

# ONONDAGA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

# 2018 Annual Report



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## MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH



Dear Friends of Public Health,

I am very pleased to present the Onondaga County Health Department's 2018 Annual Report, which highlights our accomplishments and the challenges faced over the past year.

This was a landmark year for the Health Department with the achievement of national accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). We are pleased and excited to have met PHAB's national standards that ensure effective operations and promote continuous quality improvement. The ongoing accreditation process helps to ensure that the programs and services we provide are as responsive as possible to the needs of our community. With accreditation, we demonstrate increased accountability and credibility to the public, our funders, elected officials and partner organizations.

This past year also presented public health challenges, including harmful algal blooms, Eastern Equine Encephalitis virus, human cases of West Nile virus, a confirmed case of meningitis B, and an outbreak of mumps at a local university. We met these challenges with our skilled and prepared workforce along with our dedicated community partners, and through these experiences are stronger and even better equipped for what lies ahead in 2019.

We hope the detailed information provided in this report gives you, our stakeholders, a comprehensive overview of the Health Department's priorities and accomplishments, and we welcome your suggestions on how we can continue to improve the way we provide programs and services to the residents of Onondaga County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Indu Gupta".

Indu Gupta, MD, MPH, MA, FACP  
Commissioner  
Onondaga County Health Department

# ONONDAGA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

## Mission

*To protect and improve the health  
of all residents of Onondaga County.*

## Vision

*A community of partners working together for the  
physical, social, and emotional well-being of all.*

## Values

*Respect • Excellence • Accountability • Collaboration • Health Equity*



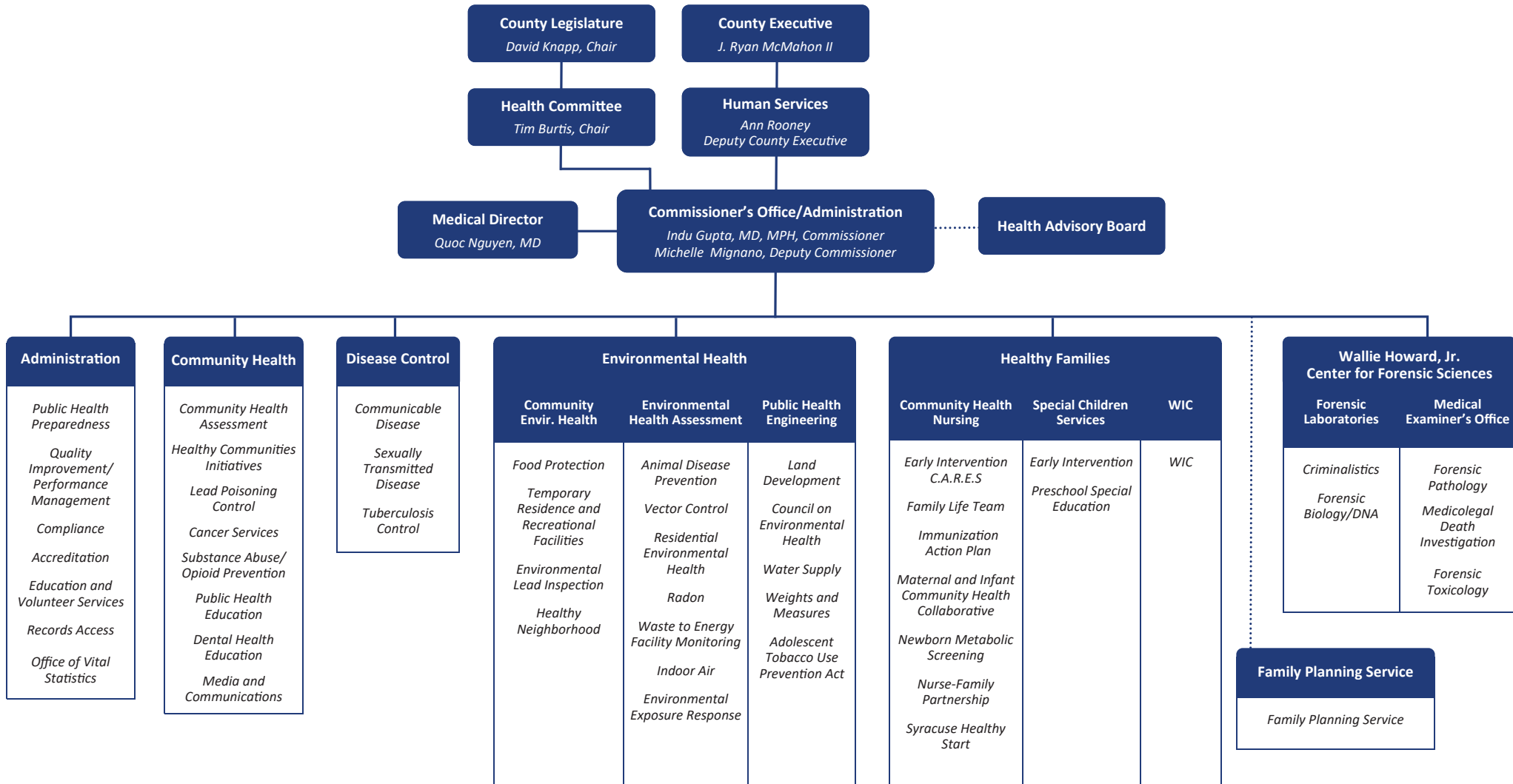
## Onondaga County Legislature 2018 Health Committee

Tim Burtis, Chair  
Monica Williams, Vice Chair  
James Rowley  
Debra Cody  
Peggy Chase

## 2018 Advisory Board of Health

Thomas Dennison, Chair  
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Larry Consenstein, MD  
David Page, MD  
Robert Hack  
Diane Turner  
Ann Rooney  
Monica Williams

# Onondaga County Health Department 2018 Organizational Chart



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Ten Essential Public Health Services .....	7
Administration .....	8
• Commissioner’s Office .....	8
• Public Health Preparedness.....	8
• Performance Management and Quality Improvement.....	9
• Compliance .....	9
• Public Health Operations.....	9
• Education and Volunteer Services .....	10
• Office of Vital Statistics.....	11
Community Health .....	12
• Health Assessment Data Team .....	12
• Substance Abuse and Mental Health .....	12
• Healthy Communities Initiatives .....	12
• Lead Poisoning Control Program .....	13
• Cancer Services Program .....	14
• Public Health Education.....	14
• Dental Health Education.....	15
Disease Control .....	16
• Communicable Disease.....	16
• Sexually Transmitted Disease .....	16
• Tuberculosis .....	17
Environmental Health .....	19
• Community Environmental Health .....	19
Food Protection .....	19
Temporary Residence and Recreational Facilities.....	19
Healthy Neighborhood .....	20
• Environmental Health Assessment.....	20
Animal Disease Prevention .....	20
Vector Control.....	21
Residential Environmental Health.....	22
Radon .....	22

Waste to Energy Facility Monitoring Program .....	22
Indoor Air .....	22
Environmental Exposure Response .....	22
• Public Health Engineering .....	23
Land Development.....	23
Onondaga County Council on Environmental Health.....	23
Water Supply .....	23
Adolescent Tobacco and Clean Indoor Air Act .....	24
Weights and Measures .....	24
Family Planning Service.....	26
Healthy Families: Maternal and Child Health .....	28
• Public Health Nursing .....	28
Early Intervention C.A.R.E.S.....	28
Immunization Services.....	29
Nurse-Family Partnership .....	29
• Community Outreach, Education, and Home Visiting Services .....	30
Syracuse Healthy Start.....	30
Community Health Worker Program: Supported by Maternal and Infant Community Health Collaborative Grant.....	30
Family Life Team .....	31
• Special Children Services .....	31
Early Intervention .....	31
Preschool Special Education .....	32
• Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) .....	33
The Wallie Howard, Jr. Center for Forensic Sciences	
• Forensic Laboratories .....	35
• Medical Examiner’s Office .....	37
Schedule of Expenditures and Revenues.....	39
Programs and Services Phone Directory.....	41

# Ten Essential PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

***The following Essential Public Health Services provide a working definition of public health and a guiding framework for the responsibilities of the local public health system.***

- 1.** *Monitor health status to identify community health problems.*
- 2.** *Diagnose and investigate health problems and health hazards in the community.*
- 3.** *Inform, educate, and empower people about health issues.*
- 4.** *Mobilize community partnerships to identify and solve health problems.*
- 5.** *Develop policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts.*
- 6.** *Enforce laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety.*
- 7.** *Link people to needed personal health services and assure the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable.*
- 8.** *Assure a competent public health and personal health care workforce.*
- 9.** *Evaluate effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services.*
- 10.** *Research new insights and innovative solutions to health problems.*

Source: CDC, <http://www.cdc.gov/nphsp/essentialservices.html>

# ADMINISTRATION

The mission of the Onondaga County Health Department's administration is to provide the support and services necessary for the OCHD's Divisions and Bureaus to be successful.

## COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

OCHD's administration provides oversight and support with:

- Public Health Preparedness
- Performance Management and Quality Improvement
- Compliance
- Public Health Operations
- Education and Volunteer Services

## PUBLIC HEALTH PREPAREDNESS (PHP)

The PHP program develops and carries out response plans for public health emergencies working with Federal, State, regional, and local emergency response organizations to assure coordination in the mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery phases of public health emergencies. The program provides:

- Regular exercises and real time implementation opportunities that use plans such as Medical Countermeasures and Isolation and Quarantine
- Coordination of all public health preparedness grants awarded to the OCHD from the NYS Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services and the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH)
- Risk communication information to the public and first responders about public health emergencies
- Input into the County's emergency planning and response under the direction of the Department of Emergency Management
- Coordination of public health preparedness planning efforts with Alliance Counties (Cayuga, Cortland, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oswego, and Tompkins)
- Development and maintenance of OCHD's emergency response plans
- Collaborations with community partners to increase the number of Closed Point of Distribution sites in the event of a public health emergency requiring a mass prophylaxis response

ANNUAL DATA	2016	2017	2018
New Individuals trained in Incident Command System (ICS)	10	30	20
Exercises conducted	7	14	11



## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

The OCHD has incorporated Quality Improvement (QI) efforts into its core functions since 1989. Now, as a newly accredited health department, the OCHD is integrating performance management (PM) and quality improvement practices into our daily work to enhance responsiveness to community needs and improve population health. The OCHD's culture of quality improvement and performance management has led to improved efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability department-wide.

The departmental QI/PM leadership teams support:

- A QI/PM Council which provides vision, direction, and collaborative assurance for QI and PM measures
- QI/PM committees within each bureau/division
- The development and integration of Performance Management measures in each bureau/division
- A QI/PM Champions program which engages staff to provide guidance to co-workers in identifying and developing QI projects and supporting ongoing performance management
- Annual QI Summit to highlight bureau/division QI projects and PM efforts

## COMPLIANCE

The Compliance program provides:

- Initiation, implementation, review and enforcement of policies and procedures
- Support and coordination for, and response to, all program and regulatory audits including Medicaid
- Quality Assurance measures and internal audits
- Support for annual trainings and certifications
- Reports to the County's Compliance Officer Deputy County Executive on quarterly basis.

## PUBLIC HEALTH OPERATIONS

Administration provides support for all public health programs by ensuring programmatic and fiscal stability by identifying and allocating the appropriate resources to serve the mission of OCHD. This also involves the engagement of the [County Executive](#), [Onondaga County Legislature](#) and a wide range of [public health partners](#) in the community.

Administration is responsible for the development, implementation, performance, accountability and oversight of all the plans and frameworks that guide the work of the department such as accreditation, the Community Health Assessment and Improvement Plan, and the OCHD Strategic Plan.

## PUBLIC HEALTH ACCREDITATION

The accreditation process advances quality and performance within public health departments and improves service, value, and accountability to all stakeholders. After successfully achieving accreditation in 2018, the focus of this administration is to provide support to each program, bureau and division of OCHD in order to show conformity with the 12 domains outlined by the [Public Health Accreditation Board \(PHAB\)](#) along with evidence to support the [10 essential services](#) provided by OCHD to maintain the accreditation and reaccreditation.

## COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The [Community Health Assessment and Improvement Plan](#) (CHA/CHIP) was developed as a collaborative process between the OCHD, local hospitals, and several community agencies. Data collection, analysis, and interpretation were combined with extensive community engagement to identify two priority areas in which to focus efforts during the next several years: Prevent Chronic Disease and Promote Mental Health and Prevent Substance Abuse. The interventions identified in the CHA/CHIP were monitored by the Division of Community Health in 2018, with guidance from the Commissioner of Health. Data are monitored continuously to provide timely and accurate reporting, and to ensure strategies can be adjusted if needed to achieve the desired goals.

## STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION (2015-2019)

The [OCHD Strategic Plan](#) (2015-2019) provides strategic direction for the department, in order to better serve our community. The plan is organized into four overarching strategic priorities: Health Protection, Health Improvement, Public Engagement, and Organizational Excellence. Each of these strategies are associated with detailed work plans to enable us to measure progress and adapt strategies to effectively respond to community need. The plan emphasizes the use of data and systematic approaches to improve how we can work together both within the organization and within the community. This work continued in 2018 and modifications to the implementation process are guided by staff input, under the direction of the Commissioner of Health.

## EDUCATION & VOLUNTEER SERVICES

Onondaga County Health Department provides educational opportunities to undergraduate and graduate students of public health, nursing, social work, forensic anthropology and pathology, and medical students and residents in close coordination with local and regional colleges and universities. Volunteers provide assistance with:

- Rabies vaccination clinics
- Blood pressure screening and education sites
- Clerical support in programs and services within OCHD

The Health Department currently works with approximately 25 interns annually.

ANNUAL DATA	2016	2017	2018
Volunteer/Intern hours	4,569	2,680	3,724
Volunteer/Intern estimated value	\$75,971	\$46,330	\$69,351

## OFFICE OF VITAL STATISTICS

The Office of Vital Statistics Provides:

- Consultation for community members and requests for local health statistics
- Maintenance of records documenting all births and deaths that occur in Onondaga County
- Issuance of certified copies of birth and death records for a fee, which is set by New York State

ANNUAL DATA	2016	2017	2018
Certificates issued for a fee	42,063	41,308	43,743

## HIGHLIGHTS IN 2018: ADMINISTRATION

- In August, the Health Department earned national accreditation from the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) - the first midsize health department among the 6 accredited local health departments (LHD) in New York State and one of only 209 LHD in the United States.
- The Commissioner of Health is actively engaged in the City of Syracuse's antipoverty coalition HOPE in an advisory capacity.
- The Onondaga County Drug Task force, co-chaired by the Commissioner of Health and supported by Health Department staff has continued to engage stakeholders, and promote linkages to care and prevention with: all county hospitals; Onondaga County Medical Society; educational institutions; community based organizations; law enforcement, including the District Attorney, Onondaga County Sheriff's Office, Syracuse Police, New York State Police, and U.S. Attorney's Office; representatives from local, state and federal elected officials; and, most importantly, representatives of community members whose loved ones have been impacted.
- Strong emphasis on department wide performance management and quality improvement and regular staff trainings for a strong workforce and strong interagency and community collaboration has resulted in improved delivery of public health services in our community.
- The Onondaga County Health Department and the Public Health Preparedness program exercised with staff from all of the Health programs, County IT, community partners, vulnerable populations, and high school students from the Syracuse City School District to simulate providing medications to the community in the event of a public health emergency. This was the first time translation services were used on tablet computers to this magnitude.

# COMMUNITY HEALTH

The mission of the Division of Community Health is to monitor the health status of the population, and to utilize data-driven processes to promote the health of Onondaga County residents through education and policy change.

## THE DIVISION PROVIDES THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMS:

- Health Assessment Data Team
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health
- Healthy Communities Initiatives
- Lead Poisoning Control Program
- Cancer Services Program
- Public Health Education
- Dental Health Education

## HEALTH ASSESSMENT DATA TEAM

The Health Assessment Data Team provides continuous monitoring of the health status of Onondaga County residents through public health surveillance. These efforts inform the department's understanding of community needs, special populations at risk, financial impacts, and future local trends. The team also provides department-wide support for data collection, analysis and interpretation. In addition, the team supports a department culture of quality improvement and performance management while also promoting the adoption of evidence based interventions and strategies.

## SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH

The OCHD has worked with the Onondaga County Drug Task Force to identify and implement strategies to prevent substance use disorders, increase the use of naloxone to reverse opioid overdoses, and improve access to treatment. In 2018, the OCHD co-sponsored training opportunities for 33 medical providers to become waived to provide medication assisted treatment. The department developed and implemented an educational campaign aimed at reducing the stigma associated with substance use disorders, and worked to develop an OCHD policy on provision of community-based naloxone trainings, set to being in 2019. Program staff also convened and facilitated a work group of treatment providers to share information and data on available inpatient treatment resources.

## HEALTHY COMMUNITIES INITIATIVES

Through grant projects funded by the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center and HealthConnections, the Healthy Communities Initiatives program works to develop policies and programs that will prevent obesity, Type 2 diabetes, and other chronic diseases. Target populations include students in the Syracuse City School District, small retail venue owners, employees of local businesses and community-based organizations, children who attend early child care centers and their families, college students

and city of Syracuse residents. A primary focus is on reducing health disparities among adults. Program outcomes are achieved through supporting policy changes that support health at the organizational or legislative level; environmental changes, involving changing the physical environment in ways that facilitate healthy choices; and practice changes, when individuals or agencies modify processes or behaviors to support health. Specific activities include partnering with the Syracuse City School District to increase the demand for and access to healthy and affordable foods, and enhance opportunities for physical activity; implementing strategies to prevent obesity, and prevent and control diabetes, heart disease and stroke; modifying health behaviors in areas where healthy choices may not be affordable or visible to underserved residents; and working in university and child care settings to implement food standards and policy changes to reduce sodium content.

In 2018, the HCI program opened 5 new breastfeeding spaces, and created 2 new breastfeeding policies. Program staff worked with local corner stores to develop the first two Healthy Corner Store policies in New York State. Over 200 teachers and staff in the Syracuse City School District were trained on methods to incorporate more physical activity in the classroom, and walking trails were installed in 6 schools to increase opportunities for exercise.

From 2016 – 2018, the Healthy Communities Initiative program created policy, practice, and environmental changes to improve nutrition and physical activity in the Syracuse City School District, and the community at large.

	COMMUNITY	SYRACUSE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
New policies created	53	1
Environmental changes	597	95
Practice changes	596	149

## LEAD POISONING CONTROL PROGRAM

The [Lead Poisoning Control Program](#) was established in 1972 to minimize the adverse health impact of lead poisoning. The program has helped thousands of families protect their children from lead exposure by ensuring their homes are lead safe. By law, medical providers in New York State must test children for lead at age one and at age two. Results of blood lead testing activities for 2013-2017 can be found [here](#).

The Lead Poisoning Control program works closely with health care providers to ensure children are tested for lead at age 1 and 2; identifies and targets housing at greatest risk of lead-based paint hazards for inspection; participates in community-wide planning activities and coalitions formed to ensure a holistic approach to rehabilitating at risk housing units; facilitates the development and expansion of a trained and certified work force to ensure home repairs are made safely; and links property owners with community resources for lead-safe renovation and repair.

ANNUAL DATA	2016	2017	2018
Inspections completed	336	290	259
Properties with lead hazards identified	278	238	211
Primary prevention inspections (no child associated with a BLL > 5 mcg/dL)	135	85	78

A decrease in the overall inspections completed is a result of program changes in 2017 to enhance the quality of follow up and enforcement activities, and to provide further assurance that identified lead paint hazards were corrected safely and effectively. A simultaneous change in how inspections were tracked resulted in fewer inspections being coded as primary prevention.

Additional data and maps related to blood lead testing can be found [here](#).

## CANCER SERVICES PROGRAM

Since 1987, the [Cancer Services Program](#) (CSP) of the Onondaga County Health Department has collaborated with NYSDOH, local healthcare providers, and numerous community agencies/organizations to offer screening services for breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer to uninsured and underinsured residents of both the city of Syracuse and Onondaga County.

The Cancer Services Program promotes and provides breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer screening services through collaborative relationships with healthcare providers, human service agencies, local media, and other community organizations, and provides assessment and case management services for all men and women identified with abnormal screening results.

ANNUAL DATA	2016	2017	2018
Number of patients screened	277	209	277
Clinical breast exams	147	168	132
Mammograms	208	228	211
Pap tests	50	60	46
Colorectal Fecal Immunochemical Test Kits	75	101	82
Follow-up diagnostic procedures	254	341	247
Cancers diagnosed	13	4	6

## PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATION

The Public Health Education (PHE) team increases awareness of local health issues and encourages the adoption of healthy behaviors. The team coordinates and staffs educational programs, community outreach activities, and special health events; develops health education materials for targeted populations; promotes health department programs and clinical services at area businesses, worksites, and community locations; and gathers information to identify health behaviors in our community through focus groups, surveys, and key informant interviews.

Additionally, the PHE team works collaboratively with the local media to raise awareness of public health issues and prevention measures. Within the Division of Community Health, the PHE team provided more than 180 presentations or trainings in 2018, in various locations including schools, pre-schools, colleges, child care centers, health clinics, health fairs, and the New York State Fair.

## DENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION

Since 2005, the Dental Health program has concentrated on providing dental health education to children, targeting pre-school age children and their families. In 2018, the program educated over 1,100 pre-school children at 25 sites on the importance of dental health.

## HIGHLIGHTS IN 2018: COMMUNITY HEALTH

- Health Assessment Data Team staff continued to work closely with hospital and community stakeholders to monitor interventions identified in the 2016-2018 [Community Health Assessment and Improvement Plan](#).
- Health Assessment Data Team staff convened the Onondaga County Health Equity Coalition to provide a forum for improving communication and alignment among local agencies working to address gaps in health equity. The coalition will also serve in advisory capacity to inform the 2019-2021 Onondaga County Community Health Assessment and Improvement Plan.
- The OCHD provided training on trauma and resilience to the Syracuse City School District. Over 100 teachers and staff learned about Adverse Childhood Experiences at the district's Summer Summit in August.
- The Lead Poisoning Control program's "Close the Window on Childhood Lead Poisoning" Educational Forum provided a high-level overview of both program-level and community-level initiatives intended to address childhood lead poisoning at its source – old housing in poor repair. More than 60 local elected officials, county and city government leadership and department heads and agency partners attended this inaugural event and heard updates from local medical experts and key health and housing partners.
- The Healthy Communities Initiatives (HCI) program helped the Syracuse City School District (SCSD) implement the New York State Education Department requirement of 120 minutes of weekly physical education for elementary students. HCI worked closely with teachers and parents to identify fun and innovative ways to incorporate physical activity into classroom learning. Depending on individual building needs, schools were provided with recess kits, traverse climbing walls, and/or walking trails. These changes impact over 12,000 students annually.

# DISEASE CONTROL

**The mission of the Bureau of Disease Control is to decrease the impact of communicable diseases in Onondaga County.**

The Bureau of Disease Control (BDC) is responsible for the prevention, investigation, reporting, diagnosis, and treatment of reportable communicable diseases in Onondaga County. Programs within the Bureau include Communicable Disease; [Sexually Transmitted Disease \(STD\)](#); [HIV Counseling and Testing](#); [Pre-exposure Prophylaxis \(PrEP\)](#) and [Tuberculosis Control](#). Bureau staff members monitor disease activity in Onondaga County and work closely with Health Administration, Community Health, Environmental Health, and Healthy Families to develop education, outreach, testing, and treatment strategies to minimize the impact of communicable disease in the community.

## COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

The Communicable Disease program is responsible for the investigation, follow-up, surveillance and reporting of 73 diseases/conditions identified as reportable under the New York State Sanitary Code. All cases of reportable disease are electronically reported to the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH). Staff works closely with OCHD's Food Protection, Animal Disease Control, Health Assessment programs, NYSDOH, and community partners including hospitals, to control and prevent the spread of communicable disease within the community.

ANNUAL DATA	2016	2017	2018*
Case investigations	2,762	2,992	2,703
Actual cases of reportable communicable disease <sup>†</sup>	1,308	1,624	1,309
Highlight: cases of possible rabies exposure investigated by staff	303	315	384

*\*Preliminary data pending review*

*†Does not include flu cases*

## SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASE

The [Sexually Transmitted Disease program](#) is responsible for the investigation of, follow-up (including partner notification when indicated), surveillance and reporting of chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, and HIV. The program offers a walk-in clinic providing on-site testing and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases.



ANNUAL DATA	2016	2017	2018*
Total patient visits to the STD Center	5,302	5,378	4,212 <sup>+</sup>
Cases of gonorrhea in Onondaga County	1,006	773	1,023
Cases of chlamydia in Onondaga County	2,617	2,684	3,185
Cases of syphilis in Onondaga County <sup>A</sup>	43	44	34
New cases of HIV in Onondaga County	30	21	N/A

\*Preliminary data pending review

<sup>+</sup>Decreased total visits due to staffing changes and implementation of new electronic medical record

<sup>A</sup> Includes Syphilis Early and Syphilis Late as reported by NYSDOH

NA- Preliminary HIV reporting not available.

## TUBERCULOSIS

The [Tuberculosis \(TB\) Control program](#) provides comprehensive testing, diagnosis, and treatment of latent and active tuberculosis cases in Onondaga County. The TB Control program decreases the public health threat of TB by evaluating and treating positive cases of TB, while promoting preventative therapy as indicated for contact cases. The TB Control program performs targeted testing on high-risk groups and works closely with the Refugee Assistance Program, the Catholic Charities Men’s Shelter, and the Rescue Mission to provide testing for those at greatest risk of TB.

ANNUAL DATA	2016	2017	2018
Total patient visits to the TB Clinic	11,015	7,915	4,612*
Active cases of TB managed by OCHD	18	6	7
Latent TB cases identified (inclusive of pediatric cases)	515	503	490

\*Decreased total visits due to a decrease in number of refugees entering Onondaga County.

## HIGHLIGHTS IN 2018: DISEASE CONTROL

- Transitioned to the use of an Electronic Medical Record in 2018, streamlining processes around data collection and analysis for both the TB and STD clinics.
- Collaborated with Syracuse University to create a smooth streamlined process to effectively provide TB assessments for foreign born students. This process will continue in the future to increase efficiency, compliance and patient satisfaction.
- Staff partnered with the Healthy Neighborhood program of Environmental Health to provide home safety supplies to newly arrived refugees served by the TB clinic.

- Staff identified and responded to a cluster of Hepatitis A cases identified in a high-risk population within the community, and provided a mobile vaccination campaign to prevent the further spread of the disease. This required collaboration with the immunization program of Healthy Families, Public Health Preparedness logistic staff, and the guidance of the Medical Director and administration.
- A new CLIA waived on-site laboratory was started to provide point of care testing for individuals in the STD clinic.
- BDC staff continue to educate and offer Expedited Partner Therapy to clients, providing free, anonymous prescriptions to the sexual partners of individuals diagnosed with chlamydia.
- The Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) program enrolled its 100th new patient, providing HIV prevention services to those at highest risk.

# ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

The mission of this Division is to protect and improve the overall health of Onondaga County residents through the assurance of a safe environment.

## BUREAU OF COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

### FOOD PROTECTION

The [Food Protection program](#) inspects and permits food service establishments including temporary events at fairs and festivals, along with investigation of potential food borne illness outbreaks.

ANNUAL DATA	2016	2017	2018
<b>Inspections</b>			
Mandated annual inspections conducted	2,225	2,036	2045
Second inspections conducted	242	196	235
Follow-up inspections conducted	2,004	1,773	1,587
Temporary food services inspections	517	502	523
<b>Complaints</b>			
Food complaint investigations	364	303	261
Clean indoor air act complaint investigations	2	10	3
<b>Enforcement</b>			
Violation notices issued	271	244	201
Hearings scheduled	65	72	74

### TEMPORARY RESIDENCE AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

The Temporary Residence and Recreational Facilities program provides health and safety inspections at regulated public facilities including hotels and motels, schools, children's camps, public swimming pools, bathing beaches, campgrounds and migrant farm worker housing.

ANNUAL DATA	2016	2017	2018
<b><i>Inspections</i></b>			
Mandated annual inspections conducted	574	550	547
Second inspections conducted	208	204	201
Follow-up inspections conducted	416	652	744
Complaint investigations	38	40	32
<b><i>Enforcement</i></b>			
Violation notices issued	70	118	153
Hearings Scheduled	5	25	25

## HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOOD PROGRAM

The [Healthy Neighborhood program](#) is a New York State Department of Health grant supported program. The program provides in home assessments and interventions for asthma, tobacco, indoor air, lead, fire safety, and other environmental home hazards in targeted high risk census tracts.

ANNUAL DATA	2016	2017	2018
Surveys completed	793	667	732
Revisits	245	202	209
Numbers of smoke/CO detectors distributed	724	614	635
Children referred for lead testing	88	184	98
Individuals with asthma identified & educated	266	219	336
Referrals to other agencies	1,012	874	888

## BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT

### ANIMAL DISEASE PREVENTION (RABIES)

The [Animal Disease Prevention \(Rabies\)](#) program deals with the concerns of rabies and its potential spread to the human population. The program investigates reports of possible exposure to rabies, submits animal specimens to Wadsworth Laboratory for rabies testing, and provides rabies shot clinics for local residents.

<b>ANNUAL DATA</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
<b><i>Rabies specimens submitted</i></b>	435	435	410
Total Positive:	18	18	15
<b><i>Rabies clinics held</i></b>	12	12	12
Dogs vaccinated	1,573	1,383	1,314
Cats vaccinated	635	605	496
Other	3	3	5
<b><i>Bites reported</i></b>			
Dogs	754	767	749
Cats	282	256	226
Other	35	60	62

## VECTOR CONTROL (MOSQUITO AND RODENT)

The [Mosquito Control](#) program traps mosquitoes at 22 sites throughout the county and submits them to the NYSDOH Wadsworth Center Laboratory weekly to test for WNV, EEE virus, California Encephalitis (CE) virus, and other arboviruses. Results are posted to the OCHD website throughout the season. Over 1,000 mosquito breeding sites are monitored each season and treated as necessary with larvicide (a pesticide to kill mosquito larvae). Truck or aerial spraying to kill adult mosquitoes is performed when indicated. Residents are educated on personal protection measures to avoid getting mosquito bites. The vector control program monitors and baits for rodents in the public sewer system and investigates rodent complaints.

<b>ANNUAL DATA</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
Mosquitoes collected/identified	83,937	193,305	143,612
Mosquito pools submitted for testing	476	749	664
EEE positive mosquito pools	0	1	6
WNV positive mosquito pools	4	31	17
Mosquito breeding sites treated	201	387	257
Catch basins treated with larvicide	5,126	4,127	4,424
Manholes treated with rodenticide	2,929	1,958	1,708
Rodent infestations investigated	8	5	2

## RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

The [Residential Environmental Health](#) program conducts health and safety inspections at mobile home parks and child care centers and investigates complaints regarding public health nuisances and hazards.

ANNUAL DATA	2016	2017	2018
<b>Inspection</b>			
Inspections conducted	555	435	412
Follow-up inspections conducted	325	348	308
<b>Enforcement</b>			
Violation notices issued	111	130	83
Hearings Scheduled	1	1	2

## RADON

[Radon](#) is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that seeps into homes through cracks in the foundation, walls, and joints. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States. The program receives a grant each year from New York State for the promotion of radon detection and prevention activities in Onondaga County.

## WASTE-TO-ENERGY FACILITY MONITORING PROGRAM

The Onondaga County Health Department initiated a [Waste-to-Energy Facility Monitoring](#) program in 1994 in response to public concern regarding possible health risks associated with the facility. Soil samples are taken at a series of sites around the facility along with ash samples directly from the facility. The samples are analyzed for metals, Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs), Dioxins and Furans. Results of the analyses are posted on the OCHD website annually. In the monitoring conducted to date, no relationship has been established between the operation of the facility and any significant increased levels of constituents in the environment.

## INDOOR AIR

The indoor air quality within a building can affect the health and comfort of its occupants. Program staff provides guidance to residents on a variety of indoor air issues including mold, asbestos, carbon monoxide, and general indoor air quality. Information is provided, referrals to other appropriate agencies are given and research is conducted.

## ENVIRONMENTAL EXPOSURE RESPONSE

Human exposure to a spill or the release of chemicals or radiation into the air, soil, or water can result in both immediate and long term health effects. Program staff responds to incidents involving chemicals, hazardous waste, and radiation by providing information and guidance. Assistance is given to other responding agencies such as the Department of Environmental Conservation and HAZMAT teams along with other public agencies that respond to environmental health issues

ANNUAL DATA	2016	2017	2018
Radon kits distributed	500	500	400
Waste to Energy facility samples collected	48	48	48

Indoor air complaints/ concerns investigated	39	88	81
Environmental exposure incidents investigated	41	50	47

## PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEERING

### LAND DEVELOPMENT

The [Public Health Engineering Land Development Section](#) reviews and approves plans for municipal sewer and water extensions, realty subdivisions, individual sewage disposal systems, and public swimming pools.

ANNUAL DATA	2016	2017	2018
Individual sewage plans approved	125	155	146
Individual sewage installations inspected	94	107	98
Realty subdivision lots approved for water and sewer	242	164	264

### ONONDAGA COUNTY COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

The [Council on Environmental Health](#) provides review, investigation, and comment on critical environmental matters relating to Onondaga County during monthly meetings. Topics for 2018 included Harmful Algal Blooms (HAB), road salt impact on water bodies, agricultural runoff issues, and Onondaga Lake watershed improvements. The Council also has oversight and is responsible for the implementation of the County's aquatic vegetation control program, lake/stream water quality, and invasive species management efforts through secured grant programs.

### WATER SUPPLY

The [Water Supply Section](#) provides surveillance, inspection, and regulatory oversight of the county's public water systems. The section also reviews and approves plans for public water main extensions, pumping and storage facilities, treatment systems, and backflow prevention devices.

ANNUAL DATA	2016	2017	2018
In-depth sanitary survey inspections	97	107	177
Water quality samples	1,834	1,782	1,845
Requests for well assistance or information	34	73	47

## ADOLESCENT TOBACCO AND CLEAN INDOOR AIR ACT

Tobacco remains the leading preventable cause of death. Since 1995, the Onondaga County Health Department has received a grant from the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) to implement the [Adolescent Tobacco Use Prevention \(ATUPA\) program](#) along with investigation and enforcement activities associated with the Clean Indoor Air Act (CIAA).

ANNUAL DATA	2016	2017	2018
<b>ATUPA (Grant Year)</b>			
Compliance checks completed	431	481	487
Re-inspections completed	31	50	38
Violations/enforcement	12	20	20
<b>CIAA</b>			
Complaints investigated	27	27	37
Violations/enforcement	0	0	0

## WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

The [Weights and Measures](#) program ensures that customers receive accurate quantities of commodity items in Onondaga County. Inspections include pumps at gas stations and fuel tank facilities, along with scales at grocery and convenience stores, delis, pharmacies, hardware stores, and bakeries.

ANNUAL DATA	2016	2017	2018
<b>Facilities inspected</b>	795	842	801
<b>Complaint investigations</b>	11	6	2
<b>Devices inspected</b>			
Scales	2,457	2,474	2,345
Liquid measuring devices	3,456	3,460	3,428
Weights	1,627	1,524	1,640



## HIGHLIGHTS IN 2018: ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

### PROTECTING CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE: WATER

- Division staff supported the development of Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) action plans for public water systems with Skaneateles Lake as a source. The plans defined routine sampling, interagency communication, and triggered operational responses based on sampling results.
- Environmental Health worked with the City of Syracuse Water Department and the NYSDOH to monitor the water in Skaneateles Lake for the presence of Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) throughout the summer and fall of 2018. Sampling results were posted on the Health Department website. Two joint press conferences were held to inform the public about the sampling plan and to explain results. Although low levels of toxin were found in untreated water on several occasions, none of the toxins reached residential taps in the public water system.
- Staff closely monitored and alerted the public to blue-green algal blooms (HABs) in Jamesville Reservoir and Skaneateles Lake that resulted in the closure of several public beaches intermittently throughout the summer.
- Staff was instrumental in working with customers of the Village of Jordan water supply in late October due to findings of E. coli bacteria when a Boil Water Order was issued by the Health Department. As a precaution residents were advised to boil their water prior to consuming it for several days until the system could be flushed and sampled to confirm that the water was safe to drink.
- Onondaga County began its participation in the Septic System Replacement program through a contract with the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation. In 2018, the Bureau of Public Health Engineering assisted owners of properties within the Skaneateles and Otisco Lake watersheds in securing a total of \$33,836 for the repair of existing substandard or failing septic systems. This project benefits two of the County's major potable water supplies by eliminating sources of potential wastewater contamination in the watersheds.

### PROTECTING THE PUBLIC: VECTOR-BORNE DISEASE

- The Cicero Swamp was aerielly sprayed with aduIticide in August in response to positive findings of Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) in multiple mosquito traps in the area.

### IMPROVING EFFICIENCIES

- The Division of Environmental Health was awarded a \$55,000 performance incentive from the NYS Department of Health (NYSDOH) for their success utilizing electronic inspection reporting and assisting with the Legionella outbreak response.
- Staff was asked by NYSDOH to field test a redesigned eForm for food service inspections. Inspectors provided comment on the design, reliability, and ease of use that was integrated into the new State form to improve efficiencies.

# FAMILY PLANNING SERVICE

In Partnership with Syracuse Model Neighborhood Facility, Inc./  
Syracuse Community Connections

## CLINIC LOCATIONS

- Dr. William Harris Health Center, 301 Slocum Ave, Syracuse NY 13204
- 113 East Taft Road, North Syracuse, NY 13212
- Administrative Office  
428 West Onondaga Ave, Syracuse, NY 13202  
315-435-3295

## PROGRAM PRIORITIES

Under Title X guidelines, Family Planning Service (FPS) has been an essential provider (since 1969) of primary, preventive reproductive health care in Onondaga County. FPS program goals derive from Healthy People 2020 Objectives and from the Department of Health and Human Service priorities as follows:

- Delivery of quality family planning and related preventive health services, with priority for services to individuals from low-income families
- Assessment of clients' reproductive life plan as part of determining their need for family planning services
- Access to a broad range of family planning preventive health services including, contraceptive services, pregnancy testing and counseling, STD testing and treatment, HIV testing, HPV vaccine, preconception healthcare, basic infertility services, and breast and cervical cancer screening
- Voluntary, client-centered contraceptive and other preventive health services using shared decision making based on the patient's values and priorities
- Outreach to hard-to-reach and/or vulnerable populations
- Same day appointments and walk-in visits at every clinic session
- Partnerships with other community-based organizations, primary care providers and social service providers
- Facilitation of client enrollment into Family Planning Benefit Program (FPBP) and presumptive Medicaid
- Development and implementation of health and sexuality education programs to schools and community based organizations

ANNUAL DATA	2016	2017	2018
Unduplicated Patients	3,384	3,402	3,499
Number of Patient Visits	6,573	6,361	7,123
STD Screening Services	1,835	1,838	2,214
Male Clients Served	162	183	271

## QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

FPS participates in the OCHD Quality Improvement process with a focus on the quality of services being provided to individuals within program areas. FPS monitors both regulatory compliance issues and client centered quality issues. Topics in 2018 include:

- Implementation of personalized, timely reminders before appointments in an effort to reduce patient no-shows
- Evaluation of the retention rate and reasons for removal of Nexplanon (Impant), a Long-Acting Reversible Contraception method

## HIGHLIGHTS IN 2018: FAMILY PLANNING SERVICE

- Family Planning Service partnered with The Maxwell X Lab to test whether behaviorally informed appointment reminders could increase attendance at our clinic sites. Each day, patients were randomized to receive text reminders (day before, morning of, and day after) or business-as-usual (no reminder). The reminder messages were personalized, came directly from staff, and told patients that staff would check in with them the day after to see how things went. Over two months, patients who received text reminders were 28 percent more likely to show up. Patients were also 125% more likely to reschedule when they could not make their appointment. Combined, this means that patients were 36 percent more likely to either show up or reschedule a new appointment. At scale, by implementing this reminder system, we estimate this will save FPS \$170,000 - \$230,000 per year.

# HEALTHY FAMILIES: MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

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The mission of this program is to improve the overall health and related socio-economic, educational, and developmental outcomes for mothers, infants, children and families in Onondaga County.

[The Division of Healthy Families](#) (Maternal and Child Health) provides services to moms, babies, dads, and families in Onondaga County. Healthy Families Comprises:

## Public Health Nursing

- [Early Intervention Children at Risk Early Screening \(EI C.A.R.E.S.\)](#)
- [Home Visiting Program with Nurse-Family Partnership](#)
- [Immunization Services](#)

## Community Outreach, Education, and Home Visiting:

- [Syracuse Healthy Start](#)
- [Community Health Worker Program: Supported by Maternal and Infant Community Health Collaborative \(MICHC\) Grant](#)
- [Family Life Team](#)

## Special Children Services

- [Early Intervention](#)
- [Preschool Special Education](#)

## Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

The Division of Healthy Families is accessible through its [website](#) and [Facebook page](#).

## PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING

The Public Health Nursing program provides visits to pregnant women, new parents and infants/toddlers by public health nurses and public health social workers. Visits are provided in the home, school, the Justice Center, shelters, at community based organizations and other locations in the community. Public Health nurses provide health assessments, teaching on pregnancy, labor and delivery, infant care and other maternal/child topics and make referrals to community support services. Public health social workers provide mental health assessments, teaching, support and referral to mental health and substance use treatment resources, and other community support services.

## EARLY INTERVENTION C.A.R.E.S. (CHILDREN AT RISK EARLY SCREENING)

The Early Intervention C.A.R.E.S. program is part of a statewide Early Intervention Child Find program that identifies infants and toddlers, birth to three years, who are at risk for developmental delays. Public Health Nurses provide home visits for health assessments, teaching, and referrals to community resources for infants who are at-risk for developmental delays.

ANNUAL DATA	2016	2017	2018
E.I. C.A.R.E.S Referrals	452	506	480

## IMMUNIZATION SERVICES

The Onondaga County Health Department provides immunizations as a safety net for county residents. [Clinics](#) are currently held weekly for *uninsured* children, 2 months of age through 18 years of age, college students over 18 years of age and *uninsured* adults. The program partners with the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and their Vaccines for Children (VFC) program and Vaccines for Adult (VFA) program to improve access to, and education about, recommended immunizations for children and adults.

The Immunization Action Plan (IAP) is funded by NYSDOH and assists in identifying immunization rates and standards of practice for child and adolescent immunizations among local medical providers. IAP staff collaborates with hospitals, healthcare providers, and clients to reduce/eliminate perinatal hepatitis B transmission from mother to newborn. Additionally, staff facilitates the Onondaga County Immunization Coalition. This collaborative work engages community partners, pharmacies and healthcare providers in promoting age appropriate vaccination for children and adults in the community.

The [Immunization Clinic](#) is located in Room 30; 421 Montgomery Street, Syracuse, New York 13202.

ANNUAL DATA	2016	2017	2018
Immunization clinic, total served (adults & children)	1,065	1,901	963
Flu clinics (total served)	1,004	822	329
Perinatal Hepatitis B program referrals	28	19	29
Vaccine for Adults (VFA) (total served)	21	68	100

## NURSE FAMILY PARTNERSHIP (NFP)

The [NFP program](#) provides home visits by public health nurses to first-time pregnant women who reside in Onondaga County. The visits begin early during the individual's pregnancy and continue until the child's 2nd birthday. There is documented evidence NFP can produce significant benefits for the participating child and parents with future cost savings across many social service programs

ANNUAL DATA	2016	2017	2018
Moms served	197	243	135
Infants served	174	180	126
Mothers/two yr. olds graduated	34	32	20

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH, EDUCATION, AND HOME VISITING SERVICES

### SYRACUSE HEALTHY START

[Syracuse Healthy Start \(SHS\)](#) is a federally funded program that aims to reduce health disparities in infant mortality and perinatal outcomes in the City of Syracuse. The program began in 1997, during a time when Syracuse’s African American infant mortality rate was the highest in the country for a mid-sized city. The program takes a community based approach to support new families from pregnancy through a child’s second birthday, with an emphasis on empowering parents to meet their own personal goals, connect with community resources, and achieve optimal health for themselves and their children.

#### SPECIFIC PROGRAM ACTIVITIES FOR SHS INCLUDE:

- Home Visitation:** Healthy Start home visitors are an integral part of the Healthy Families team, and include a Social Worker, Public Health Nurses of OCHD, and Community Health Workers and Doulas subcontracted by community agencies including Catholic Charities of Onondaga County and Syracuse Community Connections. Home visitors offer case management and health education, and help families access and navigate healthcare and community resources. PHNs also provide health screenings.
- Community Action Network (CAN):** Healthy Start’s Community Action Network is the outreach and engagement arm of the program and offers open community events including baby showers, yoga classes, fathers groups and more. The Executive Council and Healthy Families Advisory Board membership comprise the CAN and brings together healthcare providers, human service workers, and program participants to focus on issues that impact maternal and child health in Syracuse, including improving community wide breastfeeding rates and fatherhood involvement, promoting safe sleep for infants, and reducing perinatal substance abuse.

ANNUAL DATA	2016	2017	2018
Fatherhood program- total clients served	26	11*	27**
Doulas- total clients served	28	52	26***
Doulas- clients delivered	20	44	7

\*Fatherhood Worker position vacant part of 2017

\*\*Fatherhood Worker position vacant 08/31/18-12/31/18

\*\*\*Funding constraints in 2018

### COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER PROGRAM

#### Supported by Maternal and Infant Community Health Collaborative

The NYSDOH grant-supported [Maternal and Infant Community Health Collaborative \(MICHC\)](#) began in October 2013 and provides outreach and home visitation to high-risk women and their families throughout the life course. The MICHC program provides assistance and advocacy for clients to overcome barriers to accessing needed services, while offering support and guidance to achieve healthier lives for themselves and their families. The MICHC program is a collaborative with many community partners and provides Community Health Worker (CHW) services via subcontract with REACH CNY and Syracuse Community Connections.

ANNUAL DATA	2016	2017	2018
Referrals received	247	240	304
Clients served	89	232	338

## FAMILY LIFE TEAM

The Family Life Team (FLT) program is a collaborative effort between the Community Health Nursing program and the Syracuse City School District (SCSD). The FLT program offers public health nursing and community health worker (CHW) services to any identified pregnant and parenting student in the SCSD schools. CHW services are provided by the Healthy Families' subcontracted services of Syracuse Healthy Start and the Maternal and Infant Community Health Collaborative.

ANNUAL DATA	School Year:	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Family Life Team Referrals		72	41	35

## ALL HOME VISITING PROGRAMS COMBINED

ANNUAL DATA	2016	2017	2018
Total referrals received (unduplicated)	2,976	2,883	2,750
Total home visits completed	10,070	9,520	10,265
Total clients served (unduplicated)	3,512	3,276	3,195

## SPECIAL CHILDREN SERVICES

[Special Children Services](#) provide mandated developmental and related therapeutic services to children birth through age five. Qualifying children receive services that are tailored to their specific needs in accordance with all rules and regulations governing their respective program (Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education) to encourage children to maximize and achieve their greatest potential.

## EARLY INTERVENTION

[The Early Intervention program](#) for infants and toddlers, birth to age three, was established in 1994 conforming NYS law to the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), Part C. The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) is the lead agency for statewide administration and oversight of this program. The program is implemented at the local level under the direction of the Early Intervention Official and the OCHD Division of Healthy Families. Fee for service reimbursement to providers is completed by the NYSDOH Fiscal Agent. Early Intervention program arranges:

- Evaluations
- Educational and therapeutic services, such as speech therapy, physical and occupational therapy, audiological services, and assistive technology
- Transportation as determined by the Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP)

ANNUAL DATA	2016	2017	2018
Children referred from all sources	1,408	1,562	1,589
Children who qualified and were receiving services as of 12/31	814	909	933
Children who received services and were closed	-	-	1,563

## PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION

The [Preschool Special Education program](#) is a Federal and State mandated program for three and four year old children. Each school district has a Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) who determines if a child qualifies for services as a preschooler with a disability. Eligibility is determined by evaluation, based on criteria established in regulation, at a meeting of the CPSE. New York State Education Department (NYSED) is the lead agency for statewide administration and oversight.

Rates for service reimbursement are set by NYSED for both Special Education Itinerant Teacher (SEIT) and classroom programs Special Class Inclusive Setting (SCIS). Rates for related therapy services (speech, physical therapy, occupational therapy, etc.) provided outside of a classroom program are set by the OCHD. There are no family out-of-pocket expenses for children determined eligible for services, and there is no third party billing, except for Medicaid with parental consent.

## OCHD CONTRACTS WITH APPROVED PROVIDERS THAT SCHOOL DISTRICTS CAN CONTACT TO ARRANGE:

- Evaluations
- Special education and therapeutic services, such as speech therapy, physical and occupational therapy, and audiological services
- Transportation as determined appropriate by the school district CPSE through an Individual Education Plan

ANNUAL DATA	2016	2017	2018
Number of school districts served	22	21	22
Children who received services during the summer 7/1 – 8/31	1,485	1,442	1,473
Children who received services during the school year, 9/1 -6/30	1,955	1,998	2,005



## WOMEN, INFANTS AND CHILDREN (WIC)

- The OCHD [Women, Infants, and Children \(WIC\)](#) program provides monthly benefits for specific nutritious foods tailored to prenatal, postpartum, and breastfeeding women and their infants/children (birth to 5 years); nutrition education; and facilitates referrals to other supportive health and human services
- In December, the WIC program moved its administrative and main clinic office in the heart of 13204 ZIP code. This new office is located near bus line, west side medical clinic and pharmacy, making it very accessible to the clients.
- WIC has convenient appointments (with some evening times) at clinics across the County including sites in Camillus, Lafayette, Liverpool, Onondaga Nation, and Syracuse (at both Gifford Street, and at Assumption Church, N. Salina Street). A Breastfeeding Peer Counselor program, part of the WIC program, supports participants with successful breastfeeding.

ANNUAL DATA	2016	2017	2018
Average monthly caseload	8,982	8,681	8,517

## HIGHLIGHTS IN 2018: MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH: HEALTHY FAMILIES

- Healthy Families, as part of the Early Childhood Alliance (ECA) Comprehensive Developmental Screening Committee, assisted to bring the national Help Me Grow (HMG) system model to the Onondaga County community. HMG leverages and enhances existing resources in a given community in order to develop and enhance a comprehensive approach to early childhood system building.
- The Early Intervention (EI) program has grown steadily; referrals to EI increased 17% from 2012 to 2018. All EI programs promote children to achieve and maximize their fullest potential.
- Healthy Families partnered with the NYSDOH on its Early Intervention State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) (aka IFaCT: Improving Family Centeredness Together) whose focus is to improve the outcome for families and children served by the EI program. The local SSIP team developed a resource list for families with children with special needs as well as a parent support Facebook page.
- Healthy Families worked with The Adolescent Bureau, within the Treatment Division of the NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) on an In-Depth Technical Assistance (IDTA) program that provided support and expertise in the area of Perinatal Substance Abuse.
- The Maternal Infant and Community Health Collaborative (MICHC) program held a Women's Wellness program series in collaboration with Crouse Chemical Dependency Treatment Services. The program helped women learn healthier habits and promoted exercise. The group at Crouse was composed of women in treatment for opioid addiction.
- The MICHC program worked collaboratively with REACH CNY to host the Share Your Birth Story: A Community Conversation between women and their partners/families and the NYSDOH Health Commissioner. The Syracuse event (one of seven held across NYS) promoted opportunities for candid conversations and explored the barriers women of color face in perinatal care as well as recommended strategies to decrease the high and disparate maternal mortality and morbidity rates and other adverse birth outcomes; critical issues occurring across NYS.

- Healthy Families has fully integrated an electronic screening and referral process which allows the community to make electronic referrals through the link on the Healthy Families website where clients are screened and referred for needed support services.
- Healthy Families strengthened collaboration with one of the referral sources for the program, Upstate Women's Health Services. Through a series of collaborative information sharing sessions between Healthy Families and Upstate staff, in-services were developed to ensure service providers in each program were maximizing their connections to better serve the needs of clients receiving support from Healthy Families home visiting and Doula services.
- WIC, a supplemental food and nutrition program, converted from a paper check system (WICSIS) to an Electronic Benefit Card system. WIC participants may now purchase their WIC food benefits using a debit card called an eWIC card.

# FORENSIC LABORATORIES

**The mission of the Forensic Laboratories is to provide high quality scientific laboratory services in support of the administration of justice and public safety programs for the citizens of Onondaga County.**

The [Forensic Laboratories](#) provide forensic laboratory analysis in the disciplines of Digital Evidence, Firearms, Forensic Biology/DNA, Forensic Chemistry, and Latent Prints with 27 scientists and technicians working in various disciplines within the sections. The Forensic Laboratories process evidence from all police agencies within Onondaga County and several from surrounding counties. Evidence is also processed for various state and federal agencies as necessary. The Laboratories’ scientists provide expert scientific testimony in court concerning analytical processes used in the analysis of evidence and the results of that analysis. The Forensic Laboratories maintain accreditation by the American Society of Crime Lab Directors/Laboratory Accreditation Board International under ISO 17025 standards and by the New York State Commission on Forensic Science.

The laboratory also plays an active role in the forensic education and criminal justice communities at local, state, and national levels. The laboratory has representatives on six statewide forensic technical working groups (TWGS) and the crime laboratory advisory committee (NYCLAC), which serves to identify technical and policy issues affecting forensic science services and to encourage consistency and uniformity in forensic service provider services and reporting. Members of the laboratory also sit on various national forensic boards including the National Institute of Standards and Technology Organization of Scientific Area Committees (NIST-OSAC) and the Association of Firearm and Tool Mark Examiners (AFTE) Board of Directors.

The laboratory also actively participates in criminal justice initiatives and promoting forensic science best practices and education as members of the local Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner program, the Gun Involved Violence Elimination (GIVE) Initiative, the Syracuse University Forensic and National Security Sciences Institute (FNSSI), and the Syracuse City School District’s Forensic Science Advisory Council and Cybersecurity Council. Additionally, the laboratory is engaged in providing forensic science seminars and outreach to local high schools, SUNY Upstate Medical University, and Syracuse University’s Forensic Science Department and Law School.

<b>ANNUAL DATA</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
<b><i>Laboratory Assignments Completed</i></b>			
Ignitable Liquids	25	23	9
Firearms	1,254	1,006	1,076
Forensic Bio/DNA	488	621	535
Drug Identification	271	511	557
Latent Prints	827	994	1,062
Digital Evidence	24	27	59
<b><i>Court testimony provided for all disciplines</i></b>	68	78	64

## HIGHLIGHTS IN 2018: FORENSIC LABORATORIES

- The Digital Evidence section completed validation of the Joint Test Action Group (JTAG) and Chip-Off, two new tools that will enhance their analysis of mobile devices such as cell phones and tablets. The JTAG and Chip-off enables the examiner to physically interface with device hardware to extract data, bypassing operating system security measures like passcodes and locks. The digital evidence section is experiencing a steady increase in the number of mobile devices submitted (70% increase between 2017 and 2018) as evidence for examination in various types of criminal cases including child exploitation, harassment, drug investigations, and homicides.
- In 2018, the Firearms section of the laboratory had a 39% increase in the number of reported National Integrated Ballistics Information Network (NIBIN) hits compared to 2017, possibly due in part to the Syracuse Police Department instituting ShotSpotter. These matches assist local law enforcement agencies in matching firearms evidence to other crimes and to seized firearms. In 2018, NIBIN results helped law enforcement to identify 119 multiple use firearms, 47 of which were recovered. Onondaga County currently ranks 18th in confirmed hits out of 196 sites.
- The laboratory was instrumental in solving a cold case sexual assault of a young girl that occurred at a park in Solvay in 1997 that led to a conviction of the perpetrator. A DNA profile that the Forensic Biology section had entered into the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) in 2002 matched to an offender that was required to provide his DNA sample to the database due to a felony charge in 2017. The Chemistry section also played a role in the CODIS hit as the offender's DNA sample was entered into the CODIS system due to a conviction on a drug charge for a case worked by the Chemistry section. This case highlights the many facets of the crime laboratory and exemplifies the power of CODIS in providing investigative leads to law enforcement agencies.

# MEDICAL EXAMINER'S OFFICE

The mission of the Medical Examiner's Office is to protect the health and safety of our community by providing objective, comprehensive medicolegal investigations and establishing an accurate, legally-defensible cause and manner of death for all unnatural, unattended, and unexpected deaths that occur within Onondaga County and other contracted counties.

The [Medical Examiner's Office](#) is located in the Wallie Howard, Jr. Center for Forensic Sciences in Syracuse, New York. The Onondaga County Medical Examiner's Office (OCMEO) is accredited by the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) and is responsible for the investigation of sudden and unexplained deaths in the Central New York region. OCMEO findings are shared with and/or utilized by decedent next-of-kin/family members, district attorney offices, law enforcement, insurance companies, legal offices, and local and state public health agencies. Specific services provided include: [Forensic pathology](#), [Medicolegal death investigation](#), [Forensic Toxicology](#) and other educational services for community agencies.

<b>ANNUAL REGIONAL DATA*</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
<b>Total Cases</b>	2,611	2,586	2,701
<b>Total Deaths Reported</b>	2,602	2,583	2,696
<b>Medical Examiner Cases</b>	1,213	1,116	1,164
Full autopsy	956	883	870
External examination	78	85	100
Skeletal examination	19	10	19
Body Inspection	9	7	10
Death Certificate Only	151	131	165
<b>Medical Examiner Cases by Manner of Death</b>			
Accidents	578	539	517
Motor Vehicle	104	101	94
Drug Use/Toxin	276	228	212
• Opioid related	238	184	167
• Other drugs	38	44	45
Falls	131	142	156
Fire	21	18	15
Other	46	50	40

Homicide	52	38	41
Natural	423	398	437
Suicides	119	104	121
Undetermined	23	29	28
Pending	0	0	2
Manner not applicable/fetal death	18	8	18
<b>Scene Response</b>	465	420	443
<b>Expert Consultation</b>	20	17	9
<b>Investigated and Released from MEO Jurisdiction</b>	1,378	1,453	1,528
<b>Forensic Toxicology cases</b>	1,252	1,144	958

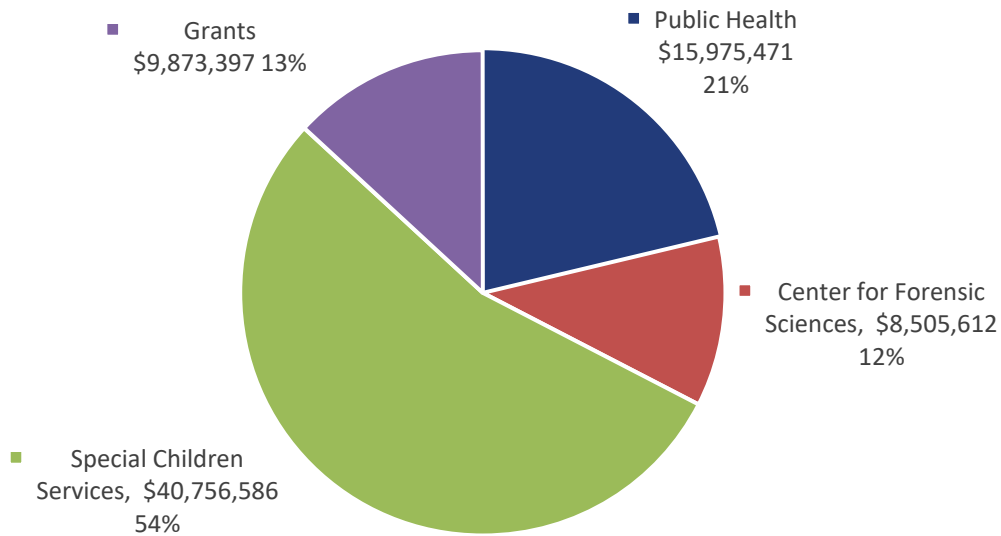
*\*Annual regional data includes deaths routinely reported and referred from Cayuga, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga and Oswego counties. Data also includes other counties that less commonly refer deaths such as Jefferson, Lewis, and Tompkins counties.*

## HIGHLIGHTS IN 2018: MEDICAL EXAMINER’S OFFICE

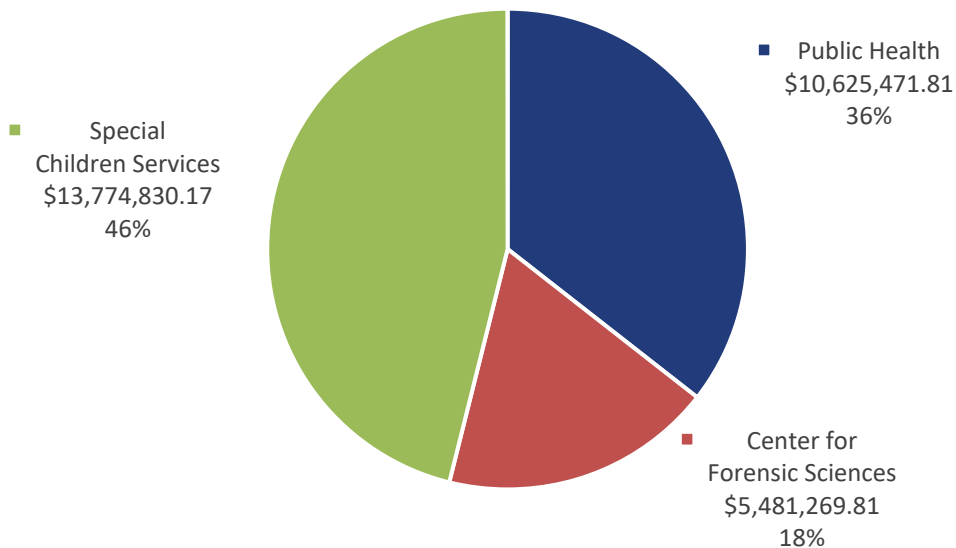
- The Medical Examiner’s Office passed full on-site inspection and was awarded re-accreditation by the National Association of Medical Examiners for another 5-year term.
- The Forensic Investigation Division participated in three critical incident training events involving mass casualty/fatality active shooter exercises that were coordinated and funded by the Syracuse Police Department, Cicero Police Department and North Area Volunteer Ambulance Corps in May and June 2018.
- The Forensic Toxicology Laboratory (FTL) validated new methods for cannabinoids and benzodiazepines analysis using the liquid chromatograph triple quad (LC/MS/MS) instrument. The FTL can test 15 different benzodiazepines previously limited to only 8 using other instruments and now has capacity to test 3 different cannabinoids. Capacity to test for additional drugs is necessary to remain current with drug trends.
- The MEO streamlined the drug data query process for opioid-related deaths by creating a Crystal Report to extract opioid-related overdose fatality statistics from our database for the OCHD website and outside county health departments and agencies in a timely manner. The MEO’s use of database technology and report development successfully met an increasing demand from multiple agencies for timely fatality data while requiring little increased staff time to extract and summarize data.

# 2018 HEALTH DEPARTMENT EXPENSES AND LOCAL DOLLARS

2018 Expenses: \$75,111,066



2018 Local : \$29,881,572



## GRANT PROJECTS, 2018

Administration	\$238,079
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Community Health	\$1,758,605
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Disease Control	\$976,245
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Environmental Health	\$717,937
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Maternal and Child Health	\$5,211,549
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Center for Forensic Sciences	\$970,982
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<b>TOTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT:</b>	<b>\$9,873,397</b>
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# PHONE DIRECTORY

JOHN H. MULROY CIVIC CENTER • 421 MONTGOMERY STREET, SYRACUSE, NY 13202  
PHONE 315.435.3155 • FAX 315.435.5720 • ONGOVHEALTH@ONGOV.NET

## BIRTH AND DEATH RECORDS

Autopsy Reports.....	315.435.3163
Birth and Death Certificates.....	315.435.3241
Genealogy Research.....	315.435.3241

## CLINICS/SCREENINGS

Cancer Screening (breast, cervical, and colorectal).....	315.435.3653
Family Planning.....	315.435.3295
HIV Testing, PrEP.....	315.435.3236
Immunizations (shots for children and adults).....	315.435.2000
Lead Testing.....	315.435.3271
Pregnancy Testing.....	315.435.3295
Rabies Shots.....	315.435.3165
Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD).....	315.435.3236
Tuberculosis (TB).....	315.435.3236
WIC (Women, Infants, and Children).....	315.435.3304

## ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Animal Bites/Rabies.....	315.435.3165
Food Protection (restaurants, events, and mobile units)*.....	315.435.6607
Housing/Sanitation Complaints.....	315.435.1649
Indoor Air Quality (asbestos, mold, radon, and smoking).....	315.435.6600
Land Development (septic systems and subdivisions).....	315.435.6600
Lead Inspections (homes).....	315.435.6617
Migrant Labor Camps*.....	315.435.6617
Mobile Home Parks*.....	315.435.6617
Mosquito Control.....	315.435.1649
Pesticide Safety.....	315.435.1649
Recreational Facilities (pools, beaches, and campgrounds)*.....	315.435.6617
Rodent Control.....	315.435.1649
Temporary Residences (hotels and motels)*.....	315.435.6617
Water Supply.....	315.435.6600

*\*Call for information about permits, inspections, or to report a complaint*

## FAMILY HEALTH AND SAFETY

Bike Helmets .....	315.435.3280
Home Health and Safety Check-Up .....	315.435.5431
Immunizations (shots for children and adults) .....	315.435.2000
Lead Testing .....	315.435.3271
Nutrition and Physical Activity .....	315.435.3280
Preparing for Emergencies.....	315.435.5262

## PREGNANCY/EARLY CHILDHOOD

Early Intervention.....	315.435.3230
Healthy Families .....	315.435.2000
Home Visits (new moms and babies).....	315.435.2000
Immunizations (shots for children and adults) .....	315.435.2000
Lead Testing .....	315.435.3271
Preschool Special Education .....	315.435.3230
Syracuse Healthy Start .....	315.435.2000
WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) .....	315.435.3304

## SPECIALIZED PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Communicable Disease (epidemiology).....	315.435.3236
Forensic Laboratories.....	315.435.3800
Health Administration.....	315.435.3252
Medical Examiner's Office.....	315.435.3163
Health Surveillance (gathers and analyzes health data).....	315.435.3280
Volunteer and Internship Opportunities.....	315.435.3663
Weights and Measures (inspections and complaints) .....	315.435.6625



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