



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Steuben County NY



Steuben County

Public Health

Annual Report: 2019 - 2021

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Bath, NY 14810

Steubencountyny.gov/publichealth

Director's Letter



The year 2020 was a year like no other in our history and presented challenges that were previously thought inconceivable. However, Steuben County Public Health (SCPH) rose to the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and worked on the frontline of our community to protect the health and safety of county residents. Thousands of case investigations of positive residents were completed with in depth contact tracing. As COVID-19 test kits began to be available, we responded with providing thousands of test kits to organizations as well as standing up testing clinics for the community. However, in September 2020, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, SCPH achieved national accreditation status through the Public Health Accreditation Board. This recognition was the culmination of many years of intense quality improvement in processes, programming, and training, which laid the foundation for a well-functioning department.

In 2021, we shifted our efforts to vaccine administration, standing up multiple vaccine clinics, while beginning to resume some of Public Health's core programs that serve the residents of Steuben in many tangible ways. Further in this report you see the sheer number and volume of cases, PPE secured and distributed, testing, vaccinations and clinics that your local health department provided for the community.

COVID-19 required Public Health to pivot and refocus all workforce, budget and resources away from daily programmatic priorities to support COVID-19 mitigation and response efforts of this widespread disease. We have closely monitored community spread, maintained constant, transparent communication with residents and organizations within the community, deciphered, implemented and enforced state Department of Health guidance and advocated for state policies that would strengthen protective measures for all.

Part of any success we had can be directly attributed to the hundreds of local organizations, businesses and individuals who gave their time, money and support to assist us in this monumental task. As a local health department, we have trained for decades to be prepared for such a time as this. Our efforts are ongoing and enlarged as we consider new possibilities, enhanced priorities and an engaged community.

With Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Darlene R. Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

*Darlene R. Smith, MS, CPH
Public Health Director*

Table of Contents

Director's Letter	1
Mission, Vision and Values	2
Essential Services Overview	3
NYS Prevention Agenda and Smart Steuben	4
COVID Response	5-6
Public Health Services	7-11
Immunizations, Jail Services and COVID Clinics	7
Lead Poisoning Prevention	8
Communicable Disease & STDs	9
Maternal & Child Health, Early Intervention, and Preschool Services	10
Rabies & Environmental Health	11
Budget Summary	12

Our Mission

Steuben County Public Health will protect and promote the health and wellbeing of our community through education, collaboration and prevention efforts.

Our Vision

Healthy people,
Strong families,
Vibrant communities.

Our Values

Quality

Focusing on the best service to the community.

Empowerment

Encouraging the community to be confident in their ability to take steps towards health.

Responsiveness

Assessing the needs of the community and providing appropriate follow through for the prevention of disease and protection and promotion of health.



Public Health Staff, January 2020

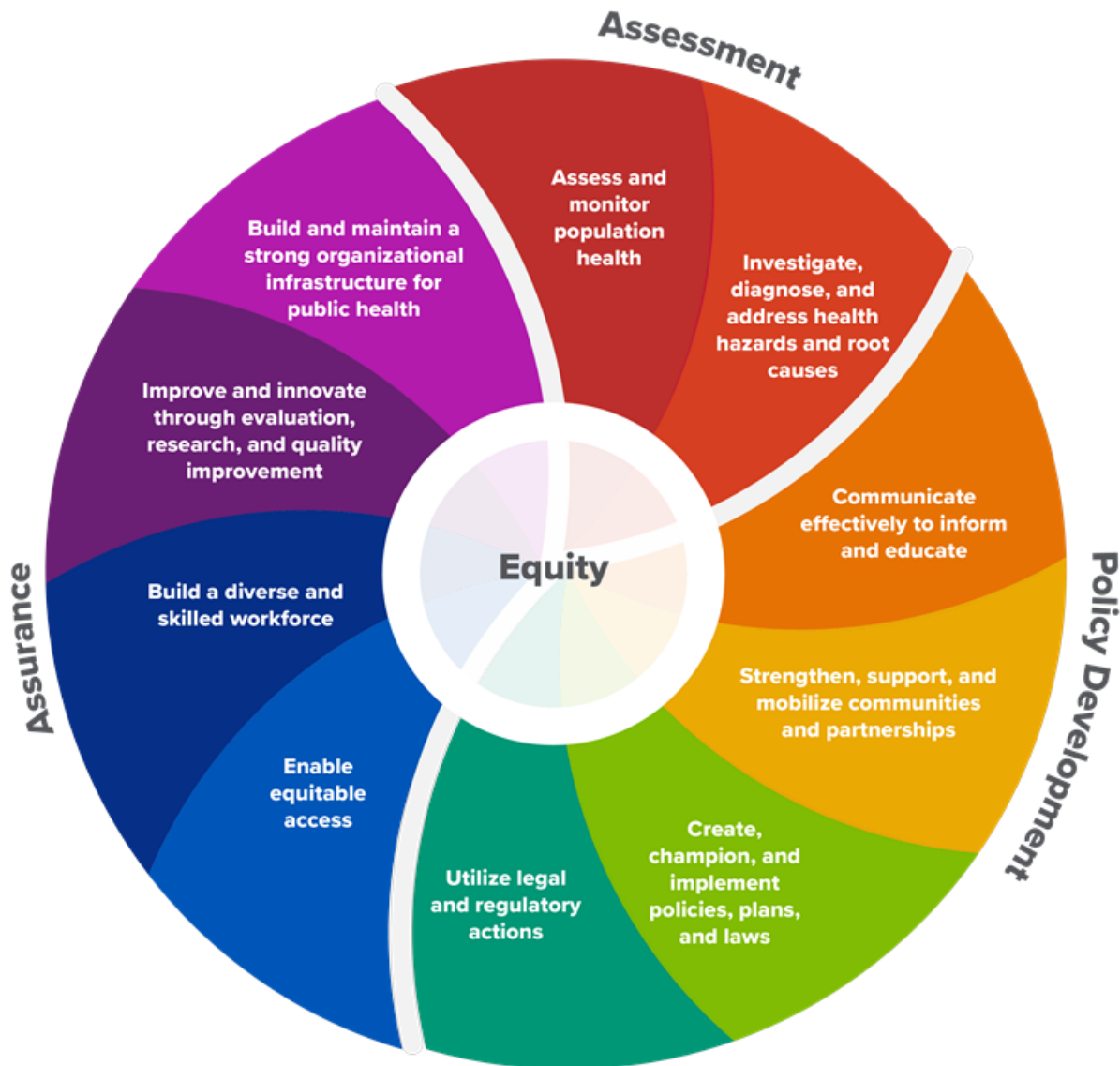


Public Health Nurses, January 2021

The 10 Essential Public Health Services:

A framework for public health to protect and promote the health of all people in all communities.

To achieve optimal health for all, the [Essential Public Health Services](#) actively promote policies, systems, and services that enable good health and seek to remove obstacles and systemic and structural barriers, such as poverty, racism, gender discrimination, and other forms of oppression, that have resulted in health inequities. The goal is for everyone to have a fair and just opportunity to achieve good health and well-being.



Essential Services Integration

The work and programs of Public Health relate to various essential services as outlined in the coming pages. All of our efforts are linked with the assurance essential services 9 and 10: improving and innovating public health functions through ongoing evaluation, research and continuous quality improvement and building and maintaining a strong organizational infrastructure for public health. Both of these services were especially highlighted and became even more ingrained through the pandemic.

Essential Public Health Service 1:

Assess and monitor population health status, factors that influence health, and community needs and assets.



Essential Public Health Service 4:

Strengthen, support, and mobilize communities and partnerships to improve health.



New York State’s [Prevention Agenda](#) serves as the blueprint for state and local action to improve the health and well-being of all New Yorkers and to promote health equity in all populations who experience disparities.

Every three years, Steuben County Public Health, along with our local hospitals and community partners, assesses the community’s health needs. The team of partners, called Smart Steuben, then develops a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) based on the results of the Community Health Assessment (CHA). The CHIP’s goals are to address the greatest health needs and improve the health of county residents utilizing the resources available and offered through the team of partners.

Smart Steuben completed the [CHA](#) and the 2019-2021 [CHIP](#) in December 2019. The priority areas highlighted in the 2019-2021 CHIP were:

- Chronic disease prevention: tobacco prevention and cessation
- Promote healthy women, infants and children: child and adolescent health
- Prevent mental and substance use disorders: opioid overdose reduction and suicide prevention

Smart Steuben Team Members

Steuben County Public Health	Arnot Health
Guthrie Corning Hospital	St. James Hospital
Common Ground Health	Oak Orchard Health
UR Center for Community Health & Prevention	Center for Tobacco Free Finger Lakes
Finger Lakes Community Health	Pregnancy Resource Center of the Valley
ProAction of Steuben & Yates, Inc.	Southern Tier Tobacco Awareness Coalition (STTAC)
Steuben Rural Health Network (IHS)	Community Services (Mental Health)
Steuben County Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services (SCASAS)	S2AY Rural Health Network <i>(now Pivotal Public Health Partnership)</i>

Essential Public Health Service 2:

Investigate, diagnose, and address health problems and hazards affecting the population.



Essential Public Health Service 3:

Communicate effectively to inform and educate people about health, factors that influence it, and how to improve it.

Essential Public Health Service 5:

Create, champion, and implement policies, plans, and laws that impact health.



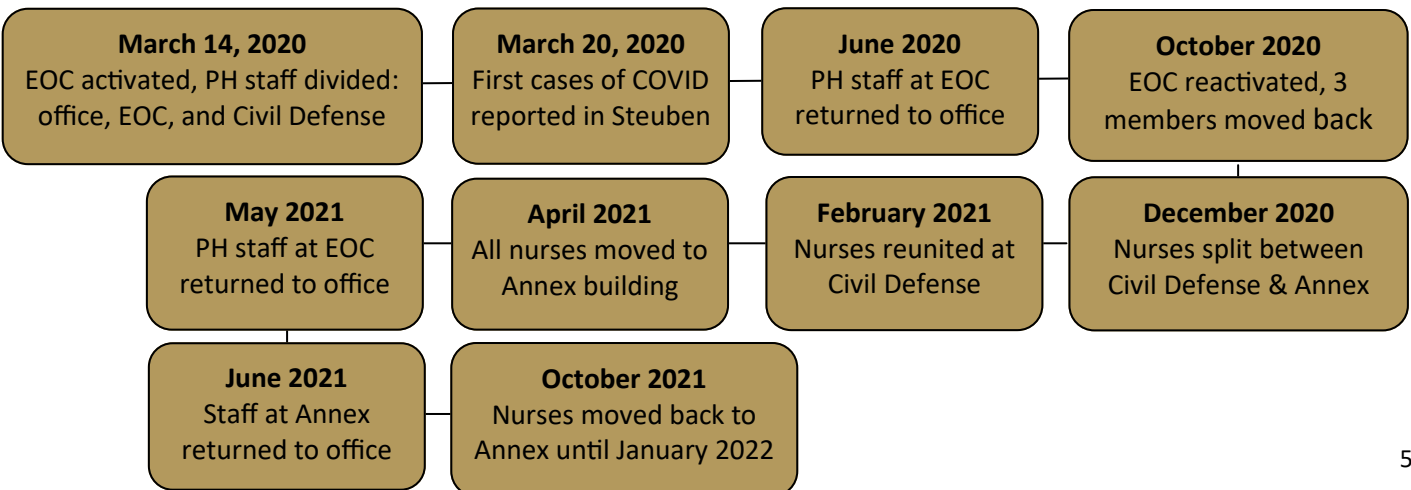
Essential Public Health Service 8:

Build and support a diverse and skilled public health workforce.

COVID Response

Preparedness efforts and the response to COVID-19 began in January 2020. As cases started spreading in the United States, the Steuben County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was opened on March 14, 2020. The EOC included direct support from the County Manager, Public Health, and the Office of Emergency Services. The first case of COVID in Steuben County was confirmed on March 20, 2020. With the official onset of the COVID response, the department took an “all hands on deck” approach, and much of our regular programming was put on the back burner.

Public Health staff were divided into three groups in different locations to allow for continued operations and to protect from the whole team being impacted if someone were to get COVID. Clerical staff remained at the Public Health Office, nurses and other support staff were moved to the Civil Defense Training Center, and the Public Health Director, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator and Public Health Education Coordinator / Public Information Officer moved to the EOC.



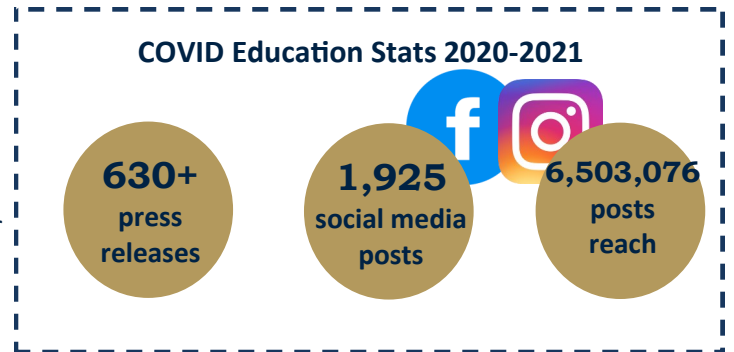
Outreach

Education around any and all health topics is a top priority for Public Health, and information about COVID started to be shared in early February 2020. To reach a large population quickly, Public Health regularly utilizes social media ([Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#)), puts out press releases for traditional media to run (radio, newspapers, TV), and includes information on our [website](#). Prior to COVID, Public Health staff regularly tabled at events and health fairs.

Emergency Preparedness & COVID Response

Our Emergency Preparedness efforts revolve around trying to educate residents on how to prepare themselves for any emergency events that may occur in the future. We also respond to emergency events to help mitigate the impact.

COVID was a long-lasting emergency that required coordination among various county departments and help from hundreds of staff and volunteers throughout 2020 and 2021 to investigate positive cases, contact trace, distribute supplies, answer phones, manage testing and vaccine clinics, and provide data input.



Non-COVID Emergency Events Tracked 2019-2021					
	Winter Storms	Extreme Temps	Environmental	Severe Weather	Floods
2019	3	3	6	12	1
2020	2	0	2	9	1
2021	1	0	3	17	2

	COVID Cases	COVID Deaths
2020	3,493	139
2021	11,483	135
Total	14,976	274



Above: Public Health Director, County Manager, and Director of Emergency Services in EOC, April 2020

Above Right: Supplies housed before distribution

Right: Volunteer nurses preparing to test a nursing home, April 2020

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Distributed



Essential Public Health Service 2:

Investigate, diagnose, and address health problems and hazards affecting the population.



Essential Public Health Service 7:

Assure an effective system that enables equitable access to the individual services and care needed to be healthy.

Public Health Services

Many of our regular Public Health programs were disrupted by COVID and the response needed on our part, but we were able to continue offering needed programs in a limited capacity. Public Health offers:

- Immunization clinics
- STD surveillance
- Jail health
- Lead poisoning prevention
- Rabies prevention
- Special Children’s Services: Early Intervention & Preschool special education
- Communicable disease investigations
- Maternal & child health

Immunization Clinics

In addition to offering COVID vaccines while under Public Health emergency authorization, Public Health always provides routine immunizations to the community. Through our Vaccines for Children (VFC) and Vaccines for Adults (VFA) funding, regular immunizations are provided to residents who are uninsured or underinsured.

Routine Immunization Clinics 2019 –2021.

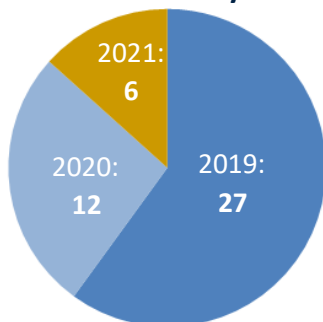
COVID vaccines not included

	2019	2020	2021
Number of clinics	27	14	5
Children vaccinated	78	50	50
Adults vaccinated	185	206	205

Jail Health

Immunizations and HIV and STD testing is offered to inmates at the Steuben County Jail by Public Health nurses.

Jail Clinics by Year



COVID Clinics

Public Health held COVID vaccine and testing clinics for the public during the pandemic. From 2020-2021, Public Health staff and hundreds of volunteers were utilized to help vaccinate, test, manage the flow of traffic, register individuals and more.



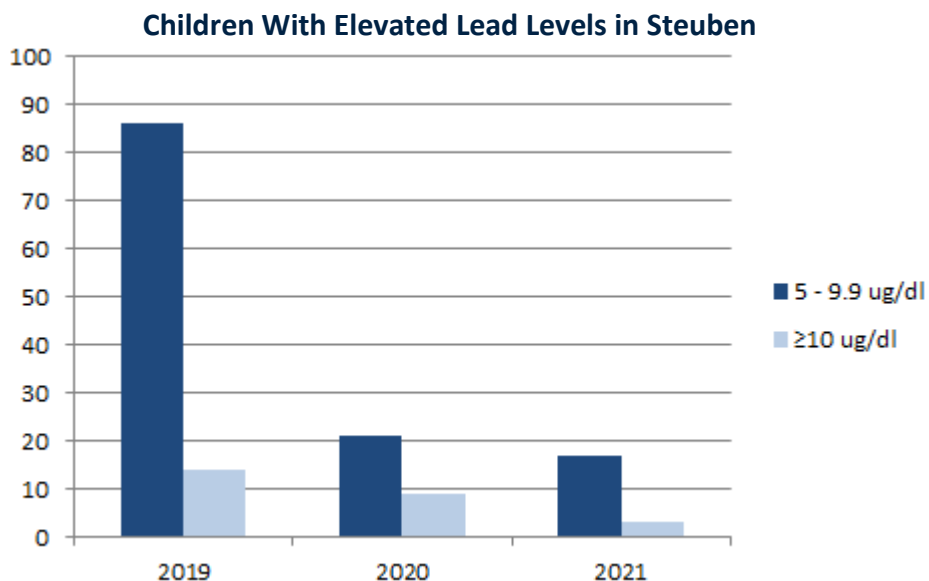
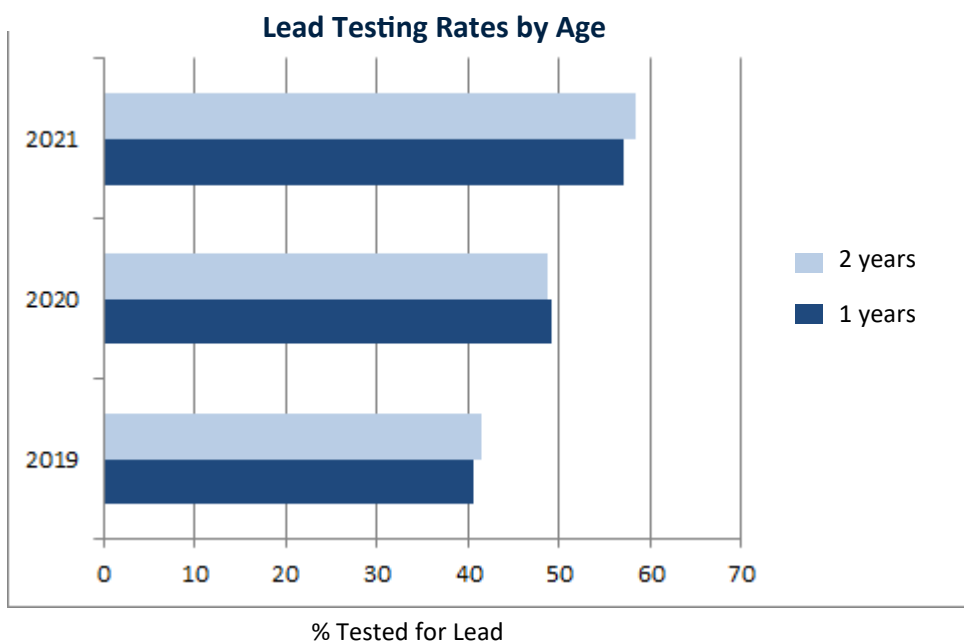
Lead Poisoning Prevention

All children are supposed to be tested for lead at age 1 and again at age 2 in New York State. Lead testing rates are still below 60% in Steuben County for both age groups, but have improved since 2019 as seen in the graph on the left below.

As of October 1, 2019 all children with a lead level of ≥ 5 ug/dl required environmental investigation, further screening, educational intervention and case management. Due to the pandemic workload, for much of 2020 and 2021, we and our NYSDOH Environmental Health partners were not able to perform home visits for lead inspections or education for children with elevated lead levels. Each year, we update a [housing map](#) of the county that highlights areas with elevated lead levels.

In September 2021, there was a recall on LeadCare II, LeadCare Plus and LeadCare Ultra Blood Lead Tests due to a significant risk of falsely low results. The majority of offices that serve pediatrics in Steuben County utilize the LeadCare II machines. It wasn't until March 2022 that distribution resumed for the LeadCare II products.

The graph to the bottom right shows a greatly decreased number of children tested in the 5 - 9.9 ug/dl range in 2020 and 2021, which could have been impacted by both the pandemic and the recalled machines.

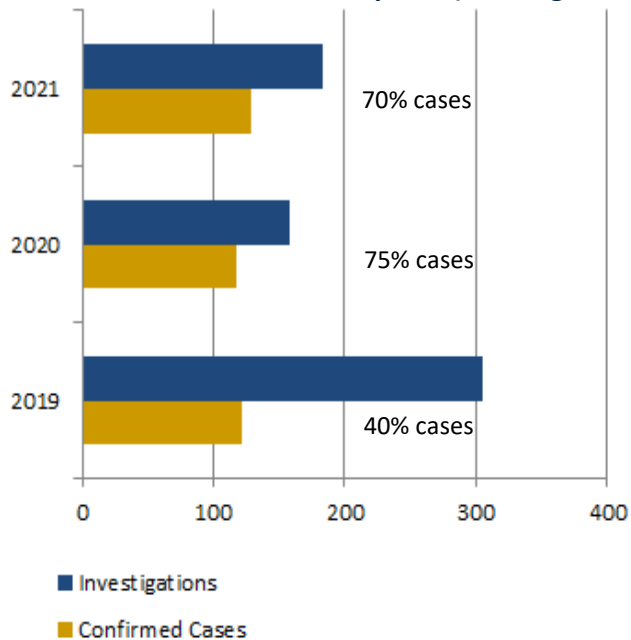


Communicable Disease

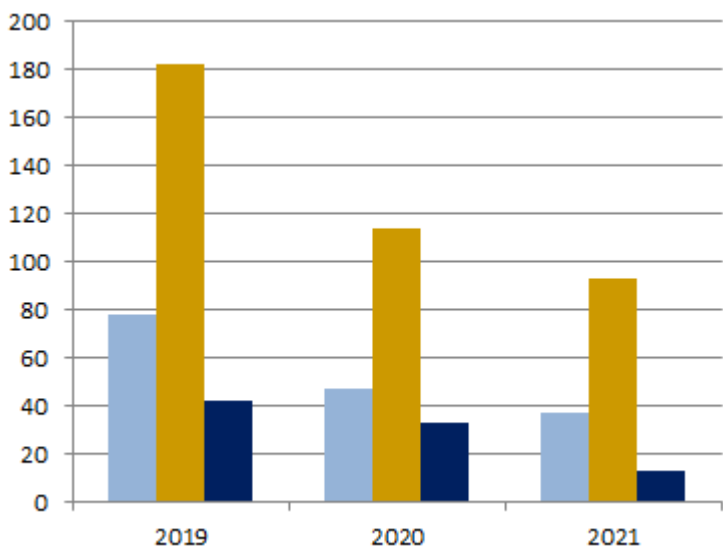
Another function of Public Health is to investigate communicable (infectious) disease reports and to determine if the report is an actual case, and if so try to identify the cause(s) of the disease or steps needed to stop the spread of the disease to others. Below is a look at the number of communicable diseases that were reported to Public Health and investigated. Not all investigations end up being confirmed cases. The information below does not include COVID-19 cases and investigations.

The most prevalent communicable diseases, besides COVID, were Campylobacter, Salmonella, Group B Strep, Giardia, and Cryptosporidiosis. STDs are another group of communicable disease that is reported to and tracked by local health departments. Below are cases of chlamydia and gonorrhea by age groups.

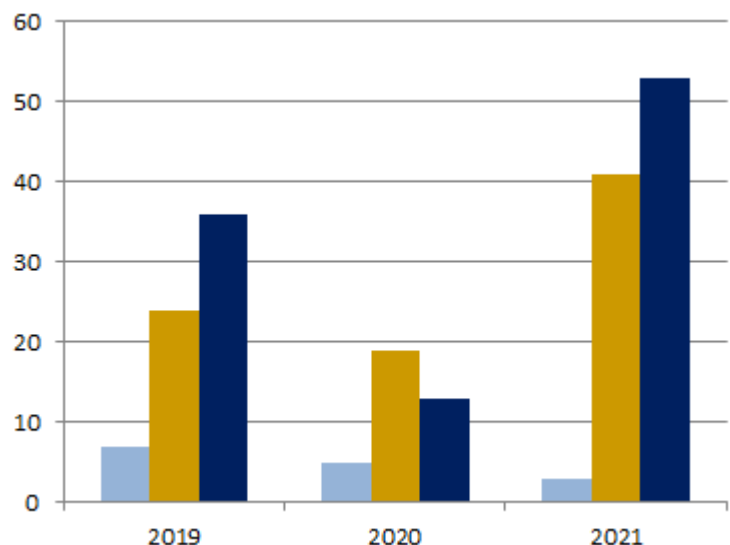
Communicable Disease Reports (Investigations) vs. Cases



Chlamydia Cases by Age



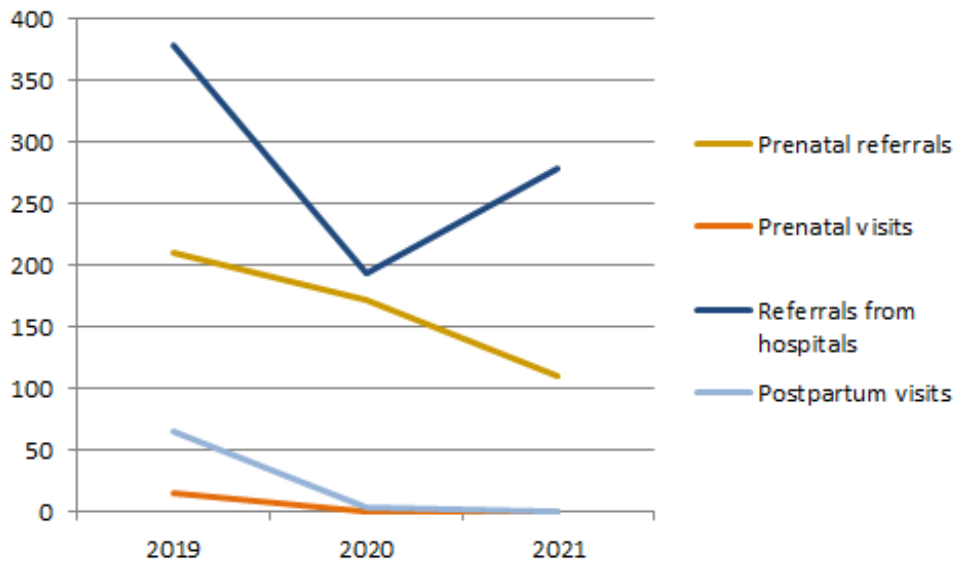
Gonorrhea Cases by Age



- ≤19 Years
- 20 - 30 Years
- ≥31 Years

Maternal & Child Health (MCH)

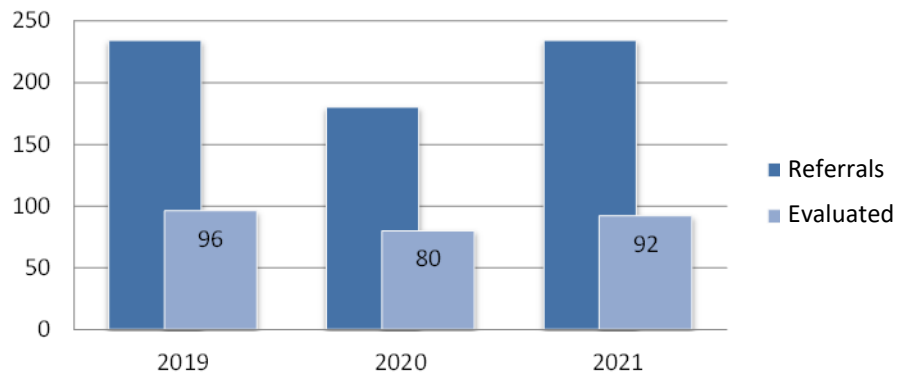
Our MCH program offers free educational home visits to all expecting and postpartum moms in Steuben County. The visits cover topics from feeding to car seats to baby proofing and more. Additionally, during this timeframe, the two nurses offering visits were also Certified Lactation Counselors (CLC) and could provide more in depth breastfeeding support. During the pandemic, visits were offered virtually, but seen to the right, both referrals and visits dropped in 2020.



Early Intervention (EI)

EI is a free, statewide program that provides early identification, screening, evaluations, special services and service coordination for infants and toddlers at risk for developmental delays from birth to 3 years old. Service Coordinators at Public Health work with families to meet the needs of their children and provide a link to community services, including special instruction, speech therapy, physical therapy, psychological services, social work, occupational therapy and nutrition services.

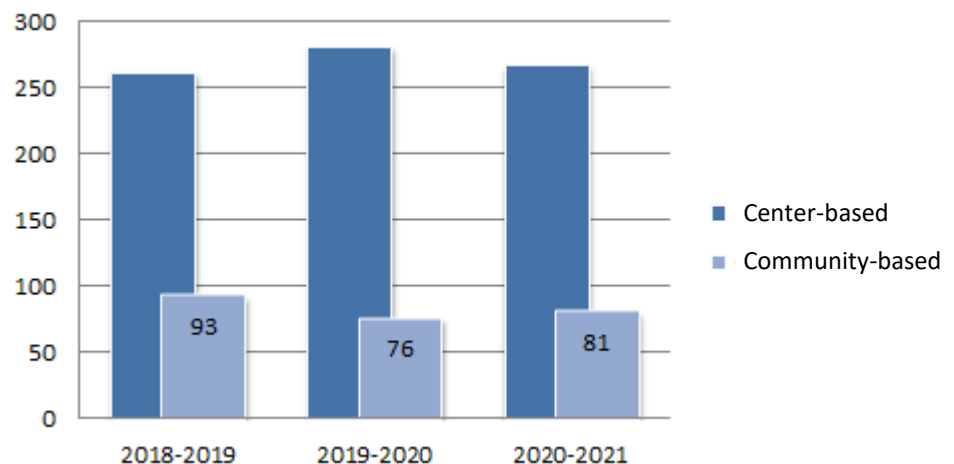
EI Referrals and Evaluations



Preschool Special Education

Children ages 3 - 5 years old with suspected disabilities are eligible for referral to their school district for preschool special education. Evaluations are conducted and individual education plans are developed that recommend either center-based programming or community-based related services. Services may include physical, speech or occupational therapies, social work, or psychological services. Transportation is provided to center-based programs, and there is no cost to families for any of the services.

Preschool Special Education



Essential Public Health Service 2:

Investigate, diagnose, and address health problems and hazards affecting the population.



Essential Public Health Service 7:

Assure an effective system that enables equitable access to the individual services and care needed to be healthy.

Essential Public Health Service 6:

Utilize legal and regulatory actions designed to improve and protect the public's health.



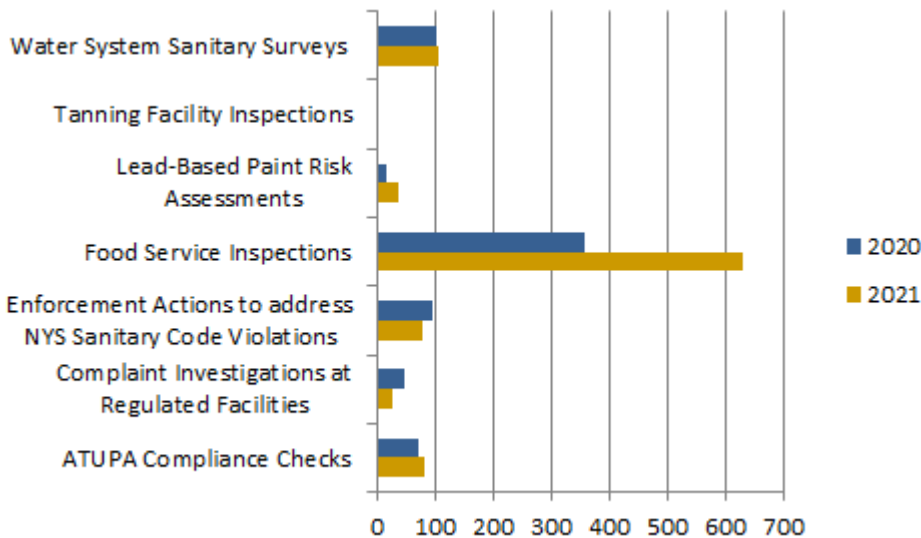
Rabies Prevention Program

Rabies is a fatal virus, so regulations and programs are in place to ensure pets are vaccinated and for Public Health to assess any bites that occur to prevent the potential for rabies infection.

Public Health provides rabies vaccines to local municipalities to host clinics throughout the year. Public Health also covers any costs not allowed by insurance for post-exposure treatment when needed.

	2019	2020	2021
Rabies Vaccination Clinics	40	14	29
# Pets Vaccinated	3,274	1,628	2,003
# People Treated for Rabies Post-Exposure	52	57	57
Animals Tested Positive for Rabies	11	6	5

HDO Activities

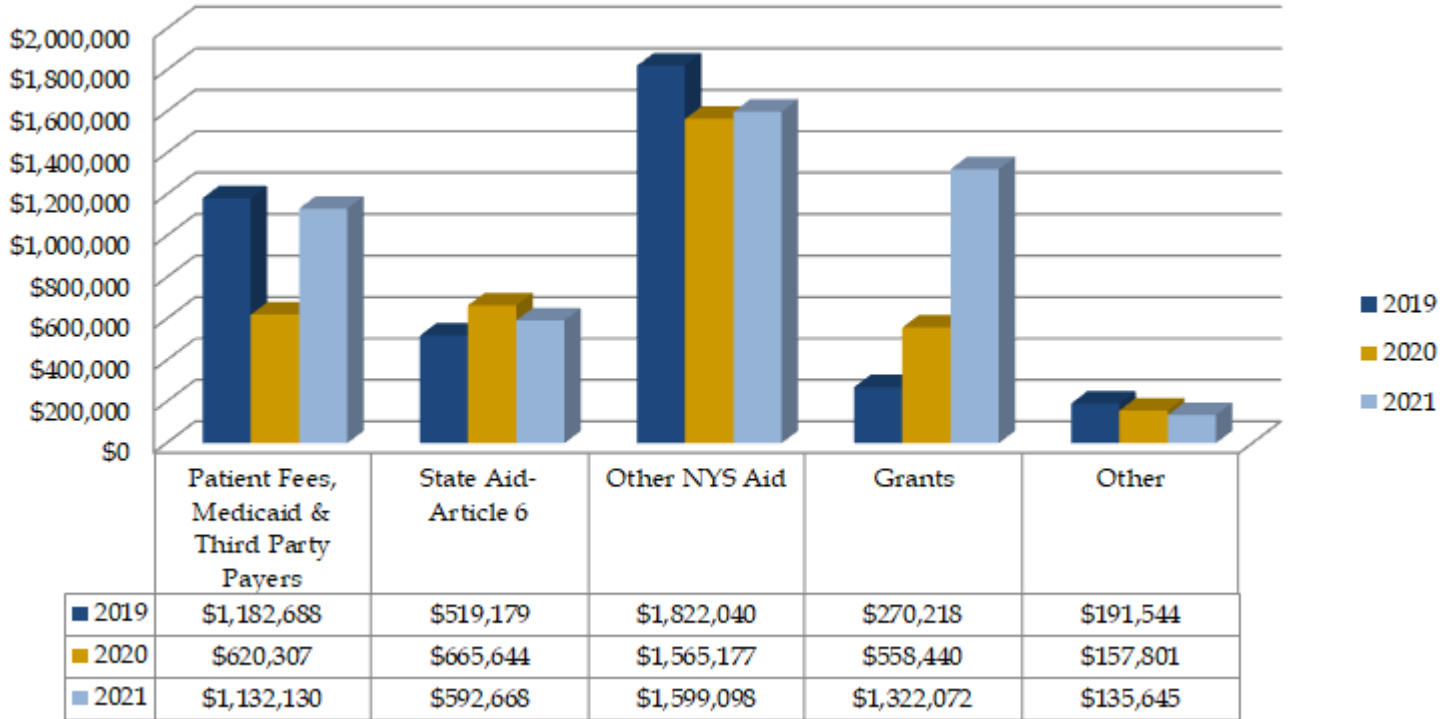


Environmental Health

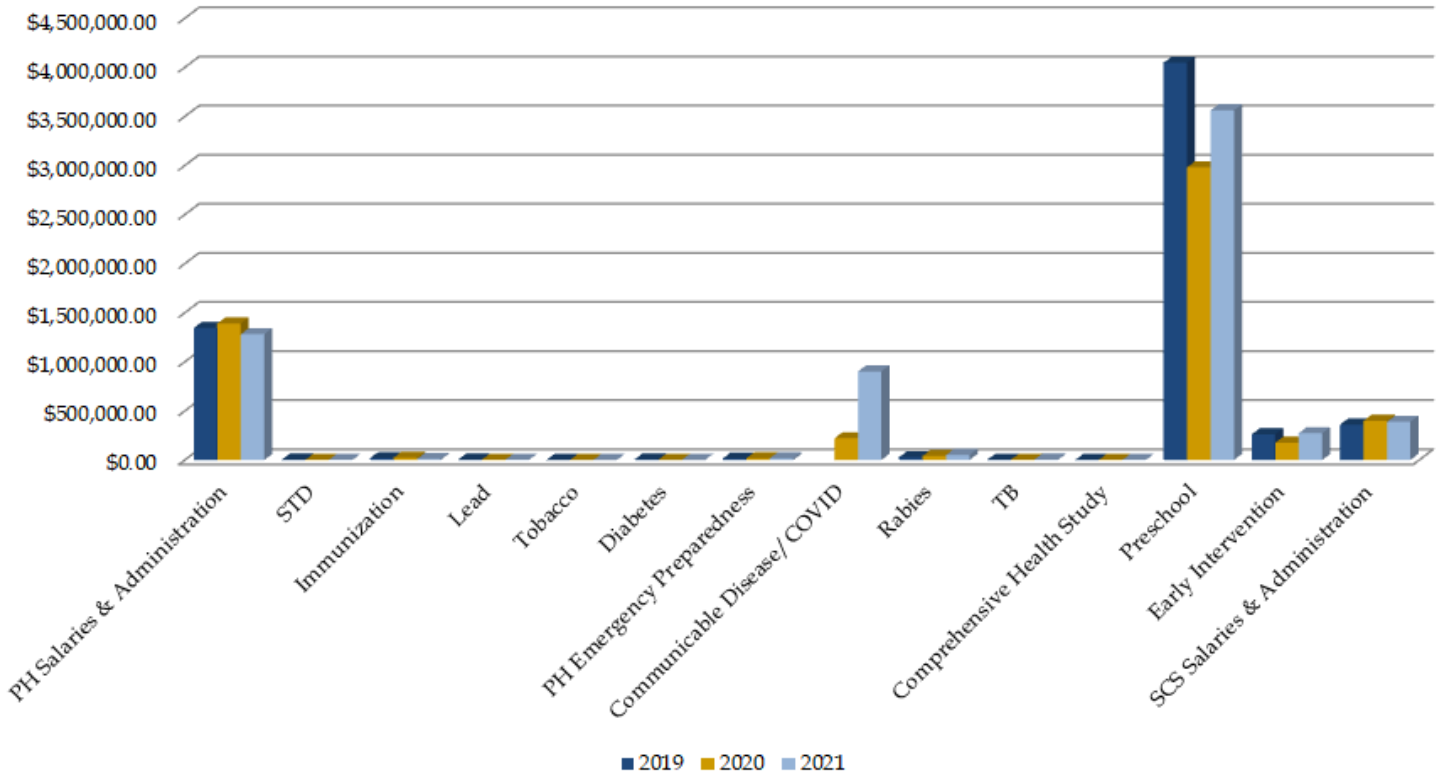
Steuben County is a partial service health department, which means that environmental health services are covered by the NYSDOH Hornell District Office (HDO). Among other things, the HDO issues permits to regulated facilities, conducts inspections and investigations related to licensed and permitted facilities, food or waterborne illness outbreaks and conditions related to elevated lead levels, and oversees tobacco prevention programs.

Budget Summary 2019-2021

Revenue Sources



Expenditures



	2019	2020	2021
Total Expenses	\$6,082,807	\$5,243,409	\$6,486,517
Total Revenue	\$3,985,669	\$3,567,369	\$4,781,613
County Cost	\$2,097,138	\$1,676,040	\$1,704,904