

# Onondaga County Health Department

# 2019

# Annual Report

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# Message from the Commissioner of Health



Dear Friends of Public Health,

I am pleased to present the Onondaga County Health Department's 2019 Annual Report, which highlights our major accomplishments and challenges over this past year.

Since late February 2020, the Onondaga County Health Department has been focused on responding to the [COVID-19 pandemic](#), initially with information gathering and standard preparations in the event that the virus crossed US borders until our first case on March 16. Months later, we are in the middle of an unprecedented local response to a global pandemic. We are working every day to meet these challenges with our County leadership and skilled and prepared workforce. This unexpected need to shift our public health priorities caused the delay in publishing this report, which is usually made available to the community after the first quarter of each year.

We hope this report provides you with an overview of the Health Department's priorities and accomplishments. We look forward to our continued collaborative work alongside our community partners, and always welcome your suggestions on how we can continue to improve the health of all residents of Onondaga County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Indu Gupta". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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*



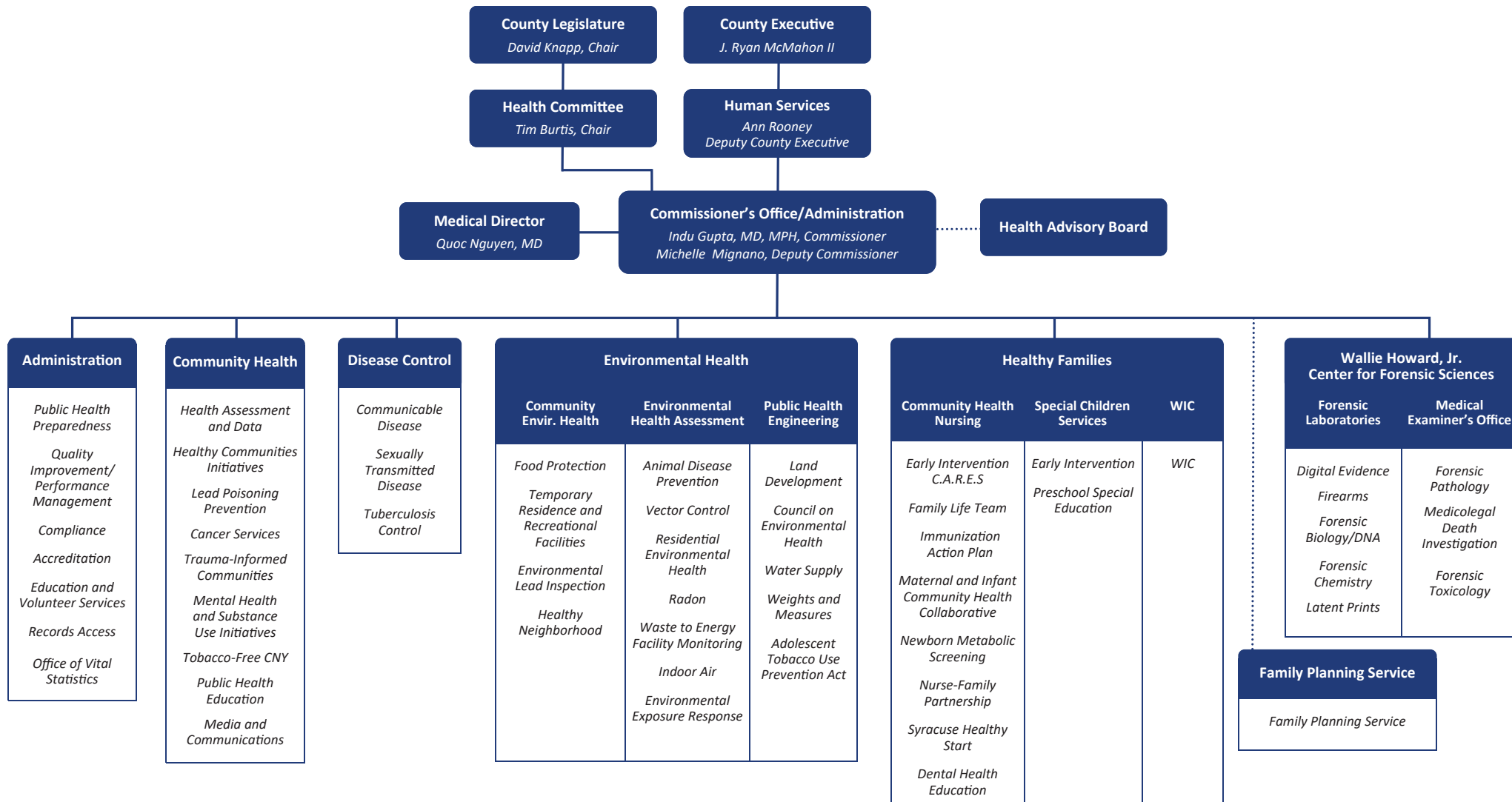
## Onondaga County Legislature 2019 Health Committee

Tim Burtis, Chair  
Monica Williams, Vice Chair  
Miles Bottrill  
Julie Abbott-Kenan  
Peggy Chase

## 2019 Health Advisory Board

David Page, MD, Chair  
Louis Castro, MD  
Peter Cronkright, MD  
Robert Hack  
Diane Turner  
Ann Rooney  
Monica Williams  
Simone Seward

# Onondaga County Health Department 2019 Organizational Chart



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# 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.

- In 2019, strong emphasis was put on coordination of public health preparedness planning efforts within three division of OCHD to increase response efforts to any number of public health threats. These three departments (Bureau of Disease Control, Healthy Families, and Environmental Health) exercised various public health scenarios, resulting in increased collaborative learning. This work will continue to expand to engage other divisions of OCHD in 2020 in order to increase the number of staff public health preparedness ready.
- Regular exercises and real time implementation opportunities that use plans such as Medical Countermeasures and Isolation and Quarantine
- 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
- Input into Community Preparedness planning and response groups (Human Needs Task Force and the Inclusive Emergency Preparedness Task Force)



ANNUAL DATA	2017	2018	2019
New Individuals trained in Incident Command System (ICS)	30	20	17
Exercises conducted	14	11	11

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

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

The departmental PM/QI leadership teams support:

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

## 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 Department of Financial Operations [County Executive](#), [Onondaga County Legislature](#) and a wide range of [public health partners](#) in the community.

Administration works with these partners to ensure that all department programs and services are implemented using a Health Across All Policies approach, which acknowledges the importance of social determinants of health, and other complex health factors that may have traditionally been the responsibility of other sectors like housing, transportation, education, and economic development. Administration supports alignment between community partners to ensure maximum impact in improving health outcomes.

Administration is also 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 national 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 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. In August 2019, OCHD submitted their first annual report to PHAB and received valuable feedback which continues to influence the department's daily work to maintain their accreditation and achieve reaccreditation in the future.

## **COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

The [2019-2021 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 an extensive community engagement process that gathered feedback from over 3,000 county residents. As a result, two priority areas were identified in which to focus efforts over the next several years: Prevent Chronic Disease and Promote Well-Being and Prevent Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders. This document serves as a framework for many sectors in the community to implement strategies focused on health equity and improved outcomes. The interventions identified in the CHA/CHIP will be monitored by the Division of Community Health in 2020, 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) provided strategic direction for the department, in order to better serve our community. The plan was organized into four overarching strategic priorities: Health Protection, Health Improvement, Public Engagement, and Organizational Excellence. Each of these strategies were associated with detailed work plans to enable us to measure progress and adapt strategies to effectively respond to community need. The plan emphasized the use of data and systematic approaches to improve how we can work together both within the organization and within the community. Final phase of implementation work was completed in 2019. In the last quarter of 2019, a new process to identify OCHD's Strategic priorities for 2020-24 was initiated by engagement of staff, external stakeholders including governing body at the County Executive and County legislature 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 the Adolescent Tobacco Use Prevention Act (ATUPA) program and clerical support to various programs and services within OCHD.

The Health Department currently works with approximately 12 interns annually.

ANNUAL DATA	2017	2018	2019
Volunteer/Intern hours	2,680	3,724	2,302
Volunteer/Intern estimated value	\$46,330	\$69,351	\$38,510

## 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
- Perform genealogical research for a fee, which is based on the number of years searched

ANNUAL DATA	2017	2018	2019
Certificates issued for a fee	41,308	43,743	46,609

## HIGHLIGHTS IN 2019: ADMINISTRATION

- 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.
- A focused effort to address emerging problems of Hepatitis A infection among those affected by substance use disorder have been initiated and will continue in 2020.
- A Suicide fatality Review team (SFRT) was established in collaboration with to initiated review the causes for suicide in Onondaga County
- Strong emphasis on department wide performance management and quality improvement was supported by additional training. A desire amongst staff to engage in an in-person training led the Health Department to facilitate a quality improvement (QI) training with an speaker from NYSDOH. In October 2019, this speaker presented a QI training for all Health Department staff. Training topics included basic QI, root cause analysis, QI tools, and performance management.
- A continued emphasis on the linkage of quality improvement (QI) and performance management (PM) throughout the department resulted in significant progress towards the merger of these two plans.
- The Health Department's annual QI Summit featured additional focus on program performance measures and how the need for improving these performance measures can trigger a QI project.
- The Health Department submitted its first annual report to the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) since receiving national accreditation in 2018. This is a requirement of PHAB to maintain accreditation and is a method to showcase the Health Department's work towards meeting PHAB's requirements.

# 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:

- Cancer Services Program
- Health Assessment Data Team
- Healthy Communities Initiatives
- Lead Poisoning Prevention Program
- Public Health Education
- Substance Use and Mental Health Initiatives
- Tobacco-Free Central New York

## CANCER SERVICES PROGRAM

Since 1987, the [Cancer Services Program](#) (CSP) of the Onondaga County Health Department has collaborated with the New York State Department of Health, healthcare providers, human service agencies, local media, and other community organizations, to offer screening for breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer to uninsured and underinsured residents of Onondaga County. The CSP also provides assessment and case management services for all men and women identified with abnormal screening results.

In 2019, the CSP subcontracted with the Syracuse Community Health Center (SCHC) to provide their patients with Patient Navigation in the Adult Medicine Department. The CSP patient navigator (PN) will identify and contact age-appropriate women and men who are in need of breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer screening regardless of their insurance status. The goal of this project is to increase SCHC’s cancer screening rate by 10% over the five year grant period.

ANNUAL DATA	2017	2018	2019
Number of patients screened	209	277	262
Clinical breast exams	168	132	134
Mammograms	228	211	204
Pap tests	60	46	39
Colorectal Fecal Immunochemical Test Kits	101	82	73
Follow-up diagnostic procedures	341	247	202
Cancers diagnosed	4	6	14

## 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.

## HEALTHY COMMUNITIES INITIATIVES

The Healthy Communities Initiatives (HCI) 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. Program outcomes are achieved through facilitating 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 2019, the HCI program opened 5 new breastfeeding spaces, and created 2 new breastfeeding policies. 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 2016–2019, HCI 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	70	2
Environmental changes	797	295
Practice changes	796	349

## LEAD POISONING PREVENTION PROGRAM

The [Lead Poisoning Prevention 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 2013-2018 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	2017	2018	2019
Inspections completed	290	259	277
Properties with lead hazards identified	238	211	231
Primary prevention inspections (no child associated with a BLL > 5 mcg/dL)	85	78	116

Close collaboration with partners to increase referrals for vulnerable families resulted in an increase in the number of primary prevention inspections completed in 2019. Enhanced communication with owners of properties cited for the presence of lead-based paint violations resulted in more than 90% of interior hazards and 79% of exterior hazards corrected within the desired timeframe. Effective October 1, 2019, the New York State Department of Health adopted new regulations that require a local health department response for any child with a blood lead level of 5 mcg/dL or greater. This change resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of property inspections completed and in the number of children being served by the program in the fourth quarter. In 2020, additional program staff will be hired to ensure timely case management and home inspection for families in Onondaga County. Data and maps related to blood lead testing can be found [here](#).

## 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. In 2019, the PHE team provided presentations or trainings in various locations including schools, pre-schools, colleges, child care centers, health clinics, health fairs, and the New York State Fair.

## 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 2019, program staff began providing naloxone trainings throughout the community, resulting in over 200 people trained. The program also worked with the local Regional Health Information Organization (RHIO) to develop an electronic referral process so that individuals can be referred directly from the emergency

department to substance use disorder treatment settings. The program convened and facilitated two trainings for community medical providers to begin prescribing buprenorphine to those with substance use disorders, training over 40 providers. In May, the program was awarded funding from the NYS Suicide Prevention Center to develop and implement a Suicide Fatality Review Committee to help identify patterns among suicide deaths. This initiative will allow community providers to develop targeted interventions for suicide prevention. Additionally, the program partnered with the Onondaga County Department of Children and Family Services to host a conference for local providers to educate and enhance skills around implicit bias, trauma informed care, and resilience.

## TOBACCO-FREE CENTRAL NEW YORK

In 2019, the Division of Community Health was awarded \$2 million over 5 years to support the prevention and reduction of tobacco use in Onondaga, Cayuga, and Oswego counties through youth action and community engagement. Tobacco-Free CNY is working to engage partners and officials to support advancing local and statewide tobacco control policies, including policies to reduce e-cigarette use among teens and young adults. In just a few short months, Tobacco-Free CNY has initiated youth action programs in two local high schools, planned and held events for the Great American Smokeout, and engaged with numerous landlords and business owners about adopting tobacco-free policies.

## HIGHLIGHTS IN 2019: COMMUNITY HEALTH

- The Cancer Services Program collaborated with the Syracuse Community Health Center to develop a model to provide patient navigation services to clients in need of screening for breast, cervical, and/or colorectal cancer. Navigation is offered to all patients, regardless of their ability to pay, and will help identify individuals eligible to participate in the department's Cancer Services Program, which provides cancer screening and follow up diagnostics at no cost for those who are un- or under-insured.
- Health Assessment Data Team staff worked closely with hospital and community stakeholders to develop the 2019-2021 [Community Health Assessment and Improvement Plan](#). This plan serves as a guiding document for population health initiatives in Onondaga County.
- The Healthy Communities Initiatives program worked collaboratively with the City of Syracuse, Trinity Health, the SCSD and other partners, to develop, implement, and promote Safe Routes to School at Dr. Weeks and Franklin Elementary schools. Safe Routes to School uses built environment changes to help facilitate active commuting and promote physical activity among elementary students.
- The Lead Poisoning Prevention Program developed processes to provide comprehensive follow-up case management services to approximately 400 additional children, in accordance with the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) rule change to lower the action level for a public health response. The changes will help address gaps and inequities in childhood lead poisoning prevention resulting from unsafe housing conditions.
- The Substance Use and Mental Health Initiatives program received nearly \$100,000 from the Suicide Prevention Center of New York over two years to support suicide prevention efforts in Onondaga County. This funding will allow for enhanced data collection and an in-depth community review process to identify patterns associated with suicide deaths.

# 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) focuses on the prevention, investigation, reporting, diagnosis, and treatment of reportable communicable diseases in Onondaga County. Programs within the BDC 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 handles 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 within Onondaga County 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 and universities, to control and prevent the spread of communicable disease within the community.

ANNUAL DATA	2017	2018	2019*
Case investigations	2,992	2,703	2,988
Actual cases of reportable communicable disease <sup>+</sup>	1,624	1,309	1,243
Highlight: cases of possible rabies exposure investigated by staff	315	384	376

\*Preliminary data pending review  
<sup>+</sup>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	2017	2018	2019*
Total patient visits to the STD Center	5,378	4,212	3,262
Cases of gonorrhea in Onondaga County	773	1,023	952



Cases of chlamydia in Onondaga County	2,684	3,185	3,094
Cases of syphilis in Onondaga County <sup>A</sup>	44	34	29
New cases of HIV in Onondaga County	21	26	N/A

*\*Preliminary data pending review*

<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 active and latent 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 refugee resettlement programs and local homeless shelters to provide testing for those at greatest risk of TB.

ANNUAL DATA	2017	2018	2019*
Cases of Active TB managed by OCHD	6	7	8

*\*Preliminary data pending review*

## HIGHLIGHTS IN 2019: DISEASE CONTROL

- The BDC began offering a Patient Portal for clients seen in the clinic. This provides a fast, easy way for patients to have access to their test results and communicate with their provider.
- The BDC began utilizing Skype as a convenient way to offer Directly Observed Therapy to patients taking medication for tuberculosis. Previously, patients would need to meet in person with an Outreach Worker weekly or more. Now these sessions can be completed using a cell phone or tablet capable of video chatting.
- The BDC worked closely with community partners to streamline services for newly arrived refugees in Onondaga County. Previously, all refugees would need to come to the BDC for tuberculosis testing. Now that service is incorporated into their overall health assessment done at local primary care practices.
- The BDC began offering routine Hepatitis C screening to all patients visiting clinic, and has been able to connect many individuals who were unaware they had Hepatitis C with the care and treatment they need.
- The OCHD (including the BDC) responded to several community based Hepatitis A exposures. Response efforts included investigating the case, and offering vaccinations within a short timeframe for anyone exposed.
- The BDC responded to a case of tuberculosis on a local college campus, and partnered closely with staff there to ensure all individuals exposed were appropriately tested.

# 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	2017	2018	2019
<b><i>Inspections</i></b>			
Mandated annual inspections conducted	2,036	2,045	2,100
Second inspections conducted	196	235	369
Follow-up inspections conducted	1,773	1,587	1,614
Temporary food services inspections	502	523	493
<b><i>Complaints</i></b>			
Food complaint investigations	303	261	233
Clean indoor air act complaint investigations	10	3	3
<b><i>Enforcement</i></b>			
Violation notices issued	244	201	220
Hearings scheduled	72	74	68

### 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	2017	2018	2019
<b>Inspections</b>			
Mandated annual inspections conducted	550	547	549
Second inspections conducted	204	201	200
Follow-up inspections conducted	652	744	563
Complaint investigations	40	32	33
<b>Enforcement</b>			
Violation notices issued	118	153	134
Hearings Scheduled	25	25	22

## 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	2017	2018	2019
Surveys completed	667	732	772
Revisits	202	209	222
Numbers of smoke/CO detectors distributed	614	635	701
Children referred for lead testing	184	98	91
Individuals with asthma identified & educated	219	336	489
Referrals to other agencies	874	888	915

## 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.

ANNUAL DATA	2017	2018	2019
<b><i>Rabies specimens submitted</i></b>	435	410	397
Total Positive:	18	15	12
<b><i>Rabies clinics held</i></b>	12	12	12
Dogs vaccinated	1,383	1,314	1,086
Cats vaccinated	605	496	418
Other	3	5	8
<b><i>Bites reported</i></b>			
Dogs	767	749	809
Cats	256	226	262
Other	60	62	69

## 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.

ANNUAL DATA	2017	2018	2019
Mosquitoes collected/identified	193,305	143,612	145,455
Mosquito pools submitted for testing	749	664	627
EEE positive mosquito pools	1	6	14
WNV positive mosquito pools	31	17	4
Mosquito breeding sites treated	387	257	279
Catch basins treated with larvicide	4,127	4,424	4,572
Manholes treated with rodenticide	1,958	1,708	2,331
Rodent infestations investigated	5	2	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	2017	2018	2019
Radon kits distributed	500	400	350
Waste to Energy facility samples collected	48	48	48

Indoor air complaints/ concerns investigated	88	81	77
Environmental exposure incidents investigated	50	47	49

## 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	2017	2018	2019
Individual sewage plans approved	155	146	155
Individual sewage installations inspected	107	98	101
Realty subdivision lots approved for water and sewer	164	264	113

### 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 2019 included Harmful Algal Blooms (HAB), a project involving the history of Beaver Lake, storm water management issues, along with urban deer management and tick borne disease. 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	2017	2018	2019
In-depth sanitary survey inspections	107	131	137
Water quality samples	1,782	1,845	1,729
Requests for well assistance or information	73	47	34

## 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	2017	2018	2019
<b>ATUPA (Grant Year)</b>			
Compliance checks completed	481	487	448
Re-inspections completed	50	38	38
Violations/enforcement	20	20	16
<b>CIAA</b>			
Complaints investigated	27	29	18
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	2017	2018	2019
<b>Facilities inspected</b>	842	801	761
<b>Complaint investigations</b>	6	2	6
<b>Devices inspected</b>			
Scales	2,474	2,345	2,488
Liquid measuring devices	3,460	3,428	3,661
Weights	1,524	1,640	1,246

## HIGHLIGHTS IN 2019: ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

### PROTECTING CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE: WATER

- In May 2019, a water main break in the Town of Skaneateles resulted in OCHD issuing a Boil Water Order for approximately 75 residents. The situation occurred in the middle of the night and customers were alerted through the Hyper-Reach communication system, media outlets, and OCHD staff hand delivering notices to each home. After the break was repaired, lines were flushed, and water was tested, residents were notified that they could safely drink the water.
- A Boil Water Order was issued in October 2019 for thousands of customers, including over 300 restaurants, which are served by the Town of Dewitt Water Department due to findings of coliform bacteria. Customers were notified via the Hyper-Reach communication system and media outlets. 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.
- In 2019, the first full year of the State's Septic System Replacement Program, the Bureau of Public Health Engineering reimbursed a total of \$128,486.20 to property owners in the Skaneateles and Otisco Lake watersheds. This effort helps to fund replacements of outdated and failing septic systems which impact nutrient loading in these lakes. The elimination of these sources helps minimize a key source of nourishment for toxic harmful algal blooms in these important drinking water sources.
- 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 2019. Sampling results were posted on the Health Department website.

### PROTECTING THE PUBLIC

- The Adolescent Tobacco Use Prevention Act (ATUPA) program conducted unannounced checks at vaping stores in cooperation with the New York State Police. These compliance checks were carried out in response to the Governor's directive in an effort to curb the use of these dangerous products by underage youth.
- Updated x-ray fluorescence machines (XRF) are now being used by the Environmental Lead Inspectors to identify lead paint hazards in homes. The new machines are more compact, can reach more confined areas, and readings can be downloaded into reports that will improve the efficiency of communicating correction requirements with property owners.
- The Cicero Swamp was aerially sprayed with adulticide in September in response to positive findings of Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) in multiple mosquito traps in the area.

### IMPROVING EFFICIENCIES

- An on-line payment process for annual food permits was developed in cooperation with the Division of Financial Operations. Permit packages for 2020 included instructions on how to access the payment site. Future upgrades will allow the Division to accept on-line payments for other types of permits and services.
- During 2019, The Division of Environmental Health continued to develop forms that can be filled and submitted on-line which streamline the process for providing services to the public. Forms are now available to request a home radon test kit and to request a Healthy Neighborhood home visit for services related to improving the health and safety of the home environment.



# 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	2017	2018	2019
E.I. C.A.R.E.S Referrals	506	480	405

## 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	2017	2018	2019
Immunization clinic, total served (adults & children)	1,901	963	1,330*
Flu clinics (total served)	822	329	170
Perinatal Hepatitis B program cases	19	29	28
Vaccine for Adults (VFA) (total served)	68	100	115

*\*Decrease due to increase in number of clients receiving vaccines from primary care providers.*

## 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.

## 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.

## 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.

## 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.

## ALL HOME VISITING PROGRAMS COMBINED

ANNUAL DATA	2017	2018	2019*
Total referrals received (unduplicated)	2,883	2,750	2,305
Total home visits completed	9,520	10,265	6,327
Total clients served (unduplicated)	3,276	3,195	2,685

\*Decrease due to decrease in home visiting staff.

## 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	2017	2018	2019
Children referred from all sources	1,562	1,589	1,505
Children who qualified and were receiving services as of 12/31	909	933	871
Children who received services and were closed	-	1,563	1,579

### 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	2017	2018	2019
Number of school districts served	21	22	22
Children who received services during the summer 7/1 – 8/31	1,442	1,473	1,535
Children who received services during the school year, 9/1 -6/30	1,998	2,005	2,126

## 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.
- 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 Destiny Christian Center, Turtle St.). A Breastfeeding Peer Counselor program, part of the WIC program, supports participants with successful breastfeeding.
- During 2019 all WIC participant benefits were converted from paper checks to EBT cards, making redemption of WIC foods easier and more confidential.

ANNUAL DATA	2017	2018	2019
Average monthly caseload	8,681	8,517	8,080

## HIGHLIGHTS IN 2019: MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH: HEALTHY FAMILIES

- The work of Healthy Families aligns with the County’s P.I.E. platform with its work serving county residents living in poverty. Healthy Families is actively engaged in efforts to address the overwhelming impact of poverty on the health and welfare of infants, children and families in Onondaga County.
- In an effort to increase WIC participation among eligible Onondaga County residents, a new “All-In-One” clinic procedure was put in place to reduce clinic waiting times.
- To increase availability and consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables among the residents of Onondaga County, a weekly Famers Market was held in the parking lot of the Gifford St. WIC clinic.
- The MICHC program received “Community Health Worker Expansion Funds” from NYSDOH allowing the program to expand with 3 newly funded Community Health Worker positions thereby providing services to more families in Onondaga County. This award was the result of participation with “Listening Sessions” for the NYSDOH Commissioner of Health. The sessions were developed and facilitated by the MICHC program following the release of Gov. Andrew Cuomo’s comprehensive initiative to target maternal mortality and reduce racial disparities in birth outcomes. Thirty seven African-American women from the community were brought together to discuss their own experiences including pregnancy, access to care, and delivery experiences. The sessions were held in 2018, however, the funds were awarded and positions filled in 2019.

- Through the combined efforts of the Onondaga County Departments of Healthy Families and Information Technology, an electronic mailbox for submission of Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) reports was developed and implemented for submission of reports from Onondaga County school districts evaluating agencies and CPSE meeting agendas that are needed prior to the CPSE meeting. Prior to this, Special Children Services was receiving 73% of the CPSE reports via traditional mail.
- After the implementation of the electronic mailbox, the amount of reports that Special Children Services received prior to the CPSE meeting increased to 99% as of December 2019. This 26% increase resulted in improved communication with school districts regarding meeting agendas while bringing Onondaga County school districts in compliance with NYS CPSE regulations and increasing attendance and participation by the Onondaga County Education Specialists, also set forth in NYSED regulations.
- Providing programming for children with special needs in Onondaga County is of high importance to the Special Children Services Preschool team that want to see children succeed in the present, as well as the future. Bright Starts of Central New York opened a Special Class Integrated Setting (SCIS) classroom in September 2019, to meet the needs of these very children
- The Immunization clinic provided over 3000 vaccines to 1330 children and adults who could not, for various reasons, receive vaccine elsewhere. This helped eliminate the need for children to be excluded from school and allowed children who were excluded due to inadequate vaccine status to be readmitted.
- Healthy Families committed to training home visitors in evidence based programs to better improve the health of families in Onondaga County. The Healthy Families home visitors, including Public Health Nurses, Public Health Social Workers, and Community Health Workers were trained in the “Partners for a Healthy Baby” research-based home visiting curriculum, to systematically and effectively plan home visits that address all the key topics to meet families’ needs. In addition, they received training in SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment) for screening and referral for substance abuse and SCRIPT (Smoking Cessation and Reduction in pregnancy Treatment) to assess smoking behaviors and assist clients in quitting smoking during pregnancy.
- Healthy Families continues as part of the Early Childhood Alliance (ECA) Comprehensive Developmental Screening Committee, to assist in bringing 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.

# 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 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 laboratories are accredited by ANAB (ANSI National Accreditation Board; ANSI = American National Standards Institute) and 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 serve 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 are also members of 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 (SANE), 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>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
<b><i>Laboratory Assignments Completed</i></b>			
Ignitable Liquids	23	9	17
Firearms	1,006	1,076	961
Forensic Bio/DNA	621	535	511
Drug Identification	511	557	421
Latent Prints	994	1,062	822
Digital Evidence	27	59	25
<b><i>Court testimony provided for all disciplines</i></b>	<b>78</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>58</b>

## HIGHLIGHTS IN 2019: FORENSIC LABORATORIES

- The Forensic Laboratories transitioned to new accreditation standards and are now compliant with the International Standards Organization (ISO/IEC 17025:2017) requirements for laboratory testing and the ANSI National Accreditation Board (ANAB) requirements for forensic science testing laboratories. These requirements encompass management system policies, personnel qualifications, technical procedures, and quality assurance practices. Compliance with these new accreditation requirements demonstrates the laboratory's continued commitment to meeting the highest industry standards.
- The Forensic Laboratories successfully implemented a new quality and compliance software system called Qualtrax. This system provides a completely configurable document control database that allows for version control, real-time updates and acknowledgment tracking. The system also incorporates the management of a variety of information including training plans and associated documentation, proficiency test records, testimony tracking and evaluation, quality issues/corrective actions, safety documents, accreditation documentation, and other useful quality measures. The use of this system creates a more efficient workflow and will also allow the Laboratories to more effectively meet accreditation standards.



## 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>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
<b>Total Cases</b>	2,586	2,701	2,834
<b>Total Deaths Reported</b>	2,583	2,696	2,824
<b>Medical Examiner Cases</b>	1,116	1,164	1,206
Full autopsy	883	870	918
External examination	85	100	142
Skeletal examination	10	19	16
Body Inspection	7	10	5
Death Certificate Only	131	165	125
<b>Medical Examiner Cases by Manner of Death</b>			
Accidents	539	517	505
Motor Vehicle	101	94	82
Drug Use/Toxin	228	212	222
• Opioid related	184	167	188
• Other drugs	44	45	34
Falls	142	156	148
Fire	18	15	17

Other	50	40	36
Homicide	38	42	42
Natural	398	437	427
Suicides	104	122	131
Undetermined	29	28	25
Pending	0	0	60
Manner not applicable/fetal death	8	18	16
<b>Scene Response</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>468</b>
<b>Expert Consultation</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Investigated and Released from MEO Jurisdiction</b>	<b>1,462</b>	<b>1,533</b>	<b>1,628</b>
<b>Forensic Toxicology cases</b>	<b>1,144</b>	<b>958</b>	<b>1,012</b>

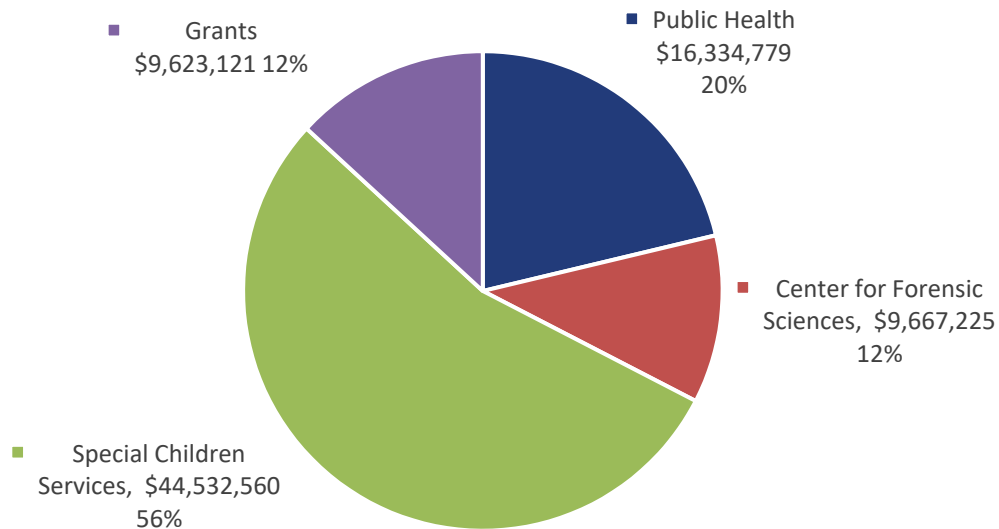
\*Annual regional data includes deaths routinely reported and referred from Cayuga, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga and Oswego counties. Data also includes other counties that less commonly refer deaths such as Jefferson, Lewis, and Tompkins counties.

## HIGHLIGHTS IN 2019: MEDICAL EXAMINER’S OFFICE (OCMEO)

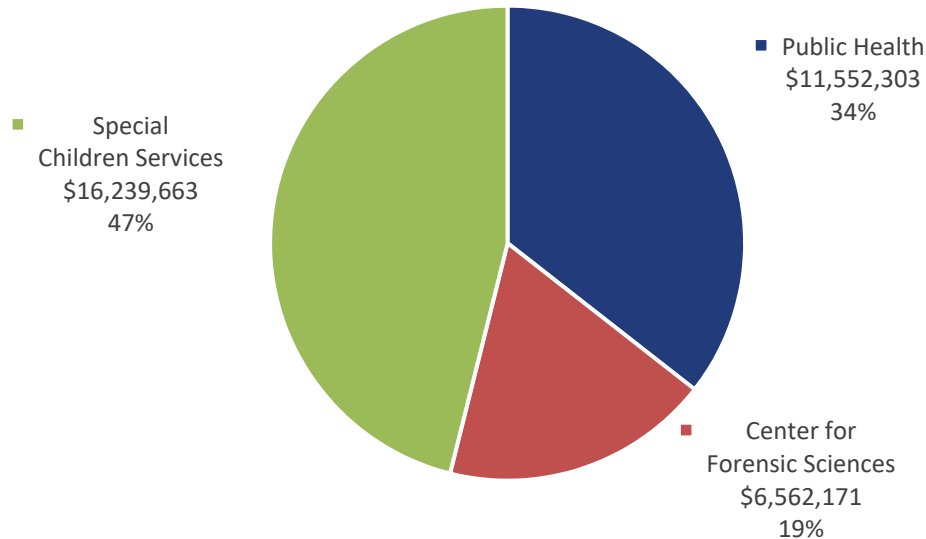
- OCMEO advanced from Provisional Accreditation to Full Accreditation OCMEO Chief Forensic Investigator was elected to the office of Vice President of the American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators (ABMDI) and was also appointed to the Organization of Scientific Area Committees for Forensic Science - Medicolegal Death Investigations Subcommittee [a subcommittee of OSAC, administered by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)].
- Onondaga County Toxicology laboratory, achieved re-accreditation through June 2021 by both the American Board of Forensic Toxicology and the New York State Forensic Laboratory Accreditation Program.

# 2019 HEALTH DEPARTMENT EXPENSES AND LOCAL DOLLARS

## 2019 Expenses: \$80,157,686



## 2019 Local : \$34,354,138



## GRANT PROJECTS, 2019

Administration	\$332,233
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Community Health	\$1,721,677
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Disease Control	\$1,087,041
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Environmental Health	\$796,363
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Maternal and Child Health	\$4,738,448
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Center for Forensic Sciences	\$947,359
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<b>TOTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT:</b>	<b>\$9,623,121</b>
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# PHONE DIRECTORY

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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 for Children.....	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
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  
 Substance Use/Opioid Prevention ..... 315.435.3280  
 Tobacco Use Prevention ..... 315.435.3280

**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 Assessment and Data (gathers and analyzes health data) ..... 315.435.3280  
 Public Health Preparedness ..... 315.435.3204  
 Volunteer and Internship Opportunities..... 315.435.3663  
 Weights and Measures (inspections and complaints) ..... 315.435.6625



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