We now have a presence on Facebook. We initiated a new partnership with Community Action Partnership of Mid-NE and area dental hygienists to provide oral health services to 414 WIC clients in all 4 counties. We provided over 2000 immunizations to children qualifying for the Vaccine for Children program. We assisted additional worksites to form wellness teams, bringing the total participating businesses to nine (1,269 employees). But wait, there’s more! Check out the following pages to learn about these and other accomplishments at SHDHD. And, as we look to future accomplishments, we hope these will involve you! Please join with us as we work toward our vision of ‘Healthy People in Healthy Communities’.

Michele Bever, PhD, MPH

South Heartland’s Mission

The South Heartland District Health Department is a combined health district dedicated to preserving and improving the health of the residents of various municipalities and townships within Adams, Clay, Nuckolls, and Webster Counties. Our mission is to provide those services mandated by statutes of the State of Nebraska in a courteous, efficient and effective manner within the limits of sound economic responsibility. Through interaction with other community agencies and leaders, the Board and staff will determine which public health services are needed and how that need may be met and financed. The Board will conduct continuing review of these activities to judge their effectiveness and continued need.

New Board Members

Justin Armstrong
Webster County Commissioner

Michael Kleppinger, DDS
Dental Representative
SHDHD Public Health Improvement Plan

Progress Report on Action Plans

South Heartland is entering the 4th year of a 5-year public health improvement plan launched in mid 2008. Action plans for each of six public health goals outline activities for (1) data collection and monitoring the health issue, (2) education and prevention, (3) mobilizing partnerships to tackle the issue while seeking resources to support the collaborative efforts, and (4) utilizing best practices and developing innovative approaches in order to be both effective and good stewards of our resources.

Progress highlights:

To promote healthy living through physical activity, nutrition and safety
- Fall Prevention in Seniors: Measured an increase in mobility in older adults participating in Tai Chi Better Balance programs in South Heartland counties.
- Increased physical activity: Wellness programs in 9 worksites across South Heartland - impacting 1260 employees; measured an increase in number of employees who report exercising regularly.

To inform area about mental health and wellness and to facilitate access to appropriate services
- Suicide Prevention: 40 community members trained in QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) method of recognizing signs of suicide.
- Access to Mental Health: Submitted proposal to Health Resources Services Administration for a rural network planning project on behavioral health/primary health integrated rural care. Awarded $84,000 for 1 year of assessment & planning.

To prevent and control oral disease, conditions, and injuries and improve access to related services
- Regular Dentist: Connected 87 people to dental homes via P.H.O.N.E. program.
- Access: Continued Sonrisa dental care program, expanding dental screening and restoration beyond low income school age children to include children age 0-6 years and uninsured or low-income pregnant women.
- Access: Initiated oral health access in WIC clinics; in the first 6 months reached 414 children and their caregivers for education and fluoride varnishes.

To reduce illness, disability and death caused by lung, breast, prostate & colon cancer
- Increase cancer screening rates: South Heartland Colon Cancer Coalition, distributed 161 free colon cancer screening kits through partnerships with 14 pharmacies and assisted individuals testing positive to navigate next steps for colonoscopy.
- Investigated 3 new violations of Nebraska Clean Indoor Air Act (smoking ban).

To reduce the illness, disability and death related to substance abuse
- Collected 170 pounds of expired or unwanted medicines at drug collection events.

To reduce the health impact of environmental hazards
- Radon Testing: Offered low cost radon test kits and surveyed homeowners whose levels were high to determine whether they had taken steps to reduce radon levels. Top reasons for not mitigating include: “Don’t perceive it as a threat” & “Expense”
- Policy Success: City of Hastings adopted building code for radon-resistant new construction and gives training to Central Community College construction students.
- Awareness of Drinking Water Safety: Assisted Hastings Utilities with water testing in private wells within the Hastings Wellhead Protection Area to determine nitrate levels. Of 461 private wells tested, 20 had nitrates 20-35 mg/L and 96 had nitrates 10-20 mg/L. The EPA Maximum Contaminant Level = 10 mg/L for public water systems. SHDHD also monitors public water supply violations then posts violations for nitrates and coliforms on the SHDHD website for access by the public.

Mini-Grants
South Heartland uses a portion of LB692 funds to support community efforts to identify and solve health problems. This year, SHDHD awarded a total of $2,760.00 to two organizations for health-related projects or programs that support the SHDHD Public Health Improvement Plan:

- DVD educational videos for Geriatric Mental Health, Good Samaritan Society, Hastings
- Youth Activity Program Development, Nuckolls County Youth Soccer Program

How effective are we in planning and in setting health policies?

Board Members Michael Combs, Merrill Duntz and Barb Sprague
Public Health Surveillance and Disease Investigation

What's going on in our communities? Do we know how healthy we are?

South Heartland staff investigated over 150 disease reports and provided follow up or referral for a host of nuisance reports and complaints, environmental issues (such as mold), and queries from residents and health care providers on topics ranging from radon testing to bird droppings, dog bites to egg recalls, as well as Hepatitis B in the workforce, head lice in a daycare center, TB in a homeless shelter, exposure to a bat in a home, tick exposure in a boy scout camp, blood exposure in a fitness facility, boil water advisories, bed bugs in motels and nursing homes, MRSA in a day care center, influenza in a long-term care facility, home clean up recommendations after sewer back-up, complaints about food service establishments or property upkeep, and adults looking for a low-cost option for influenza vaccine. South Heartland prides itself in providing excellent customer service - finding answers or providing referrals in a prompt, courteous and timely manner.

Reducing Spread of Disease

This year SHDHD investigated or monitored 210 reports of illnesses, including: 30 reports of food- or water-borne illness, 25 reports of hepatitis, 7 confirmed influenza cases, and 22 confirmed pertussis (whooping cough) cases. For communicable diseases, SHDHD staff follow up to ensure that case contacts (persons exposed to a person with illness) are educated on symptoms and available treatment to reduce the chances of developing illness, as well as recommendations for reducing spread of the illness.

What Diseases are Reportable in Nebraska?

Find Out Here: http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/reg_t173.aspx

173 NAC 1
Title 173
CH. 1 Reporting & Control of Communicable Diseases

Nebraska Statutes on Notifiable Conditions were Revised Effective May 11, 2010

What’s keeping students home from school? Thirty-eight schools in Adams, Clay, Nuckolls and Webster counties collaborated with SHDHD to monitor the absentee rates and illnesses of 7558 students. Top reason given for student absences due to illness? Gastrointestinal illness was the most common reason cited for absence due to illness from mid-October through mid January, while from mid-January through late March influenza was the most prevalent reported reason for absence.
Emergency Preparedness & Response

South Heartland leads exercises to test local emergency preparedness plans.

Bringing in stockpiled supplies.
How quickly and efficiently can we request and distribute the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) of medical and pharmaceutical supplies if we needed these supplies locally?

SHDHD, along with 3 other area health departments and Nebraska DHHS staff, designed a full-scale exercise to test the SNS distribution plan, including receipt, inventory control, pick list generation, repackaging, pick up, chain of custody and transport. In addition to public health staff, law enforcement and emergency managers from all four counties were involved as well as hospitals in Red Cloud, Superior, and Hastings. A local Pharmacist assured appropriate management and distribution of the scenario’s controlled substances.

Testing Resource Requests and Communication Among Agencies

SHDHD designed and conducted a combination Table Top Exercise / Functional Exercise for schools, emergency managers, law enforcement, hospitals, Region III Behavioral Health, news media, State Patrol, FBI, National Weather Service and public health. With 90 people attending, the exercise involved all aspects of communications, the Incident Command System, and resource availability. SHDHD’s primary roles in this type of scenario would be to assist with access to the ChemPak for antidotes/treatment and to initiate behavioral health response. The exercise stimulated important discussion around what entity would have the lead command and how entities would work together in their response.

Above: Participants receive instructions and then work in small groups to discuss local response procedures to the chemical release scenario provided to them.

Above: Pallets of supplies are repackaged and inventoried for delivery to specific sites across the South Heartland District and supplies are signed over to a County Sheriff for delivery to Webster County.

Essential Service
Protect People from Health Problems and Health Hazards

Are we ready to respond to health problems and health threats?
How effective is our response?

Testing Resource Requests and Communication Among Agencies

Public Health Risk Coordinator Jim Morgan is responsible for developing and testing plans for responding to and protecting the population from health threats such as pandemic influenza. Jim works closely with other agencies and organizations within the Health District and Across Nebraska.
Healthy Lifestyles

4th Graders Attend 6th Annual Kids Fitness & Nutrition Day

Five hundred and seventy-three 4th grade students from 22 area schools came to Hastings College in September 2010 to participate in a day focused on physical fitness and nutrition activities.

Our partners (Hastings College, Hastings Y, and UNL Extension-Adams County) helped coordinate and provided most of the 100 volunteers for the event activities. At the physical activity stations the students tried out the Fitness Stability Balls, Dead Bug Freeze Tag, Parachute, and many more. At the Nutrition Stations, students learned about Label Logic, Hand Washing & Food Safety, Energy Balance, Healthy Snacks, and MyPyramid.

Promoting Wellness Education in Schools

Seven School Wellness Councils working with South Heartland wrapped up the school year with wellness activities including field days, walking programs, wellness days, breakfast campaign, and a staff wellness challenge. This year, the school wellness councils served over 1,500 students.

Creating Healthier Worksites for Employees

Through South Heartland’s Wellness for Women at Work project, employees in the SHDHD area are joining the effort to make worksites healthier for their employees. 35 area employers/employees attended a workshop presented by Well Force to learn how to start a workplace wellness team.

Participating in the National Drug Take Back

In partnership with local law enforcement, hospitals, pharmacists, and the Area Substance & Alcohol Abuse Prevent coalition, South Heartland collected 170 pounds of expired or unused medications as part of the Drug Enforcement Agency’s DEA National Drug Take Back events. The DEA covered the costs of pick up and environmentally-friendly disposal.
......... And Making Healthy Choices

“What is Public Health?” PSA Contest

South Heartland sponsored a Public Service Announcement (PSA) contest for the secondary (grades 9-12) schools in the health district. Student teams were challenged to develop a 30-second PSA answering the question “What is Public Health?” Winners had their PSA aired on TV during Public Health Week in April. There were nearly 100,000 votes cast for the People’s Choice PSA contenders.

Active Older Adults Moving for Better Balance

South Heartland launched a second Tai Chi Moving for Better Balance program in partnership with Midland Area Agency on Aging. This evidence-based program aims to improve balance, coordination, and strength in older adults. South Heartland’s Tai Chi program had a total of 47 participants in the 4-county area with data indicating that participants showed significant improvement in the 50-foot walk test. In pre/post self-assessments, participants reported on their successes, saying: “...my arthritis was much better...” and “We absolutely loved the instructor!”

Suicide Prevention in the South Heartland District

South Heartland Suicide Prevention Coalition promoted recognition of signs of suicide by offering three QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) suicide prevention trainings. The more than 40 participants who attended one of the five trainings offered across the health district were trained to recognize signs of suicide ideation in youth, trained to ask appropriate questions and assess risk, and provided methods to appropriately assist and ensure proper precautions are taken and care is given.

Building Awareness for Colon Cancer Screening

South Heartland Colon Cancer Coalition secured continuation funding to support an awareness and education campaign as well as screening and intervention. The Coalition partnered with area beauty parlors and bars/taverns to distribute emery boards and coasters, respectively, with messages that encouraged screening for colon cancer during National Colon Cancer Awareness Month and partnered with 14 area pharmacists for distribution of colon cancer screening kits.

Dr. Bever and Dr. Schramm visiting KHAS Sunrise 60 morning show to discuss the importance of colon cancer screening

Goal:
Inform, Educate & Empower People About Health Issues to Reduce Risk and Promote Improved Health

South Heartland: In the Media

South Heartland Colon Cancer Coalition secured continuation funding to support an awareness and education campaign as well as screening and intervention. The Coalition partnered with area beauty parlors and bars/taverns to distribute emery boards and coasters, respectively, with messages that encouraged screening for colon cancer during National Colon Cancer Awareness Month and partnered with 14 area pharmacists for distribution of colon cancer screening kits.

Above: Holiday Radon Ad in the Hastings Tribune
Below: West Nile Virus Ad published in 6 local newspaper

Follow the 4 “D”s to protect yourself against West Nile Virus
1. DETER by using repellent containing DEET
2. DRESS in long sleeves and long pants
3. Avoid DUSK to DAWN when mosquitoes are most active
4. DRAIN standing water to reduce mosquito breeding sites

For more information, call South Heartland District Health Department at 612-333-7395
South Heartland’s Public Health Outreach Nursing Education (P.H.O.N.E.) program provides assistance to those who are on – or potentially eligible for – Medicaid and Kid’s Connection. Having medical, dental and optometric homes is essential for maintaining wellness. The P.H.O.N.E. Nurse Coordinator connected 23 persons to medical homes, 87 to dental homes, and 47 to vision homes. She follows up on missed healthcare appointments, investigating reasons for missing the appointments and stressing to patients the importance of keeping appointments. In addition, the P.H.O.N.E. nurse follows up on clients who have accessed the emergency room at Brodstone Memorial Hospital, Webster County Community Hospital and Mary Lanning Memorial HealthCare with an aim of reducing inappropriate emergency room visits.

P.H.O.N.E. nurse Janet Staehr initiated 981 contacts reminding clients of early periodic screening diagnosis & treatment (EPSDT), completed 139 health assessments to determine client and family needs, followed up on 462 emergency room visits, 431 missed dental appointments, and 15 missed vision appointments; made contact with families of 525 children regarding upcoming dental surgeries; and made referrals to other resources and services for 217 persons.

SHDHD Offers Oral Health Services at WIC Clinics

With support from a grant through the DHHS Office of Oral Health and Dentistry and a partnership with Mid-Nebraska Community Action Partnership’s Women, Infant and Children (WIC) program, South Heartland initiated oral health services for clients at WIC clinics in Superior, Red Cloud, Clay Center and Hastings beginning in March 2011. From March to June, 414 WIC children and their caregivers took advantage of the services offered, which included iodine and fluoride varnish treatments, education on oral health care, and a take-home bag consisting of preventive dental care information, toothbrushes, toothpaste, and Xylitol gum to reduce bacteria in the mouth. SHDHD contracts with public health dental hygienists to provide services and CCC dental hygiene students are gaining public health experience by participating in the program. Jorge Perez coordinates the project and provides interpretive services.
Working Together to Improve Public Health

Partnering to Manage and Prevent Diabetes

Inspirado en el Bienestar (Inspired by Wellness) is a partnership between Mary Lanning Memorial Health Care Diabetes Department, SHDHD, & the Hastings YMCA to serve the health and wellness, medical education and exercise needs of the Hispanic population in the Hastings area diagnosed with or at risk for diabetes. A community garden was started on the YMCA grounds to further develop team work and unity for Inspirado group members. UNL Extension staff provided Nutritional Education on ways to prepare fresh garden vegetables.

Exploring a “Complete Streets” Policy

The A.C.H.I.E.V.E. (Action Communities for Health Innovation & EnVironmental ChangE) community coalition, which includes representation from the City of Hastings, the Hastings City Council, Mary Lanning Memorial Hospital, the YMCA and YWCA, and the South Heartland District Health Department, is working toward a “Complete Streets” policy in Hastings. Under this policy, any street or road work would consider the Complete Streets concept, taking into consideration non-motorized uses for that street. The goal is to make streets friendlier for walking and biking in order to facilitate a more physically active public.

All New Homes in Hastings to Include Radon-Resistant Features

In an effort to initiate local policy change aimed at reducing exposure to radon, South Heartland researched regulations, building codes and model policies regarding radon and developed an action plan to achieve radon resistant new construction practices. SHDHD presented information and data supporting adoption of Appendix F of the International Residential Code which includes radon-resistant new construction to the City of Hastings Planning Commission which recommended the proposal to the Hastings City Council. The policy was approved by the council on March 14, 2011.
Expenses for FY 2008-2009

NE Clean Indoor Air Act.
The number of smoking violations reported was fewer in the second year of NE Clean Indoor Air Act (NCIAA) implementation. SHDHD investigated 3 new reports of smoking violations (NCIAA non-compliance) and continued working on 5 violations reported in the first year.

Establishments investigated included two businesses, four bars/taverns, one assisted living facility, and one municipal building. Using an educational approach during the first visit, most establishments were in compliance when SHDHD staff returned for a follow up visit. SHDHD worked with Law Enforcement, when appropriate, with only one case resulting in a fine.

South Heartland provides internship and temporary employment opportunities for students who may be interested in pursuing a career in public health. Hastings College senior Tara Harms researched evidence-based interventions for improving school health. Hastings College junior Apollo Stack trapped mosquitoes for the West Nile Virus surveillance program and developed a “Jeopardy-type” game about mosquitoes for 4th-6th grade students.

SHDHD trains & Recognizes Current and Future Public Health Workforce

SHDHD coordinates quarterly meetings of the South Heartland Infection Control Group. RNs, LPNs, APRNs, CMAs, and other health care providers working in school, clinic, long term care, hospital, and public health settings are invited to attend our educational programs on a variety of public health topics. Invited experts provided the following training:

- July, 2010 - "Immunization Update" presented by Karen Rutherford and Lori Howell from DHHS Immunization Program.
- October, 2010 - "Best Practice in Isolation Procedures and Perinatal Influenza Infections" presented by Connie Hyde, RN, and Janet Riese, RN, Infection Preventionists from Mary Lanning Memorial HealthCare.
- January, 2011 - "Nebraska State Immunization Information System (NESIIS)" Training presented by a DHHS Immunization Program staff member.
- April, 2011 - "Compassion Fatigue" presented by Dr. Ann Harms, Creighton University School of Nursing.

SHDHD Board of Health Honors Former Board Member Elmer Murman with the First Annual Public Health Award
Annual Financial Report 2010-2011

Revenue by Source

- **Total Revenue $707,561**
  - 44%: Services
  - 28%: Preparedness Contracts
  - 2%: LB 692 /1060
  - 7%: P.H.O.N.E Program Contract
  - 18%: Other Local/State/Federal Grants & Contracts
  - 1%: Other Income / Interest

Expenditure by Category

- **Total Expenditures $712,928**
  - 40%: Program Personnel
  - 24%: Operations
  - 17%: Admin Personnel
  - 17%: Program
  - <1%: Mini-Grants

TRI-Cities Medical Response System (TRIMRS)

- New Revenue (SHDHD FY 2010-11): $150,285
- Expenses (SHDHD FY 2010-11): $292,487

A BIG “Thank You!” to part-time SHDHD Staff & Volunteers

**Vaccine for Children Program:**
- Leslie Anderson, RN
- Sharyl Buescher
- Amanda Fitzke, RN
- Kari Grams, CMA
- Carol Hamik, RN
- Judy Sandeen, RN
- Dixie Zoucha, LPN
- Jessica Warner

**Sonrisa Dental Program:**
- Gloria Molina

**Suicide Prevention Coalition:**
- Sue Kennedy, Derek Bumgardner

**West Nile Virus Program:**
- Apollo Stack, Derek Bumgardner

**Experience Works Participant:**
- Janice Bank

Assistant Director & Grants Administrator Cindi McDowell finds resources to help staff address Public Health Improvement Plan goals. Operations Manager Denise Ferguson coordinates SHDHD’s administrative and financial activities.
Board of Directors

County Officials
Charles Neumann  Adams County Supervisor
Eric Samuelson  Clay County Supervisor
Michael Combs  Nuckolls County Commissioner
Justin Armstrong  Webster County Commissioner

Public Spirited Citizens
Judy Reimer  Adams County
Bradley Neet  Adams County
Merrill Duntz  Clay County
Bob Rose  Clay County
Peggy Meyer  Nuckolls County
Perry Freeman  Nuckolls County
Barbara Sprague  Webster County
Ron Kuehner  Webster County

Professional Representatives
Phyllis Salyards, MD  Adams County
Dee Griffin, DVM  Adams County
Michael Klepinger, DDS  Adams County

Officers (Elected March 2010)
President  Peggy Meyer, LIMHP
Vice President  Charles Neumann, DVM
Treasurer  Bob Rose

Board Members who completed terms or retired during the 2010-2011 Fiscal Year:
David Landgren, DDS
Michele Durr, MD

We thank you for your years of service!

Staff Directory

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