

KNOX COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Knox County Health Department Board Members:

Daniel J. Combs, MD
President

Donald Fredrick
Vice President

Noel Suanes, MD

Charlene Grove, RN

Heidi Hinkle, RN

Bill Cleveland

Tanner Bouchie

Bryan Jewel
Legal Counsel

Financial Report

Beginning Balances:

1159 Fund \$107,858.74

1168 Fund \$73,986.33

1206 Fund \$47,930.56

Ending Balances:

1159 Fund \$66,294.40

1168 Fund \$37,591.13

1206 Fund \$56,431.62



Message from the Knox County Health Officer

The year 2019 has been a year of changes and transitions, while hopefully continuing to carry on the work and policies to serve and protect the citizens of Knox County. As of January 1, 2019, I, Dr. Alan Stewart, was appointed Health Officer to transition and continue the 53 years of dedicated service provided by Dr. Ralph J. Jacqumain. I feel that the department is staffed by highly qualified and dedicated employees who keep the safety of the public and service at the forefront of what they do. They have handled change, as well as, an emergency in a very capable and professional manner. The coming year will involve continued growth in outreach to the public in the services that are provided.

Board Changes

During the year, Bill Cleveland resigned, due to the fact that he was serving on two other county boards. Kyre Cleveland was appointed to replace him by the Knox County Commissioners. Dr. Noel Suanes' term ended in December of 2019, and the commissioners appointed Dr. Caroline Steinman to replace him on the board in 2020.

Vital Records Stats

- 380 New Birth Records Posted
- 2334 Birth Certificates Issued
- 2502 Death Certificates Issued
- 4 Genealogy Death Certificates Issued
- 500 Death Records Posted
- 501 Burial Permits Issued
- 8 Legal Name Changes
- 4 Birth Notifications
- 31 Adoptions

Environmental Stats

- 73 Environmental Permits issued
- 63 Septic Inspections
- More than 150 pre-construction site evaluations
- 7 occasions assisting other agencies on projects
- Declared 10 dwellings unfit for human habitation, three of which contained methamphetamine labs
- 89 dog bit complaints investigated

Highlights from 2019

Vital Records

Kelly Phipps and Melody Russell are the staff for the Vital Records Department. Phipps is a level 2 Vital Records Professional-Specialist and the Director of Vital Records. During 2019, Phipps was elected to be the Vice President of the Indiana Vital Records Association, with a term starting January 1st, 2020. The following year, she will then serve as President. As part of her duties holding office, she will be required to attend all board meetings for the IVRA, as well as three spring conferences and a fall conference.

Melody is also level 2 Vital Records Professional-Specialist and attended the Spring and Fall 2019 conferences. She is also the department's Digital Records Preservationist and responsible for the entry of historical data from record books dating back to as early as 1880. This process protects the delicate books and allows both registrars to quickly find genealogical data.

In December of 2019, an additional 17 historical record books were relocated to the Vital Records Department from the Knox County Public Library. These records include two books recording deaths from communicable diseases, one dating from 1894 to 1908, and the other from 1911 to 1934. There was one marriage record book from 1895 to 1898 and other records from 1892 to 1934.

During the year, the Health Department implemented the use of credit and debit cards to facilitate payment of charges for the records. This is being done with no cost to the department, and a small user fee charged to the customer.

Environmental

Mike Beaman continues to serve as both the Office Administrator and the Chief Environmentalist of 28 years. Regarding office management, a new time clock was purchased and placed in service to record hours worked. An employee evaluation form was developed and will be used to record annual employee evaluations. All employees will submit annual evaluations to the Office Administrator and the Health Officer.

Grants

Two new grants obtained in 2019 from the Indiana State Department of Health.

First grant details:

- Amount \$42,500
- Purpose further work of immunization clinic
- Allowed for hiring of part-time nurse, additional equipment, and promotion of vaccines, especially Gardasil (HPV)

Second grant details:

- Amount \$2,920
- Training grant for additional employee education

Food Safety Stats

- 471 inspections of restaurants, convenience stores, grocery stores, mobile food trucks, and events
- 29 food complaints investigated



Food Protection

Madeline Hatcher has served as the full-time Sanitarian since 2017. Hatcher is a member of the Indiana Environmental Health Association and, in 2019, was elected Secretary of the Southern Chapter.

The position of Sanitarian requires the inspection of Retail Food Establishments and Tattoo and Body Piercing Establishments. Due to the high volume of inspections performed annually, a part-time Sanitarian was hired to assist Hatcher who also does the bookkeeping, grant writing, and Vector Control Program. Hired was Cassandra Heinlein. Heinlein has previous experience in the foodservice industry and has made a significant positive impact on the work of the department to maintain the foodservice and restaurant inspections.

The food protection division has been working diligently to function in cooperation with and in support of the food industry in Knox County. Instruction, education, and warnings have been given to assist the entrepreneurs when inspections have been completed. Fines have been levied when necessary to ensure compliance and that high standards and safety is maintained. In November, a free one-day foodservice instruction course was held at Good Samaritan Hospital, to which all food service employees and members of the public were invited. Those who attended evaluated the course positively.

Vector Control

Madeline Hatcher also serves as the Vector Control Specialist for Knox County. This year, grant funds were used to purchase an Ultra-Low Volume fogger for control of adult mosquitoes. The new sprayer is battery powered and eco-friendly. Due to the cool and wet weather, particularly in the Spring, much of the mosquito control performed involved the use of larvicides in standing water to control the pre-emergence of adult mosquitoes. Mosquito surveillance traps were placed in the county by both the Indiana State Department of Health and by Hatcher. The mosquitoes collected are tested at the Indiana State Department of Health lab for arboviruses. One pool of mosquitoes tested in the county were positive for West Nile Virus and additional treatment of that area was performed. Rest assured, there have been no reported cases of people contracting the West Nile Virus in Knox County.

Coming in 2020

Full-scale Mock Pandemic Influenza Outbreak Scenario in March on the campus of Vincennes University



New Hours & Ages

In 2019, the vaccine clinic changed the hours of operation.

Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays

- 700 am – 400 pm

Wednesdays (for records and appointment scheduling only)

- 800 am- 400 pm

Fridays

- 700 am – 300 pm

- Appointments 700 am - noon

In keeping with the theme to increase accessibility to the people of Knox County, the clinic now offers vaccines to adults in addition to children. Vaccinations are given without charge to the patient. If you have any questions, please give us a call to go over your specific circumstances.

Immunization and Communicable Disease Stats

- 5713 vaccines
- 126 communicable disease cases investigated and logged
- 37 elevated lead levels evaluated and followed

Emergency Preparedness

Howard Hatcher directs the office of Emergency Preparedness in Knox County. In his role, he coordinates with all law enforcement and emergency response groups and agencies in the county, as well as in Indiana. On June 18th, he facilitated and organized a Point of Dispensing (POD) exercise for the Health Department, as well as other interested agencies. A POD exercise is a practice run at responding to a public health emergency by setting up and carrying out dispensing and administration of vaccines/medications to large populations. The situation chosen for the mock exercise was the activation of a POD in response to an Anthrax release. The exercise was a success and provided all parties involved with practice, as well as information to help improve our processes.

The exercise helped to prepare the county and the health department for the Hepatitis A case that occurred in a local restaurant where a symptomatic employee had worked. Training in the exercise helped key players of the department to handle the food handler related Hepatitis A event. This public health situation involved the mobilization of the entire health department, including Emergency Preparedness, with close coordination from the Indiana State Department of Health.

During the event, the establishment voluntarily closed and followed strict disinfection procedures. The occurrence was publicized, and a special immunization clinic day was held for individuals who had been at the restaurant during the time the symptomatic employee worked and for all restaurant employees. 269 shots of Hepatitis A vaccine were administered on that day.

Immunization Clinic

The Knox County Immunization Clinic is staffed by Tracy Goodwin, RN, Clinic Administrator and Communicable Disease Nurse, Cara Rivera, LPN, Head Immunization Nurse, and Gail Personett, billing specialist and receptionist. During 2019, a part-time nurse, Dee Shelton, RN, was added to the staff. While most immunizations are given by appointment, walk-ins are welcome and the volume of walk-ins has gradually increased.

Communicable Disease

Tracy Goodwin, RN, manages communicable diseases with the assistance of Dee Shelton. Elevated lead levels are also evaluated and monitored by the communicable disease department