

Tioga County Public Health Annual Report



Note From Our Interim Public Health Director

Covid-19 continued to consume most of the work our department did in early 2022; primarily case investigation/contact tracing, isolation, quarantine, vaccination clinics and many other tasks that come with managing a global pandemic. We rejoiced and suffered in the challenges it all brought: the shift to 'self-reporting' Covid, along with the lifting of mask mandates, weekly school testing and continued changes in guidance. While we continue to track and monitor Covid in our community and provide necessary education, we were able to largely close the Covid chapter and move on to our new normal!

The later part of the year was filled with providing public health services to the community across 25 program areas including but not limited to: communicable disease investigation and surveillance, mobile dental van services, drinking water monitoring, childhood vaccines, and a variety of education. Staff were elated to return to the field full-time for in-person visits; for our Healthy Neighborhoods Program, child development evaluations, tabling at events, car seat checks, distributing our famous tick kits, and hosting rabies vaccination clinics. We completed our 2022-2024 Community Health Assessment and Improvement Plan, and through collaboration with numerous community partners we will work towards the shared goal of making Tioga a healthier home.

While this 2022 Annual Report is a summary of our accomplishments and highlights from the year, we would be remiss if we did not thank our partners and all those who have supported us along the way. As we head into 2023, our team is anxious for a fresh start and ready to serve our community. Public Health: It's what we do. Prevent, promote, protect.

-Heather Vroman, MEd



Tioga County Public Health Staff



Adam Ace
Rachael Baker
Laura Bennett
Sarah Centerwall
Ashley Coney
Angel Conklin
Jason Davis
Mark Griep

Janice Heyman
Kylie Holochak
Tamie Jacobs
Rani Kapur-Pado
Albert Knapp
Todd Kopalek
Jordan Marsh

Stephen Mastro
Lisa McCafferty
Denis McCann
Meagan Mertson
Abigail Reigelman
Eric Sarnicola
Dan Scherrer

Lisa Schumacher
Laura Schurter
Katie Searles
Kim Thomas
Heather Vroman
Katie Wait
Nicole Whitmore

Welcome New Staff

Sarah Centerwall - EI Service Coordinator
Tamie Jacobs - Accounting Associate III

Staff Farewells

Ashley Coney - EI Service Coordinator
Angel Conklin - Public Health Educator
Jessica Lovell - Public Health Nurse
Maggie McGoff - Public Health Educator
Laura Schurter - Accounting Associate III

Special Recognition

Eric Sarnicola - 10 years of service
Heather Vroman - 10 years of service
Mark Griep - 5 years of service
Kylie Holochak - 5 years of service

Interns

Samantha Black - Binghamton University
Erin Bruttomesso - Utica University
Shane Healy - Binghamton University

2022 Employees of the Quarter

Quarter 1: Kim Thomas



Kim has worked on the Tioga Smiles Dental Van since October 2006 as a Dental Hygienist. The Dental Van was reduced to emergencies only during the early phase of the COVID-19 pandemic. During this time, Kim became an essential member of the Public Health COVID-19 team. Kim has since been able to resume to her full-time duties on the Dental Van, which includes being able to visit each school district in Tioga County. The services she (and the rest of the dental team) bring to Tioga County are valued and extremely important to the dental health of so many Tioga County residents.

Quarter 2: Meagan Mertson



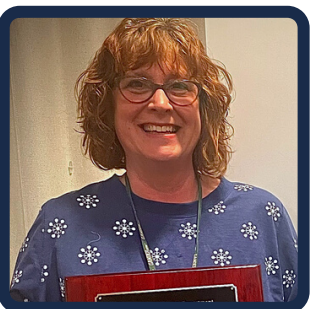
Meagan has worked at Tioga County Public Health since April 2019 as an Early Intervention Service Coordinator. She works with children from birth to age three who have developmental delays and disabilities. Early Intervention can be provided anywhere, so Meagan can be found out in the community, in her families' homes, or at daycare providers. Recently, Meagan, along with the other EI Service Coordinators, helped make an on-site Therapy Room for providers to use with families. Meagan is a reliable team member who is motivated and takes initiative in the work she does. It is apparent that she cares deeply for the kids and families on her caseload.

Quarter 3: Heather Vroman



Heather started working for Tioga County Public Health over 10 years ago as a Public Health Educator. She was promoted to Community Health Program Supervisor in 2016, and in 2020 became our Deputy Director of Public Health. Heather currently oversees various programs within Public Health including Community Health, Early Intervention and Preschool, and Nursing Services. Heather is a major asset to the Public Health team. Moving through the ranks, through all her different titles, she has gained a wealth of experience and knowledge.

Quarter 4: Lisa Schumacher



Lisa started at Tioga County Public Health on May 1, 2000 as a Typist, working within the Home Care Agency. She transitioned into our Primary & Preventive Care department in 2013, and in January 2017 she took over her current position as the support role for Environmental Health as an Office Specialist I. Lisa is the backbone of our Environmental Health Team. She keeps things organized and moving along from day to day. Some of Lisa's most important tasks include processing food permits for restaurants and other food vendors, scheduling Healthy Neighborhoods visits, and organizing everything needed for rabies vaccination clinics.

Looking back at 2020, 2021, & 2022

Notable Numbers:

Dental Screenings

2020: 631
2021: 782
2022: 1120



Disease Investigations

2020: 616
2021: 5,989
2022: 882



Please Note that most of our positive COVID-19 cases occurred during 2021 & investigations stopped in early 2022.

Animal Bite Investigations

2020: 143
2021: 150
2022: 163



Early Intervention Referrals

2020: 132
2021: 153
2022: 149



Healthy Neighborhood Visits

2020: 94
2021: 112
2022: 241



Animal Rabies Vaccinations

2020: 854
2021: 1098
2022: 1087



Facebook Likes

2020: 2927
2021: 329
2022: 257



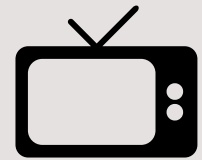
Facebook Posts

2020: 639
2021: 270
2022: 240



Media Interviews

2020: 23
2021: 18
2022: 14



Leadership Tioga Graduates



Congratulations to **Nicole Whitmore**, Director of Dental Services, and **Jason Davis**, Confidential Assistant, for completing the Leadership Tioga program!

The goal of Leadership Tioga is to develop individuals for future leadership roles in Tioga County. During the course of the program individuals visit local businesses and organizations to learn more about the services, resources, and issues affecting our community.

2022 Program Spotlights

On-Site Therapy Room for Children



A new on-site therapy room for children in Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education was created at our local Health and Human Services Building. This convenient, centralized location may be used for:

- Full Developmental Evaluations
- Physical Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech Therapy
- Service Coordination
- And More!



Creating Healthy Schools & Communities Grant

We wrapped up our first year of the Creating Healthy Schools & Communities Grant!

The goal of this grant is to:

- Implement food service guidelines to increase the availability of healthy foods.
- Improve policies, practices, and environments for physical activity and nutrition in early care and education settings.
- Implement community planning and active transportation (Connecting Activity-Friendly Routes to Everyday Destinations) interventions in municipalities to increase safe and accessible physical activity.
- Implement components of Local School Wellness Policies for Comprehensive School Physical Activity Programs and a Healthy Nutrition Environment as found in the CDC Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child model.

Through the first year of the Creating Healthy Schools and Communities Grant, we supplied the Village of Waverly and Town of Richford with supplies (speed radars, flashing crosswalk signs, benches) to help improve the safety and walkability of their communities. In addition, the Waverly School District was given funds to purchase physical education equipment.



2022 Program Spotlights

Well Head Replacement Grant

As part of the CDC's initiative to work with State and local health departments to identify residential wells that are below flood level, Tioga County Public Health received a grant as part of a pilot program from the New York State Bureau of Water Supply. Funding includes well head replacements, well head extensions, and two UV systems for residents with chronic bacteria in their residential water supply.



Water Testing in Spencer for Nitrates

Residential and commercial water testing was done throughout the village of Spencer to identify areas with high nitrates. High levels of nitrates can cause health problems, particularly in infants and pregnant women. This information will be used to gauge the need for public utilities throughout the Village of Spencer.



Narcan Emergency Boxes

Tioga County Public Health, in partnership with the Tioga County ASAP Coalition, CASA-Trinity, and Tioga County Mental Hygiene collaborated to get Public Access Narcan Boxes installed in various locations around the county. Five boxes were installed, including one at the Health & Human Services Building in Owego. The purpose of these boxes is to make it easier to access Narcan, the lifesaving medication used to reverse an opioid overdose. These boxes also make it easier for someone to access Narcan to have on hand, especially if they live with someone who is actively using or is currently in recovery. Keep an eye out as more of these boxes will be installed in 2023!



2022 Program Spotlights

Cancer Prevention in Action Grant

The Cancer Prevention in Action (CPiA) grant supports cancer prevention and risk reduction interventions using a policy, systems and environmental change approach.

The main focus of this grant is to:

- Raise awareness about skin cancer and the dangers of indoor tanning.
- Help community partners adopt their own policies which promote sun safety and prevent skin cancer.
- Work with employers to provide a paid time off benefit so their employees can access life-saving cancer screenings.
- Raise awareness about the HPV vaccine as cancer prevention.

In the 4th year of the grant, we were able to supply the Tioga County Boys & Girls Club, Town of Richford, and Gigglebox Playhouse with tents, shade structures, and/or sunscreen dispensers to promote sun safe practices.



Community Health Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan

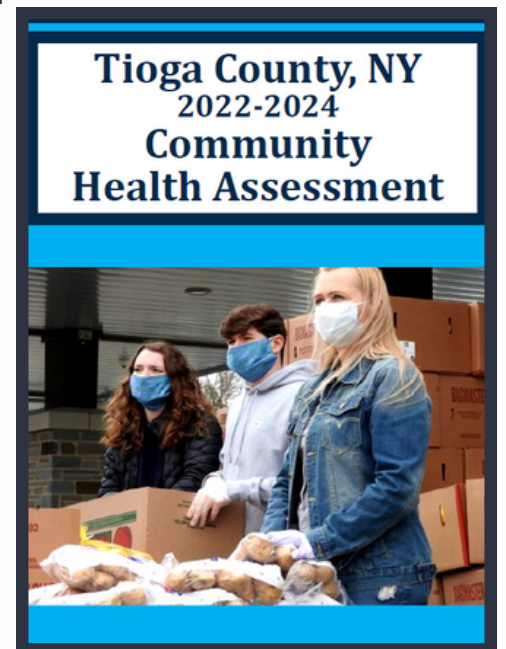
Our Health Education team led the 2022-2024 Tioga County Community Health Assessment (CHA) Update and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)! Many hours were dedicated to gathering community feedback on health issues in Tioga County, finding updated state and local data, updating documents, and meeting with the CHA/CHIP Steering Committee!

The Priority Areas picked to be worked on for the Community Health Improvement Plan are:

- Promote Healthy Women, Infants, & Children
- Prevent Chronic Disease
- Promote Well-Being and Prevent Mental and Substance Use Disorders

What is a CHA and CHIP?

The CHA identifies key health needs facing local communities, whereas the CHIP is a long-term, systematic effort to address the identified needs. You can view the CHA & CHIP by visiting our website: ph.tiogacountyny.gov



Administrative Services



Our Admin Services Team was hard at work in 2022 assisting in all areas of the department! One of the most notable programs they helped with was the Healthy Neighborhoods Program. This program has provided Tioga County residents with Free Home Health & Safety Checks for the last five years. Unfortunately, New York State canceled the grant funds that were needed to operate this program. Admin Services and our Environmental Health team collaborated to find funds so that this program could continue to be provided to our county.

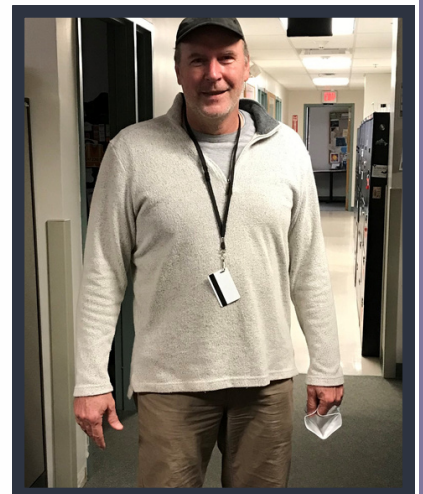
Admin Services also assisted with an audit for the fiscal portion of our Public Health Emergency Preparedness grant. There were no findings, and they received the following feedback: “HRI experienced a professional, knowledgeable, and well-organized program at Tioga”.

Weights & Measures

The Bureau of Weights and Measures provides certification and inspection services to ensure that all equipment, such as grocery store scales and gas pumps, provide correct and accurate readings for commercial transactions.

In 2022 there were:

- 123 inspection sites
- 475 devices inspected



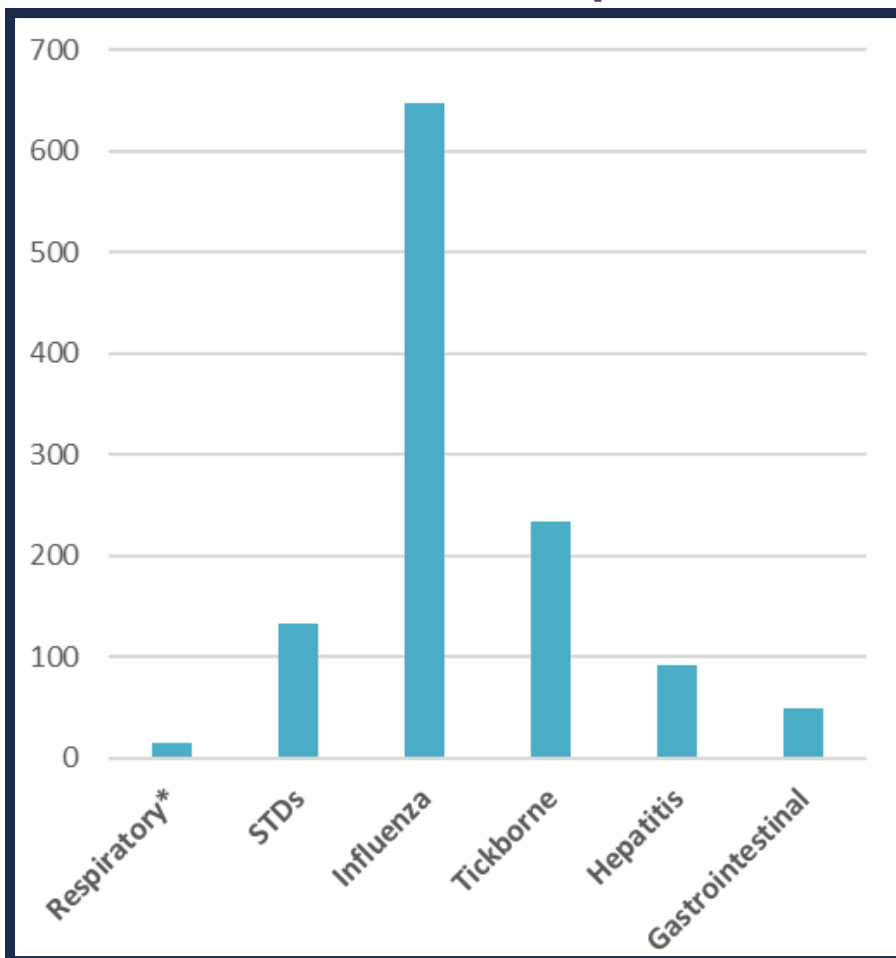
Communicable Diseases

Our staff was busy again in 2022 staying up-to-date on the latest guidance and procedure changes for COVID-19. In the fall, we began seeing another uptick in COVID-19 cases, while also having RSV and influenza circulating in our community. Our team provided education and outreach focusing on the various respiratory illnesses that we were seeing.

We also continued to assist with COVID-19 related efforts, including coordinating in-home COVID-19 vaccinations and monitoring for local trends.

2022 also brought another communicable disease that raised concern. Fortunately, Tioga County only had one confirmed case of Monkeypox.

Communicable Diseases Reported in 2022



*Respiratory illness includes cases of Legionellosis and Strep. COVID-19 and RSV cases are not included.

5 IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT ISOLATION & QUARANTINE

- 1 ISOLATION & QUARANTINE ATTESTATION FORM**
If you test positive for COVID-19, visit ph.tiogacounty.ny.gov. Isolation or Quarantine Attestation Forms are available if you need documentation for work or school. The Attestation Form will serve as an isolation or quarantine order.
- 2 NO CONTACT TRACING**
Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 is responsible for contacting those they have been in close contact with.
- 3 WHO NEEDS TO QUARANTINE AFTER AN EXPOSURE?**
Anyone who has not completed a COVID-19 vaccine series, or is not boosted but is eligible, must quarantine for 5 days after a known exposure. Test on day 5, if possible, and wear a well-fitting mask around others for 5 additional days.
- 4 FIVE DAY ISOLATION & QUARANTINE**
Isolation for those who have tested positive for COVID-19 has been reduced to 5 days. If symptoms are not improving, continue to isolate until day 10, or until 24 hours fever-free. Anyone who is not vaccinated or not fully vaccinated should quarantine for 5 days from the last day of exposure.
- 5 RELEASE FROM ISOLATION & QUARANTINE**
The last day on your order or attestation will serve as your release. For example, if your isolation is set from January 15 - January 20, you will automatically be released to return to school or work on January 21 (unless new symptoms have developed or current symptoms are not improving). You will not be given a separate release form from TCPH.

Public Health
Tioga County

TIOGA COUNTY SEES FIRST CONFIRMED CASE OF MONKEYPOX

Public Health
Tioga County

Environmental Health



Our Environmental Health team had another busy year keeping the public safe by:

- Issuing food permits
- Inspecting commercial tanning facilities
- Investigating animal bites
- Assisting with designing new septic systems for homeowners
- Ensuring public drinking water is safe to consume
- And more!

Did You Know?

Our Public Health Sanitarians monitor and inspect food service establishments all across Tioga County?

That includes restaurants, commissaries, mobile food units, school cafeterias, and food stands at fairs and carnivals in order to protect the community from foodborne illnesses! Next time you're at Strawberry Fest or the Tioga County Fair, rest assured that our sanitarians have recently inspected the food truck you're about to visit!

Food Safety

172 Food Establishment Inspections

57 Temporary Food Inspections

21 Establishments with Violations

Rabies Prevention

Through partnership with Stray Haven we were able to hold 8 rabies clinics in 2022!

2022 Rabies Numbers!

- 163** Animal Bite Investigations
- 38** Wild Animal
- 125** Domestic Animal

- 28** Animals Submitted for Testing
- 3** # That Tested Positive for Rabies

- 8** Rabies Vaccination Clinics
- 1087** Animals Vaccinated



Visit ph.tiogacountyny.gov or our Facebook page for our 2023 Rabies Vaccination Schedule!

Community Health



Early Intervention

Program for children birth to age three who have developmental delays and disabilities.

- Continued to see a steady number of referrals.
- Experienced a substantial loss of providers and therapists who offer services to children in Tioga County. This limited the ability to provide in-home services for those who qualify for the program.
- EI Service Coordinators are constantly coming up with ways to meet the needs of children on their caseloads.

Health Education

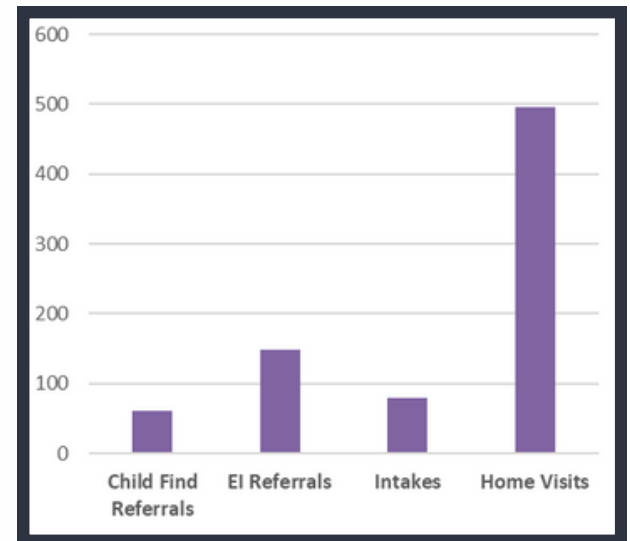
Our Health Ed team was busy managing numerous grants, doing education and outreach through many different platforms, getting back out into the community more regularly, and monitoring what illnesses were circulating around our community.

Child Passenger Safety Program

Offers education to parents and caregivers about proper car seat installation and use.

- Last year we:
 - Checked 40 seats for correct use and installation
 - Replaced 37 child safety seats
- Hosted two Child Safety Seat Check Events:
 - HHS building in Owego
 - Visions Federal Credit Union in Apalachin
- Provided education and training for the employees of the foster care agency Glove House

Early Intervention Numbers



Dental Services

The start of the 2022 school year marked the 19th year of the Dental program providing services to the residents and school children in Tioga County!

The Dental Van visited all 6 School Districts and provided services to children from all 20 Public Schools in Tioga County, including West Learning Center in Apalachin. The number of children participating in the School Based Program has increased since 2021 and even doubled at some schools.

In July and August, The Dental Van parked at the Health and Human Services Building and continued to provide dental services to the employees and residents of Tioga County.



2022 Highlights:

- 1120 Dental Screenings**
- 1049 Dental Cleanings**
- 687 Sealants**
- 576 Restorations (Fillings)**
- 100 Extractions**
- 340 New Patients**



Visit ph.tiogacountyny.gov for the Dental Van schedule!



Tioga County Public Health Services

Animal Bite Investigations
CarFit Program for Seniors
Child Find Program
Child Passenger Safety
Disease Surveillance
Drinking Water Monitoring
Early Intervention
Food Safety
Food Service Inspection
Health Education
Healthy Neighborhoods
Illness Complaint Investigations
Lead Poisoning Prevention

Mobile Dental Services
Opioid Overdose Prevention
Outreach to New Moms
Potable Water Supply
Public Health Preparedness
Rabies Vaccination Clinics
Special Education Pre-School Program
Septic Permits & Design
School-Based Dental Clinic
Tick & Lyme Disease Education
Vaccines for Children & Adults
Weights & Measures Testing
AND MORE!

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Thomas F Nyth, DVM
James Raftis, Jr., DO
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Health & Human Services Committee

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Dennis Mullen



**A Special Thank You to
Joseph Picco, Kevin Millar, and Erica Haray-Butcher
for Serving on our Board of Health!**



**Thank you to everyone
who supported
Tioga County Public Health
in 2022!**



Tioga County Public Health

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