

# RANDOLPH COUNTY



## Public Health

# Annual Report 2022

## Randolph County Public Health FY2021-22 Annual Report

Throughout the year, Randolph County Public Health staff demonstrated resiliency and adaptability to change. Similar to the previous year, staff continued COVID-19 response duties. The team assured access to COVID-19 vaccines, at-home test kits, and masks to ensure safety and peace of mind to Randolph County residents. Additionally, staff members communicated with numerous community partners to provide updated guidance as guidelines evolved. As new information became available, guidelines regarding quarantine, isolation, and testing often changed quickly.

As COVID-19 cases decreased, many department programs and services returned to standard operations. Communicable disease staff shifted their focus from COVID-19 to other communicable diseases of concern including tuberculosis, varicella, meningococcal, sexually transmitted infections, and more. Randolph County Opioid-Drug Community Collaborative reconvened and resumed work on strategies to address substance use disorders in the county. The coalition reviewed previous successes and current trends to develop a new action plan. Work at the megasite located in Liberty began which required additional work by Onsite Wastewater and Groundwater staff to inform residents in the area of water sampling opportunities. Staff communicated results with property owners who requested water sampling.

The state launched a large initiative which presented challenges. North Carolina Medicaid Managed Care launched at the beginning of the year. This was a transition from fee-for-service to managed care. In addition to transitioning to a new model, NC Medicaid Managed Care introduced five prepaid health plans for beneficiaries to enroll. This change significantly impacted billing and reimbursement for services as each insurance company processes reimbursement in a different way. To demonstrate outcomes, the transition also required documentation of engagement with beneficiaries by care management staff.

In addition to the overhaul of Medicaid, North Carolina Database Application for Vital Events (NC DAVE) had significant changes. Staff trained to process death and birth certificates, participated in numerous listening and training sessions with state staff to identify challenges in the new system that launched the previous year. Staff gained more familiarity with using the electronic system by learning short cuts to expedite the processing of death certificates and how to use the reporting feature offered by the system. Additionally, staff collaborated with state staff to identify medical providers and funeral homes needing onboarding to the system.

Several program areas had staff who retired or changed jobs during the year. Many staff cross trained to assure efficient operations which strengthened the department. In addition, some divisions restructured for quality improvement. Despite challenges and rapid changes, Randolph County Public Health emerged a stronger team that strives to serve Randolph County residents well.

## Care Management for At-Risk Children /Care Management for High-Risk Pregnancies

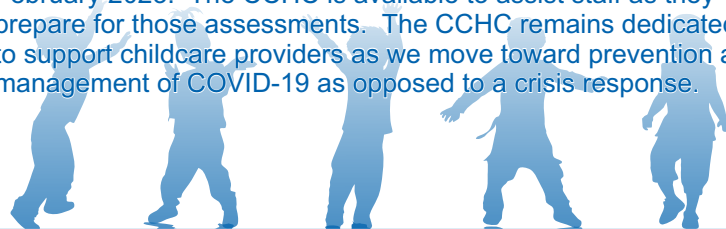
Care Management for At-Risk Children (CMARC)/Care Management for High-Risk Pregnancy (CMHRP) case management programs started the year with staff preparing for NC Medicaid Managed Care by participating in North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NC DHHS) training sessions. In 2015, the NC General Assembly enacted legislation directing DHHS to transition Medicaid and NC Health Choice from fee-for-service to managed care. Under managed care, the state contracts with insurance companies, which are paid a predetermined set rate per enrolled person to provide all services. NC Medicaid Managed Care became effective on July 1, 2021. Despite a staff shortage, care managers worked hard to manage their caseloads and maintain required documentation. State consultants reviewed the programs and both CMARC and CMHRP met required benchmarks.

In addition, care management staff kept donations on hand to provide support for families. Donations included baby formula, baby/young children clothing, diapers/pull-ups (provided by the North Carolina Diaper Bank), baby wipes, food, and pack 'n plays. Staff also connected families to support services throughout the community.

## Childcare Health Consultant

The childcare health consultant (CCHC) spent the majority of the year continuing to support childcare facilities in their efforts to remain current with North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services guidance as it related to COVID-19. The CCHC was recognized by Asheboro City Schools for the support that was provided to the Early Childhood Development Center. The CCHC was able to visit all childcare facilities, in person, at least once and 75% of the facilities received two or more onsite visits. Two in person workshops were also held. Facilities voiced appreciation for the American Academy of Pediatrics Reference Guide, Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools, that they all received. This guide offers explanations for how to handle the most common illnesses seen in young children.

Moving forward, the CCHC plans to return to a more typical training schedule, offering workshops at least monthly. An increased need for onsite technical assistance is anticipated as rated license assessments will resume for childcare centers in February 2023. The CCHC is available to assist staff as they prepare for those assessments. The CCHC remains dedicated to support childcare providers as we move toward prevention and management of COVID-19 as opposed to a crisis response.



## Communicable Disease

Early in FY2021-22, communicable disease staff continued monitoring rising COVID-19 cases in Randolph County. Staff continued to identify outbreaks and clusters based on epidemiological connections between positive cases. Staff provided guidance to long-term care and congregate living facilities to reduce the spread of the virus. Following guidance provided by North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, clinic staff expanded access to COVID-19 vaccines by increasing appointments to accommodate children as well as booster vaccine doses. Staff provided a total of 13,081 COVID-19 vaccines.

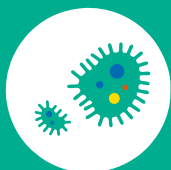
In addition to COVID-19 response activities, staff investigated reported communicable diseases occurring among Randolph County residents. Two tuberculosis cases were reported in December 2021. Staff conducted case investigation of both cases and identified contacts requiring monitoring for symptoms. Per guidance provided by the state epidemiologist, both positive cases were monitored throughout the course of treatment for tuberculosis. Later in the year, four varicella (chickenpox) cases were identified. Staff conducted case investigations of each case and provided guidance to identified contacts.

Due to the statewide hepatitis A outbreak, Randolph County Public Health supplied vaccines for the Randolph County Detention Center. While no cases were identified in the county, vaccines were offered to detention center employees and detainees to prevent future cases of hepatitis A. Community outreach events provided access to the vaccine among high-risk populations.

Aside from COVID-19 cases, communicable diseases occurring among Randolph County residents were similar to the previous year. Varicella, syphilis, gonorrhea, and HIV cases increased slightly. Gonorrhea cases on the other hand were lower than the previous year. Additionally, very few communicable disease cases were identified in schools and childcare facilities.

### Communicable Disease Control July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022

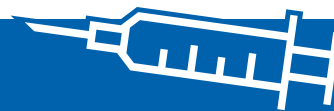
- Hepatitis A cases decreased 100%
- Gonorrhea cases decreased 39%
- Syphilis cases increased 322%
- Varicella cases increased 600%



### Immunizations

July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022

- 2,122 total non-COVID immunizations administered to 844 adults
- 1,679 total non-COVID immunizations administered to 524 children 0-18 years of age
- Influenza vaccines administered – 220
- Hepatitis A vaccines administered – 178
- Rabies pre-exposure vaccines administered – 18



## Clinic Lab

During FY2021-22, the department laboratory manager provided hazard communication training for 67 public health staff. As a required Occupational Safety Health Administration (OSHA) training, topics covered include proper storage of chemicals, safety guidelines for handling chemicals, chemical labels and their meaning, and how to handle exposures.

Throughout the year, 272 polymerase chain reaction (PCR) specimens were collected by nursing staff for Randolph County employees/others screened for COVID-19 testing. Specimens were sent to the North Carolina State Laboratory of Public Health (NCSLPH) to test for COVID-19. COVID-19 specimen collection kits were provided for Randolph County Detention Center. In addition to COVID-19 specimen collection and shipment for testing, the laboratory manager assisted nursing staff in preparation of COVID-19 vaccine materials for daily clinics.

As clinical services returned to normal operations, laboratory testing increased for sexually transmitted infections and blood lead levels. A total of 5,635 laboratory tests were conducted in FY2021-22 which was similar to pre-pandemic levels.

## Dental Health

During FY2021-22, the dental clinic provided services with safety precautions in place. In conjunction with vision screenings, dental screenings and follow-ups were conducted in both Randolph County School System as well as Asheboro City Schools. Asheboro High School screenings for ninth grade were unable to be conducted due to the lack of space to hold screenings because of construction in the school. Screenings revealed tooth decay is common as children have a lack of access to dental care in Randolph County. The dental clinic experienced an increase in the number of referrals and new patients seeking care. However, patients had difficulty in finding pediatric dental offices in the area that accept new patients with Medicaid. For treatment other than preventive care and maintenance, most patients were referred to clinics outside of Randolph County.

In May 2022, our dentist resigned to return to school to further education specific to pediatric dentistry. The clinic dental assistant left shortly thereafter. Departure of our dentist resulted in the suspension of dental clinical services and delayed initiation of the school based oral health program.

### Dental

July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022

- Dental emergencies – 165
- Routine dental care – 298
- Adult dental cleaning – 157
- Pediatric dental cleaning – 285
- New patients enrolled – 147



**Vital Records Processed**  
July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022

- 1,521– Death Certificates
- 652– Birth Certificates



### Family Planning

While COVID-19 restricted family planning services in the previous year, the program returned to normal operations in FY2021-22. The program served 714 clients with services such as physical exams, pregnancy testing, pregnancy prevention counseling including birth control methods, sexually transmitted disease prevention, and vasectomy referrals.

## Health Promotion and Policy

As of January 1, 2022, the program's title evolved from Health Education to Health Promotion and Policy to align with the staff's work. The Health Promotion and Policy (HPP) staff continued to provide support for COVID-19 response throughout the year by preparing communication materials, managing calls for information, providing guidance to local businesses, and distributing related supplies to the community. The team coordinated the inventory, management, and distribution of 18,600 N95 masks and 2,760 COVID-19 at-home test kits.

In addition to providing COVID-19 support, the staff assisted internal programs in distributing materials to inform residents of services. These efforts included posting informational materials at numerous community locations regarding Family Planning services. Responding to requests for materials from community partners, the team assembled bags with informational materials and hygiene supplies.

In January 2022, three school health liaisons were hired to provide support to local schools concerning COVID-19. Support included tracking positive cases to identify clusters occurring within schools and communicating with schools on appropriate quarantine/isolation periods based on current guidance. Liaisons provided guidance on managing contacts to positive cases in schools and testing recommendations post-exposure. Additionally, the liaisons collaborated with school nurses to identify opportunities to provide health education for school staff and students.

(Continued)

## Health Promotion and Policy (Continued)

As COVID-19 cases decreased, HPP staff participated in numerous community events to increase awareness of Randolph County Public Health services. The team attended four events coordinated by community partners. Furthermore, the team resumed providing health education programs by request which included five programs throughout the year.

In partnership with Randolph County Safe Kids, several HPP staff certified as child passenger safety technicians offer car seat installation education by request. For families in need of a car seat, staff provided a seat suitable for the child for a nominal fee. In FY2021-22, 33 families received a car seat and education on safe transport of their children.

### Environmental Health Food and Lodging

Since the beginning of the pandemic, FY2021-22 was the first year inspections were conducted under standard frequencies. During the pandemic, inspection frequencies were reduced per state regulations. Compared to FY2018-19, the food and lodging division gained an additional 141 required inspections.

As of October 2021, the 2017 North Carolina Food Code was adopted and implemented. The rule change increased the number of return verification visits staff had to complete. The food and lodging team operated with reduced staffing for an extended period of time due to staff turnover. With decreased staffing and increased inspection requirements, a lower proportion of inspections were completed during the year – 68% compared to 97% in FY2020-21.

Food and lodging staff continued participation in the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards. During FY2021-22, staff completed the final year of risk factor data collection for the Standard 9 Risk Factor Study which included data from 37 school cafeterias. The data collection is part of a large-scale effort to capture data in foodservice facilities across the county, including restaurants, meat markets, delis, healthcare facilities. Data from the risk factor study will be used to create interventions to address the most frequent foodborne illness risk factors identified among Randolph County foodservice facilities.

### Women, Infants, and Children July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022

- Assigned Caseload – 3,381
- Number of WIC caseload – 3,677
- Active Participation Rate – 109%



### Environmental Health Onsite Wastewater and Groundwater

In October 2021, a permit was filed with the Department of Environmental Quality for the megasite in Liberty. Onsite Wastewater and Groundwater (OSWW) staff played a key role in the pre-permitting process for the site. Part of that process included a significant water sampling regime required by the Department of Environmental Quality. OSWW served as the point of contact between residents and the engineering firm hired to collect the water samples. Staff notified residents of the opportunity for water sampling and processed applications received. Water sample results and health risk evaluations were disseminated by OSWW staff. When necessary, the staff collaborated with the state toxicologist to determine the risk of elevated constituents in the samples. Fortunately, the analysis did not reveal any issues. Water samples were collected in the area in 2018 and yielded similar results. Overall, the process ran smoothly.

OSWW upgraded GPS technology, software, and field hardware to improve operations. The use of these devices increased productivity as personnel became familiar with the new software, which had better capabilities. The software expedited the permitting process by enabling multiple staff members to modify data simultaneously. OSWW closely collaborated with Randolph County GIS employees to develop a program that would specifically address the needs of the division. As a result, the permits from Randolph County continue to be thorough and serve as a hallmark in the state. Staff anticipate continued improvement of processes and permits as personnel become more proficient with the software.

### Women, Infants, and Children

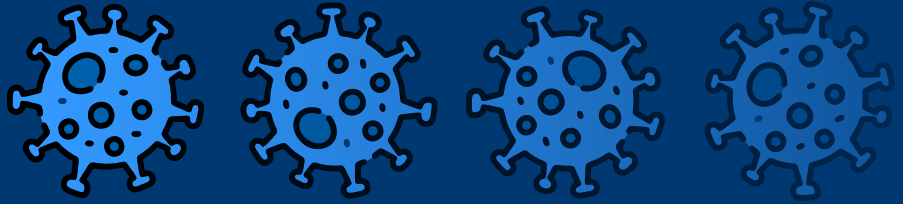
Throughout the year, Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) continued to operate under federal waivers that allowed the program to better serve participants during the ongoing pandemic. The waivers allowed WIC staff to provide remote services to applicants and participants, created automatic issuance of monthly benefits through the state office, and provided a greater selection of WIC-approved foods for participants to purchase. These temporary changes made participation easier for eligible families. Program participation data indicated a significant increase in participation. However, the changes increased the difficulty for WIC staff to track participants' growth and has resulted in a decrease in data collected through the program.

The nationwide formula shortage proved to be significant challenge this year. WIC staff were aware of the issue long before appearing on national news. A separate set of federal waivers were issued to help WIC address this issue. Temporarily, WIC provided participants with brands and container sizes of formula not included in the state contract. WIC staff were able to order some formula through the state office when unavailable through WIC vendors. Additionally, the program continued to encourage and support breastfeeding.

## COVID-19

July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022

- Laboratory confirmed cases – 15,483
- Probable cases – 6,829
- Associated deaths – 185
- COVID-19 vaccines administered – 13,081



## FY2021-22 Financial Reporting

RCPH Revenues		
Program	FY2022	FY2021
County Appropriations	\$2,019,530.53 (33%)	\$2,105,044.71 (33%)
Federal & State Grants	\$1,755,375.32 (29%)	\$2,386,406.92 (38%)
Fees & Fee Reimbursements	\$1,626,292.81 (32%)	\$1,685,015.95 (27%)
Other Revenues	\$337,618.00 (6%)	\$146,451.20 (2%)
RCPH Expenses		
Program	FY2022	FY2021
Administration	\$964,137.40 (16%)	\$982,476.94 (15%)
Child Health/Smart Start	\$92,961.00 (2%)	\$78,727.52 (1%)
Care Management for At-Risk Children	\$271,963.87 (4%)	\$263,887.87 (4%)
School Nurse	\$288,286.77 (5%)	\$250,000.00 (4%)
Communicable Disease/COVID	\$1,114,883.72 (18%)	\$1,688,435.30 (27%)
Dental Health	\$359,720.03 (6%)	\$419,084.84 (7%)
Environmental Health	\$1,056,437.26 (17%)	\$996,081.16 (16%)
Health Education	\$192,983.52 (3%)	\$164,587.93 (3%)
WIC	\$639,829.14 (10%)	\$594,843.59 (9%)
Family Planning	\$767,977.59 (13%)	\$617,771.22 (10%)
Care Management for High-Risk Pregnancies	\$347,841.07 (6%)	\$267,022.41 (4%)

## Public Health Preparedness

As the pandemic continued, Randolph County Public Health maintained response activities to protect the community. Guidance for quarantine, isolation, symptoms, testing, and vaccines was provided by staff to elected officials, community boards, local businesses, schools, daycares, and medical facilities. The agency collaborated with StarMed and numerous community partners to assure access to COVID-19 testing and vaccines. Sites and events were established throughout Randolph County to reduce barriers to these critical services.

Carolina Community Tracing Collaborative (CCTC) assigned nurses to Randolph County Public Health to assist with COVID-19 vaccine clinics throughout the year. Additionally, CCTC staff were assigned to the department to provide support for contact tracing, case investigation, and manage the COVID-19 information line, schedule vaccine appointments, and check-in/registration.

At the health department, COVID-19 vaccines were offered at no cost to the community. These included Pfizer and Moderna vaccines for adults and Pfizer vaccines for children 5-17 years of age. Additionally, staff distributed a total of 18,600 N95 masks to the community in multiple ways – onsite, Randolph County departments, libraries, churches, businesses, and first responders. To assist in earlier detection of COVID-19 and reduce the spread, staff distributed 2,760 COVID-19 at-home test kits. Guidance was included with each kit on next steps based on test results.

In January 2022, three school health liaisons were hired to provide support to local schools regarding positive cases, quarantine/isolation guidance, testing, and other health information. The childcare nurse consultant provided guidance and support for daycares regarding positive cases, quarantine/isolation, testing, and information on other communicable diseases. Randolph County Public Health appreciates the collaboration of so many community partners to ensure the safety of our citizens.



## COVID-19 Response in Randolph County (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022)

- **July 2021** – Collaborated with StarMed to offer testing and vaccine at various locations
- **August 2021** –
  - RCPH provided recommendations for schools as classes resumed
  - Participated in statewide Summer Cash Card incentive vaccine program
  - Offered third Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine doses for moderately to severely immunocompromised
- **September 2021** –
  - RCPH offered COVID-19 testing
  - Offered COVID-19 vaccine (Pfizer) booster doses for immunocompromised
- **October 2021** – Offered Moderna COVID-19 vaccine booster doses for immunocompromised
- **November 2021** – Offered Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for children 5-11 years of age
- **December 2021** –
  - Offered Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 booster doses for adults 18 years and older
  - Offered Pfizer COVID-19 booster doses for teens 16-17 years of age
- **January 2022** –
  - Three, part-time school health liaisons joined RCPH to assist the school systems in navigating COVID-19 guidance/updates
  - RCPH distributed N95 masks to community
  - RCPH vaccine clinics shifted to indoor operations
  - Promoted COVID-19 at-home test kits provided by federal agencies
- **April 2022** – Offered second COVID-19 booster doses for immunocompromised individuals
- **June 2022** –
  - RCPH distributed COVID-19 at-home test kits
  - Offered Pfizer and Moderna vaccine for children under 5 years of age
  - StarMed COVID-19 testing and vaccine sites closed Randolph County locations