

JANUARY 2024



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.


**Mercer County
Health Department**


Public Health Pulse


Mercer County Health Department Newsletter



HEALTH NEWS

 Updated 2023-2024 Covid Vaccine is available by appointment only. Please call your insurance company to verify approval prior to calling for your appointment. Flu, Pneumonia and other adult and childhood vaccines are still available. Please call to inquire about individual vaccines.

 Beginning January 1, 2024, e-cigarette use will no longer be permitted in indoor public spaces. "E-cigarettes contain nicotine and other chemicals which can be harmful to both those who use them and those who are exposed to them," said IDPH Director Dr. Sameer Vohra. Bars, restaurants, and other retail establishments can get more information on the requirements of the updated law, and can download signage for their establishments at www.smoke-free.illinois.gov. Consumers can use that same website to register complaints if they witness non-compliance with the indoor smoking/vaping ban. You may also contact MCHD with any questions regarding this law or to submit a complaint.

 January is Cervical Cancer Awareness month so let's start the new year by taking care of ourselves! Our Women's Wellness program can help you with getting your preventative care appointments We offer help with scheduling, transportation, and financial assistance for pap screenings. Over 100 Mercer County women have received preventative health care services through the help of our navigation program. Please call us at 309-582-3759 and ask for Annette or Melissa if you would like us to help assist you as well!

Upcoming Events

Mental Health First Aid
March 1st, 2024
9 AM - 5 PM at MCHD
Cost: FREE (Sponsored by Mercer Foundation for Health)

Certified Food Protection Manager's Course:

- February 21st, 2024
8 AM - 5 PM and
- May 9th, 2024
8 AM - 5 PM

at the Aledo United Methodist Church
Cost: \$150 - license is valid for 5 years

Health Jokes

Q: What do you call someone who raps about vegetables?
A: A beet-boxer!

Going for a walk because I want to stay healthy. Taking along a box of M&M's because let's be honest here.

NEW GRANTS!

Oral Health

We began providing fluoride varnish through the Bright Smiles program in October of 2023. We are thrilled to be able to provide this service to our WIC and Family Case Management clients. Fluoride varnishes can be applied every 3 months. We begin applying with parental permission from the time of first tooth up until 36 months. This service is able to be billed to the client's insurance. Please ask your nurse at your next visit with us!

Well Woman

We have received the signed contract for the continuation of our current Well Woman program. This program aims to reduce the barriers women aged 18-44 in Mercer County may be facing to receiving preventative health care. Through the grant, we are able to provide scheduling, transportation, and financial assistance for pap screenings and mammograms.

READINESS REMINDER

Let's start thinking about flooding!

Flooding can occur without warning and is especially dangerous for several reasons. It can wash away vehicles and mobile homes and cause extensive property damage. Seniors and individuals who need special assistance or cannot swim face a heightened risk of drowning. Finally, downed power lines can fall into pools of water and cause electrocution.

Familiarize yourself with the following terms to stay alert and prepared.

- **Flood/Flash Flood Watch** - conditions are favorable for flooding in the next day or two. Flash floods occur very quickly, usually as a result of heavy rainfall in a short period of time.
- **Flood Warning** - flooding is expected to threaten life and property a few hours after the onset of heavy rain, ice jams, reservoir releases or snowmelt. Flood warnings may be in effect for days or even weeks depending on weather and soil conditions, land topography, and river size.
- **Flash Flood Warning** - rapidly rising water which poses an immediate threat to life and property within a few hours due to small stream or urban flooding and dam or levee failures. Quickly move to higher ground or stay away from flooded areas - especially in vehicles.
- **Flood Statement** - ponding of water in urban areas or minor flooding of streams is occurring. Also used to convey supplemental information, updated observations, and impact information for Flood Warnings.

Before a flood

- Elevate the furnace, water heater, and electric panel if susceptible to flooding.
- Install check valves in sewer traps to prevent floodwater from backing up into your home.
- Construct barriers (levees, beams, sandbags, floodwalls) to stop floodwater from entering the building.
- Seal walls in basements with waterproofing compounds to avoid seepage.

Keep an adequate supply of food, drinking water, and flashlights (with extra batteries) in case you are trapped inside your home.



MCHD Health Happenings

In addition to our day-to-day duties, here are some activities our staff have been up to!

Community Health Worker Training

Throughout October, 9 MCHD employees attended the Illinois Public Health Association's Community Health Worker 101 Training to become certified CHWs. According to IPHA, "CHWs are trusted healthcare messengers and navigators who live and work in the communities they serve. CHWs connect community residents with the resources they need to manage their health, address chronic disease issues, and access available services and resources."



Girls Night Out

On October 25th, our Women's Wellness program attended Genesis' breast cancer awareness event, Girls Night Out. They handed out program resources and talked with community members about our navigation services.



Pop Up Flu Shot Clinics

In the fall, we held Pop Up Flu Shot Clinics in Viola, New Boston, Keithsburg, Joy, and at the Mercer County Senior Center. We also provided flu vaccines to the Mercer County School Staff. We gave a total of 46 flu shots during those events. In office, flu vaccines were offered Monday-Thursday with 324 doses of Flu administered.



Diaper Drive

October 23rd-November 9th, we held a diaper drive to give back to Loving Bottoms Diaper Bank and raised around 1,000 diapers in addition to monetary donations. Because of Loving Bottoms Diaper Bank we are able to supply infants and children in our county with 50 free diapers monthly. If you are in need of diapers or period supplies, please reach out to us at 309-582-3759. Diaper need is real and serious, and we are always happy to help!

Scam Prevention and Safety Presentation

On November 13th, our PHEP Coordinator gave a presentation on Scam Prevention and Safety for seniors and their families at Brookstone.



Mental Health First Aid

Mental Health First Aid Training was held on December 1st at MCHD. Mental Health First Aid teaches you how to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges among adults. If you are interested in taking this class, please call to sign up for our next one on March 1st!

More activities on the next page!





Adolescent Healthcare Transition Education

On November 17th, our Adolescent Health Program was able to educate 74 Sherrard High School seniors on the importance of transitioning from pediatric to adult healthcare and the steps to do so. To read the full story posted by the Sherrard School District, see page 6.

Holiday Open House

Our Annual Holiday Open House and Bake Sale was held on December 6th from 9 AM - 6:30 PM. All of the monetary proceeds went towards our emergency assistance fund to help our clients in need, the food collected was donated to our local food pantries, and the diapers were donated to Loving Bottoms Diaper Bank. THANK YOU to those who donated and attended our event! We are so thankful to serve this wonderful community! A full event summary can be found on page 5.



Signs of Suicide

On December 5th, our MHAP team assisted the Mercer County High School with SOS Signs of Suicide Training for their 10th grade class. SOS is a crucial mental health education and screening tool, helping to connect students to resources they may need. The program reached 82 students on this day alone, resulting in 10 students requiring extra follow up and screening. 6 of those 10 students were further referred for new or continued services with a mental health provider. This is a program we do yearly at the High School and Junior High level with both Mercer County and Sherrard School Districts.

OTHER INFORMATION

Scan our QR code!

The Mercer County Health Department offers many programs that provide resources to those who are in need of various health services. In order to connect you with the resources you might need, please fill out the survey to the best of your ability!



The Project of the Quad Cities

Every 4th Monday from 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM, the Project of the Quad Cities visits the Mercer County Health Department to serve the Mercer County community. The Services offered are:

- No Cost HIV, Hepatitis C, Gonorrhea, Chlamydia, and Syphilis testing with individual risk reduction counseling
- Free safer sex supplies
- Free Harm Reduction Supplies: Narcan, Fentanyl test strips, disease reduction substance use supplies
- Telehealth PrEP services with labs to reduce the risk of HIV

*A full calendar can be found on page 7.



The Project
4101 John Deere Rd.
Moline, IL 61265
(309) 762-5433

DECEMBER 6, 2023

EVENT SUMMARY

HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE AND BAKE SALE



17

GIFT BASKETS DONATED

Donated by local businesses and MCHD employees



104

COMMUNITY MEMBERS ATTENDED

- 30 were children
- 124 gift basket entries
- 2 flu shots and 1 COVID-19 booster shot given
- 7 blood pressure checks given

\$1,200

PROCEEDS

- Bake Sale: \$1,100
- Walking Tacos: \$100
- Diaper Drive: 298 diapers donated
- Food Pantry Drive: 1 grocery cart full of food items



Santa made a visit and was available for pictures



ROE #33 Early Childhood Program provided a children's activity



Bill Glenn was our Polar Express Conductor and greeted our guests



Kristin Anderson, ARNP at Genesis was available for meet and greets

SHERRARD SCHOOL DISTRICT'S FACEBOOK POST ABOUT THE ADOLESCENT HEALTHCARE TRANSITION EDUCATION:



Sherrard School District

December 6, 2023 · 🌐

👉 Empowering Seniors: Mercer County Health Department Educators Share Essential Health Information

"Having 17 and 18 year old young adults understand the concept of health insurance, and that they're responsible for their own healthcare is pretty important," said HS English Teacher Tammy Crippen.

Recently, [Mercer County Health Department, Illinois](#) guests, Hannah Garrett (Public Health Educator) and Melissa Hajostek (Public Health Nurse Navigator), discussed health insurance importance and available resources for seniors transitioning to independence during a 'Friday Feature' in Crippen's class.

The two specialize in adolescent health through the Navigator Program at MCHD helping individuals navigate their transition from pediatric to adult healthcare. The program addresses various aspects, including scheduling wellness visits, overcoming barriers to health appointments, addressing insurance inquiries, finding financial assistance, arranging transportation, and guidance in appointment scheduling.

Emphasizing the importance of healthcare transition, the speakers encouraged proactive engagement in managing their own health.

"It's important to start the transition now and understanding the kinds of things you're responsible for- otherwise you'll become an adult and have all these things fall into your lap not knowing how to navigate the process," said Garrett.

They addressed areas for consideration, starting with their current healthcare provider, seniors should assess the need for a change and consider insurance options, including those offered through full-time employment.

Seniors should create a comprehensive health history, including family medical background and keep it updated.

As part of the transition, the seniors were urged to practice an active role in their healthcare, from setting up appointments to refilling prescriptions. While parents may be involved in doctor visits until the age of 18, learning to communicate effectively with healthcare providers is essential.

Post-18, individuals are encouraged to make their own appointments, refill prescriptions, and understand their insurance coverage, including the pharmacies covered.

The program highlights the significance of being comfortable with healthcare providers, fostering self-advocacy, and maintaining clear communication. It stresses the need to be informed about insurance providers, understanding explanations of benefits, and knowing where prescriptions can be filled.

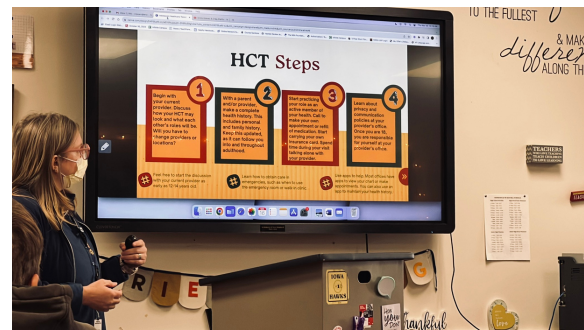
Overall, the goal of the presentation was to raise awareness and provide initial guidance for individuals to take charge of their healthcare journey.

They provided a handout, with information and a timeline for understanding and taking control of their health. The information contained a QR code for seniors to get a hold of the Mercer County Health Department if they have any needs.

"Honestly, a lot of you because you're going straight to the workforce or a trade school - this is a conversation you'll have to have.

As a parent I didn't know this. It would have been nice to have this information. You don't get a handbook when you're a parent," said Crippen.

[#sherrardroars](#)





At Mercer County Health Department
From 10:00 am – 2:00 pm



All services are walk in

The services offered are:

- No Cost HIV, Hepatitis C, Gonorrhea, Chlamydia, and Syphilis testing with individual risk reduction counseling
- Free safer sex supplies
- Free Harm Reduction Supplies: Narcan, Fentanyl test strips, disease reduction substance use supplies
- Telehealth PrEP services with labs to reduce the risk of HIV

2024

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