

# PORTAGE COUNTY COMBINED GENERAL HEALTH DISTRICT



999 East Main Street  
Ravenna, Ohio 44266  
330-296-9919  
[www.portagehealth.net](http://www.portagehealth.net)

2023  
ANNUAL REPORT



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1 Mission, Vision, Values, Who We Serve
- 2 Board of Health
- 3 Health Commissioner's Report
- 4 Snapshot of 2023
- 5 Administration
- 6 Financials
- 7 Environmental Health
- 8 Water Quality Programs
- 9 Community Health
- 10 Emergency Preparedness/Medical Reserve Corps
- 11 Nursing Programs
- 12 Communicable Disease
- 13 Women, Infants, & Children (WIC)
- 14 WIC Promotes Breastfeeding
- 15 Top 10 Causes of Death in Portage County



## Our Mission

To **promote** public health, **prevent** disease, and **protect** the environment, utilizing leadership and partnership to empower individuals and communities to achieve optimal health.

## Our Vision

Healthy People.  
Healthy  
Environments.  
Healthy  
Communities.

## Our Core Values



Accountability



Dedication



Innovation



Communication



Ethics

## Who We Serve

Serving the **Townships** of:

- Atwater
- Brimfield
- Charlestown
- Deerfield
- Edinburg
- Franklin
- Freedom
- Hiram
- Mantua
- Nelson
- Palmyra
- Paris
- Randolph
- Ravenna
- Rootstown
- Shalersville
- Suffield
- Windham

Serving the **Villages** of:

- Garrettsville
- Hiram
- Mantua
- Mogadore
- Sugar Bush Knolls
- Windham

Serving the **Cities** of:

- Aurora
- Ravenna
- Streetsboro

# BOARD OF HEALTH

## **Board Members:**

Lucy Ribelin, Ravenna City, President

James Bierlair, Vice President

Evelyn Cutlip, Member

Amy Everett, Member

Charles Delaney, Member

Brock Kertoy, Member

Dr. Howard Minott, Aurora City

Linda Grimm, Streetsboro City

*The Board of Health meets on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at the Portage County Health District in the 2nd floor Robert Palmer Conference Room.*

## **Board of Health Duties:**

As established by Ohio law, our eight-member Board of Health functions as a policy, governance, advisory, and regulatory board and provides oversight of major financial and programmatic decisions.

The Board of Health provides oversight for the health of the public, the prevention or restriction of disease, and the abatement of nuisances.

The Board of Health members are appointed by elected officials who serve on the District Advisory Council or by the city they represent.

# HEALTH COMMISSIONERS REPORT

I am pleased to present the Portage County Combined General Health District Annual Report, which highlights the staff's accomplishments for year 2023.

I would like to start by highlighting a few large projects that were completed and/or initiated. This past fall, we launched a portal on our new website which allows users to search household sewage treatment system records (septic information) by address or by parcel number. This project was accomplished by our dedicated internal staff and several external partners. Over 20,000 records are now available online to view and print. Using the same process, we are also working toward making the private water system records (residential water wells) available in early 2024. These will also be searchable by address and parcel number. We continue to increase our ability to mine our data throughout our programs and services and provide better data visualization that will be readily available to the public.

The Portage County Combined General Health District first received our national accreditation in 2019. Each year we maintain our status and provide an annual report to the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). Every five years, we are required to complete a reaccreditation process. In preparation for applying for reaccreditation in the summer of 2024, we have initiated not only the required document collection process based on the PHAB standards and measures, but also have updated many agency plans and policies. The plans that have been updated include: Community Health Assessment (2022) and Community Health Improvement Plan, Workforce Development, Quality Improvement - as well as multiple small quality improvement projects, Performance Management, Emergency Operations, Organizational Branding Strategy, Performance Evaluations, Job Descriptions, New Employee Curriculum, New Employee Checklist, Salary Ranges, and the Record Retention Schedule. Our agency Personnel Manual and Strategic Plan were both initiated in 2023, and will be completed in the Spring of 2024 for Board of Health review and approval.

Finally, I would like to thank the Townships, Cities, and Villages for your continued support of the Health District. Our Strategic vision remains: Healthy People, Healthy Environments, Healthy Communities.

Sincerely,  
Joseph Diorio, MPH, MS, REHS  
Health Commissioner

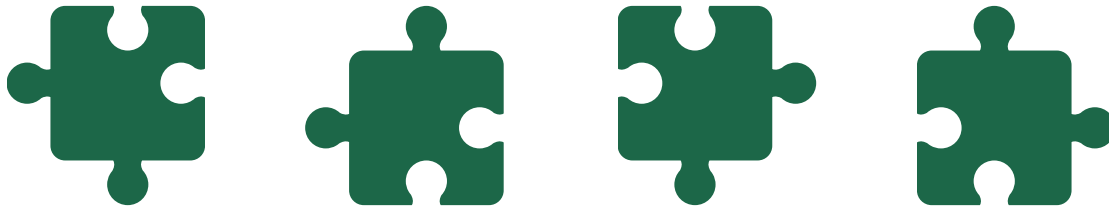
# SNAPSHOT OF 2023

The following pages provide a snapshot of some of the accomplishments by Portage County Combined General Health District Staff.

Just like a puzzle, the programs and services offered by Portage County Combined General Health District are diverse and interconnected, with each piece playing a unique role in promoting health and addressing the needs of the population.

Our interconnectedness, collaboration, and comprehensive approach to programs and services are illustrated throughout the 2023 Annual Report. By working together and leveraging our resources effectively, Portage County Combined General Health District works to help build a healthier, more resilient Portage County.

For a complete overview of our programs and services, please visit our website at [www.portagehealth.net](http://www.portagehealth.net).



# ADMINISTRATION

## 2023 WORKFORCE

49 Employees:

- 45 full-time
- 3 part-time
- 1 seasonal

22 Staff Onboarded in 2023

26 Staff Offboarded in 2023

## Additional Staff:

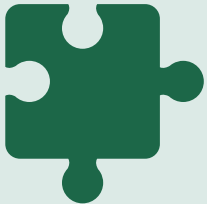
Contracts:

- 3 Public Consulting Group
- 1 MRC Team Leader  
*Above contracted staff were paid through grant funds.*
- 1 Medical Director
- 8 Public Health Interns

**The Administration Division plays an integral role in the effective management of the health district, encompassing strategic planning, operations oversight, human resource management, and community engagement.**

## STAFF TRAININGS:

- Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR)(provided by the Mental Health & Recovery Board)
- Employee Safety Training (provided by Sheriff's Office)
- Employee Safety Training (provided by Robert Walker, PHEP Coordinator)
- Discovering Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) (provided by Kent State University)
- Recognizing Bias (provided by Kent State University)
- Addressing Microaggressions (provided by Kent State University)
- Social Media and Harassment (provided by Clemans, Nelson, and Assoc.)
- Child Abuse Prevention (provided by Children's Advocacy Center)
- Human Trafficking Awareness (provided by Children's Advocacy Center)
- OHIO LEAN (provided by Akron University)
- Leadership Essentials - All Management Team(provided by Akron University)

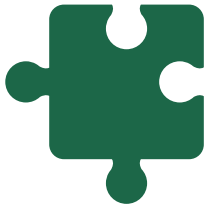




# FINANCIALS

Revenue/Resources	
Grants/Inter-governmental	\$2,963,038
Health Levy	\$1,190,167
Licenses, Permits, & Registrations	\$1,001,017
Contractual Services	\$360,636
Nursing Fees	\$60,936
Miscellaneous	\$27,180
Special Assessments	\$4,818
Carryover from 2022	\$3,358,543
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$8,966,335</b>

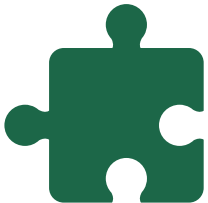
Expenses	
Personnel	\$3,637,518
Contracts	\$1,625,243
Materials & Supplies	\$210,318
Capital Outlay	\$203,953
Mortgage	\$102,672
Other	\$68,722
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,848,426</b>



The Finance Division plays a critical role in ensuring the financial sustainability and success of public health programs and services, ultimately contributing to the well-being and health outcomes of the community.

# ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

The Environmental Health Division plays a significant role in safeguarding public health by addressing various environmental factors that impact Portage County residents well-being; including safe food and water, sanitation, waste disposal, and the promotion of safe and healthy environmental conditions.



2,121

Food Safety Inspections



378

Swimming Pool & Spa Inspections

44

School Inspections

93

Recreational Camp Inspections

25

Tattoo/Body Art Inspections

58

Solid Waste Inspections & Nuisance Complaints

32

Mosquito Site Assessment and Trappings

# WATER QUALITY PROGRAMS

## Home Sewage Treatment Systems



478 Installation Permits  
285 Site & Soil Evaluations  
731 Inspections  
65 Notice of Intent

## Plumbing Program



332 Residential Inspections  
164 Commercial Inspections  
14 Clearwater Inspections  
26 Reinspections

## Chemical & Bacterial Water Sampling



252 Water Samples  
246 Field Inspections  
95 Site Evaluations

## Stormwater Program



374 Illicit Discharge & Verification Inspections  
604 Dry Weather Screenings  
350 Illicit Discharge Detection Elimination  
Inspect. & Surface Water Sampling

## Waste Water Nuisances



397 Inspections/Consults  
402 Data Collection/File Review/Reports

## Semi-Public Commercial Wastewater



263 Inspections  
87 Consultations

**In 2023, Portage County Health District was awarded \$150,000 by the Ohio EPA to provide assistance to families to repair or replace malfunctioning or prohibited household sewage treatment systems or components through the Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) program for low to moderate income homeowners. Since 2016, we have been successful in receiving Ohio EPA WPCLF funds and have provided \$1,700,000 in WPCLF funding to Portage County residents for septic system repair and replacement.**



# COMMUNITY HEALTH



89

Convertible/  
Booster Seats  
Distributed



72

Bike Helmets  
Distributed



19

Cribs For Kids/  
Pack n' Plays  
Distributed



791

Project DAWN  
(Narcan) Kits  
Distributed



790

People reached  
Comprehensive  
Sexuality Education



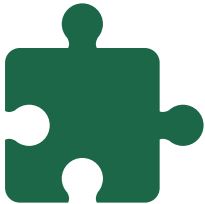
829

Participants in  
SAIL (Stay Active &  
Independent for Life-  
Falls Prevention)



1,707,438

People Reached with  
Traffic Safety Messaging



**The Community Health Division engages in proactive community health promotion and education through the development and delivery of comprehensive outreach programs tailored to the needs of Portage County residents. Additionally, the Community Health Division is responsible for emergency preparedness and public health accreditation efforts to advance the health and resilience of Portage County residents.**

# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS



90

Trainings/Classes  
Provided



461

People Trained  
in CPR, Bloodborne Pathogens,  
Psychological First Aid, &  
Community Reception Centers

**Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) is a grant funded program that builds upon existing systems and partnerships to construct a more resilient community that is prepared to deal with and rapidly recover from threats and emergencies that affect the public's health. One of the responsibilities of the PHEP Coordinator is to coordinate and manage the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), a volunteer group consisting of both medical and nonmedical volunteers that supports local public health and emergency medical services during emergency and non-emergency events.**

**Through NACCHO grant funding, PCHD was able to contract for an MRC Team Leader for the purpose of building capacity of a trained and ready corps of volunteers to respond to a public health emergency. PCHD developed a training program that includes American Heart Association CPR, Bloodborne Pathogens, and Psychological First Aid.**



# NURSING PROGRAMS

## IMMUNIZATIONS:

1,289  
Child & Adult  
Immunizations



602  
Flu & COVID-19 Shots  
(12 Community Clinics)

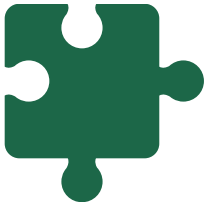


## NURSING PROGRAMS:

142  
Animal Bites/Rabies  
Exposures



438  
Children with Medical  
Handicaps Clients



**Public Health Nurses serve as advocates and educators working collaboratively with individuals, families, communities, and healthcare providers to protect and promote the health of the residents of Portage County. Their commitment to population-based services, enabling services, and education plays a part in improving health outcomes and enhancing the quality of life for the community.**

# COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Portage County Health District communicable disease staff keeps track of the number of persons infected by different communicable diseases and conducts follow up investigations on all reported diseases.

Communicable Disease Outbreaks:

- COVID-19
- Rhinovirus
- Norovirus
- Parainfluenza
- Strep Throat

4,855 

Communicable Disease Investigations

Reportable Conditions	Total
COVID-19	4381
Chlamydia infection	420
Gonococcal infection	105
Hepatitis C - chronic	66
Influenza-associated hospitalization	24
CPO	20
Campylobacteriosis	19
Salmonellosis	19
Streptococcal - Group A -invasive	16
Hepatitis B (including delta) - chronic	15
E. coli, Shiga Toxin-Producing (O157:H7, Not O157, Unknown Serotype)	9
Lyme Disease	9
Legionellosis	8
Pertussis	7
Syphilis - early	6
Syphilis - unknown duration or late	6
Cryptosporidiosis	5
Giardiasis	5
Giardiasis	5
HIV	5
Influenza - ODH Lab Results	4

Reportable Conditions	Total
Meningitis - aseptic/viral	4
Streptococcus pneumoniae - invasive antibiotic resistance unknown or non-resistant	4
Streptococcus pneumoniae - invasive antibiotic resistant/intermediate	4
C. auris	3
C. auris - Colonization Screening	3
Haemophilus influenzae (invasive disease)	3
Meningococcal disease - Neisseria meningitidis (call health department immediately)	3
Shigellosis	3
Syphilis - secondary	3
Listeriosis	2
Cyclosporiasis	1
Streptococcal - Group B - in newborn	1
Syphilis - primary	1
Varicella	1
Vibriosis (not cholera)	1
Yersiniosis	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>5192</b>

The 2023 Communicable Disease summary represents reportable cases of diseases for all residents in Portage County, excluding Kent City.



# WOMEN, INFANTS, & CHILDREN



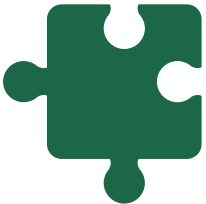
3,379  
Average Monthly  
Caseload



4,999  
Certifications/  
Recertifications



10,356  
Midcertifications  
(Nutrition Education &  
High Risk Follow-up)



The Women, Infants, & Children (WIC) program is an Ohio Department of Health grant funded program that provides nutrition education & supplemental foods for women, infants, and children. The program provides highly nutritious foods, breastfeeding support, nutrition education, and connects families with other area resources.

WIC serves income eligible pregnant, breastfeeding and postpartum women, infants, and children to age 5.

PCHD administers WIC services in Ravenna and Lisbon (Columbiana County).



# WIC PROMOTES BREASTFEEDING



**8,833**

Breastfeeding  
Education & Support

**74%**

Breastfeeding  
Initiation Rate

**WIC supports all mothers and babies, regardless of their feeding decision. Staff are trained to promote and protect breastfeeding as the optimal feeding method for all infants. WIC staff provide the necessary resources and referrals to assist mother and baby in achieving their breastfeeding goals.**

## BREASTFEEDING BENEFITS:

### Breastfeeding Mothers Breastfed Infants

Reduces their risk for:

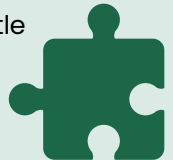
- Ovarian cancer
- Breast cancer
- Type 2 diabetes

Have a reduced risk of:

- SIDS
- Lower respiratory infections
- Type 2 diabetes
- Asthma
- Obesity

### Workforce & Environmental

- Infants have less illness so mothers miss less work
- Less trash & plastic waste compared to formula & bottle supplies



# TOP 10 CAUSES OF DEATH IN PORTAGE COUNTY

Portage County Health District collects and reviews the leading causes of death in Portage County. Keeping track of the causes of death allows us to understand how preventive measures may help people live longer and healthier lives.



	Cause of Death	Number of Deaths
1	Heart Disease	429
2	COPD & Lung Disease	209
3	Accidents	148
4	Alzheimer's Disease	147
5	Mental Health Related	129
6	Infection	115
7	Cancer	109
8	Diabetes Mellitus	78
9	Neurologic Disease	78
10	Stroke	70

*Note: There were a total of 1,732 deaths for 2023. Of these, there were 220 deaths of other varying causes.*





# Awarded National Accreditation for Public Health Excellence!



Portage County Combined General Health District  
999 East Main Street  
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330-296-9919  
[www.portagehealth.net](http://www.portagehealth.net)

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Columbiana County WIC  
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