

HARRISON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT HARRISON COUNTY HOSPICE

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

PUBLIC HEALTH IN THE MIDST OF THE PANDEMIC

The coronavirus pandemic has been an unprecedented challenge for all. It has exposed health inequities, resulting in huge economic impacts, causing overwhelming physical and mental health consequences for everyone. With this, the value and necessity of public health has been brought to the forefront.

Prevention measures, used for decades for epidemic control have become household words – social distancing, contact tracing – yet these mitigation strategies are not new to public health. Public health and epidemiology are now more recognized by the general public and policy makers than ever before. Yet the lack of recognized evidence based practices has left state and local public health agencies to deal with the increased workload without the necessary resources to remain sustainable. Misinformation and disbelief caused division amongst communities and lack of support for common public health practices. Contact tracing has been labor intensive. Vaccine planning remains fluid as adequate supply cannot meet the growing demand. People are angry, the pandemic became politicized and our fractured systems will take years to repair. Public health workforces have decreased over the past 2 decades due to lack of public health funding. Missouri's public health spending per capita is the second lowest in the U.S. so it has been difficult, to say the least, to meet the ongoing demands of the pandemic.

However, great things come from difficult circumstances. The ability of our rural communities to support one another was extraordinary. Random acts of kindness where people were buying lunches for frontline healthcare workers to show their support for the difficult task of caring for COVID patients; organizations putting signs in yards to show support for all the countless hours worked to control the spread; volunteers coming together to support mass testing and vaccine clinics with moment's notice – it was inspiring to see our small communities taking on these roles and stepping up in times of need. I am proud of the new partnerships that have been formed and those that have been strengthened in light of the darkness this pandemic attempted to cast.

The lessons of the pandemic present an opportunity for us to make needed changes and engage our communities to see a shift in public attitude about what really is public health. We look forward to sharing the importance of a strong public health system, making changes to create a sustainable future for public health and to continue to prevent, promote and protect the citizens of Harrison County.

*~Courtney Cross, Administrator
Harrison County Health Department & Hospice*

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Harrison County Hospice

Hospice is more than just treatment for those facing a terminal illness. It is a philosophy of care. Harrison County Hospice takes care of the whole self – emotional, physical and spiritual well-being of each patient along with their family and caretakers. Many families decide to contact hospice during the final days or weeks of their loved ones' lives, unaware of the fact their loved one was eligible for hospice care much earlier. One of the most common things we hear from the families of our patients is "I wish I had known sooner about hospice care."



In 2020, even in the midst of a pandemic, Harrison County Hospice continued to break down barriers to provide the needed supports for our hospice patients. We found ourselves in unique situations such as having to complete patient care "virtually" in nursing homes due to strict guidance that limited hospice services during the peak of COVID-19. It was unsettling how the pandemic that was causing our most vulnerable populations to be affected by the virus to not be able to have the necessary hospice services pro-

vided when needed the most. CMS rules, meant to protect our most vulnerable especially during emergent times, caused the mental health of this population to suffer severely. Our staff served 40 patients and drove 18,376 miles throughout Harrison County and parts of Daviess, Gentry and Mercer counties to provide patient care. Of the 40 patients served in 2020, 39 patient pay sources were Medicare and 1 patient pay source was with private insurance.

Along with the day-to-day services our hospice staff provides, every staff assisted in some capacity with COVID-19 response efforts. Our hospice staff are unique than most as they also take on a public health role, especially in times of emergent needs such as COVID-19. Hospice staff trained in contact tracing and were ready to support their public health co-workers at any time. They also are trained in Point of Dispense (POD) plans to efficiently provide needed vaccine or medicine when needed. Due to their flexibility and extensive knowledge in emergency response, they have been a vital asset to the success of our response efforts throughout the pandemic, especially in vaccine administration.

Harrison County Hospice has spent the past 27 years providing quality care, close to home and we would like to continue to provide these quality services to our communities. Our hospice chaplain and social worker also provide a monthly Grief Support Group, which is open to anyone. Call (660) 425-6324 for more information.





“Our collective **journey**, (especially those leaving this earth) is to find the things people want to be honored for—the things that are close to their **heart**.”

~Hospice Volunteer

Hospice Volunteers

Hospice volunteers know that helping others at the end of their lives is tremendously **rewarding**. Being part of a hospice team gives you the profound privilege of bringing comfort, peace and care to patients, caregivers, and their families during their transitional journey. Volunteers feel a greater appreciation of life itself, a deeper understanding of what is truly important, and an authentic sense of fulfillment.



Although our hospice volunteer time was limited during the pandemic, these individuals need to continue to be recognized for the amazing services they provide to support the patient and family with anything they need. These individuals find ways to continue to bring companionship to people in the final months and weeks of life, often a time when people find themselves cut off from the community, isolated and alone. These volunteers also complete yearly training to assure they remain educated on how to best serve our hospice patients.



Quality Care Close To Home

THE REAL FACTS ABOUT COMMON COVID-19 VACCINE MYTHS

PUBLIC HEALTH REPORT

The Covid-19 vaccines bring promise of a global rescue from the coronavirus pandemic, but myths and misinformation are filtering through on social media. That's why leaders from the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and prevention are working to build public trust in Covid-19 vaccines. Here are some facts about vaccine myths and explains the value and safety of the PFIZER and MODERNA vaccines.

FACT: The vaccines will not give you Covid-19

There is no possible way you can get Covid-19 from the vaccine. The vaccine was not developed using a live virus. The PFIZER and MODERNA vaccines use mRNA, which stands for messenger ribonucleic acid. In simple terms, mRNA carries instructions to your body on how to build protein. In this case, it tells your body to make the spike protein that's on the coronavirus. The proteins your body makes are solitary, and they do not connect or reproduce. Then your immune system recognizes the protein as foreign and develops antibodies to destroy it. Your immune system remembers the protein and is ready to attack and eliminate the real SARS-CoV-2 virus.

FACT: You can't test positive for COVID-19 after the vaccine.

This is not possible due to how the vaccines were developed. There is no part of the virus in either vaccine. You cannot test positive on a PCR or an antigen test. You will test positive for antibodies because your body will have built them up as part of your immune response.

FACT: The vaccines are safe and went through full review by experts.

The vaccines have been studied very well. There were 43,661 people enrolled in the randomized Pfizer clinical trial. The results were carefully reviewed and both vaccines were scientifically proven to be safe. The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and other experts reviewed the data from the vaccine trials more quickly than usual by looking at data as information came in. In most cases, they wait until the trials are complete. They used the same demanding safety and efficacy standards as always and no safety protocols were changed or skipped.

FACT: There is no government mandate to get the vaccine.

Health experts and health officials at every level are urging everyone to get vaccinated. The more they get vaccinated, the faster we can end the pandemic and return to normal. Some schools and businesses may mandate the vaccine, just like they do influenza and other vaccines.

PUBLIC HEALTH REPORT

FACT: The vaccines were developed quickly because of the worldwide effort.

These vaccines were developed at record speed. Vaccines usually take 7-10 years to develop. Along with the constant review by regulatory experts, there were two other reasons. First, vaccine manufacturers and the scientific community dropped everything they were doing to develop a vaccine. There was a huge effort from universities, public health experts, manufacturers, epidemiologists, and many others. The second was that the innovative mRNA approach was already in development. They had already created ways of getting the mRNA into the body, what is called the mRNA platform for trials on other vaccines and cancer efforts. The platforms were developed just in case of pandemics. Most of the research was to determine what to put into the Covid-19 vaccines.

Fact: The vaccines will not change the DNA.

There is nothing in either vaccine that could affect anyone's genetic makeup. These vaccines are mRNA based, so they do not enter the cell nucleus, so they can't modify anyone's DNA.

FACT: Vaccines do not cause infertility.

All the findings from clinical trials about effectiveness, safety, and side effects show no reports of any impact on infertility.

FACT: Immunity from the vaccines is safer than natural immunity.

For many diseases, natural acquired immunity often lasts longer than immunity from a vaccine. But that means you have to suffer and survive the disease. Plus the natural immune response with Covid-19 after a mild case appears to be short lived, and much shorter than what is expected from the vaccine. People need to get vaccinated to reach herd immunity. If we wait to reach that naturally, society would be shut down much longer and millions of people would die and millions more would suffer, possibly with permanent damage to their health.

FACT: There is no microchip and no tracking device of any kind in either vaccine.

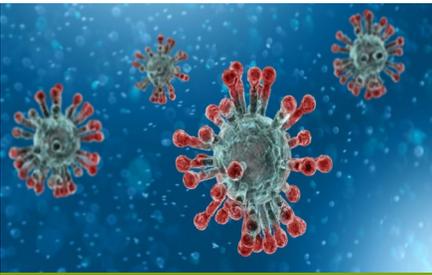
Contrary to several conspiracy theories circulating online, a tracking microchip planted by the government to surveil the movements of Americans is not among the ingredients of the vaccine.

BOTTOM LINE:

As of 2/1/21, approximately 31 million people in the US have been vaccinated. The studies have shown both vaccines are safe and have few serious side effects. People most generally have experience mild pain at injections site, fatigue, and headache. Anaphylaxis is rare and typically occur in people with a history of allergies.

Overall, the vaccine is considered safe, and as more people get vaccinated, the greater population immunity we'll achieve that will help us get a handle on the pandemic.

~Fred Lindsey, RN



FACTS:

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Harrison County Health Department has focused on case investigation and contact tracing. Case identification and contact tracing are fundamental activities that involve working with confirmed cases to identify and provide support to those affected during this time. The goal of this core disease control measure is to the spread of disease in the community. Contact tracing is the identification and monitoring of those who have been exposed to, and possibly infected with the virus. In the months of October, November, and December 2020, we identified over 500 lab confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Harrison County. In the months of October, November, and December 2020, we completed over 1,000 close contact phone calls to Harrison County residents to notify them of exposure.

The Novel (new) Coronavirus that first appeared in Wuhan, China has caught the attention of everyone around the world. The outbreak quickly turned into an epidemic, which is defined as a widespread occurrence of an infectious disease in a community at a particular time. COVID-19 rapidly spread across several countries, affecting large numbers of people and was then classified as a pandemic. As the Coronavirus continued to spread, the Harrison County Health Department began to heavily focus on preparation and community education with intentions to be prepared for the spike in our own community. The all-around goal of public health is to promote health and prolong life among the population as a whole, and our main focus during this pandemic is to prevent disease and sickness. In doing so, we have relied on information and guidelines provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). For more information regarding COVID-19 please visit [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html).

It is important to have the community's help to slow the spread of COVID-19. This aids in protecting community members at increased risk for severe illnesses. Mitigation strategies such as handwashing, social distancing, wearing a proper mask/face covering, and staying home while sick are designed specifically to help protect healthcare and critical infrastructure workforces. For more information regarding mitigation strategies, please visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>.

~Breann Bennett, BSN, RN

Sources used:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/about-epidemiology/identifying-source-outbreak.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/overview.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/open-america/community-mitigation-concepts.html>

Breastfeeding is considered to be the best way to feed infants. Breast milk is nutritionally superior to formula, it offers a wide range of short and long-term health benefits for mother and baby, it's natural, and it's financially and environmentally responsible. The cells, hormones, and antibodies in breastmilk help protect your baby from illness. This protection is unique and changes every day to meet your baby's growing needs. WIC Clients receive breastfeeding support from our Breastfeeding Peer Counselor, Whitney Rinehart. Whitney uses her past personal experience as a breastfeeding mother of her 4 children to provide support and education to her mothers, helping mothers achieve their own breastfeeding goals, addressing the barriers to breastfeeding and promoting the health benefits of breastfeeding.

Harrison County Health Department is a proud breastfeeding friendly worksite.

WIC Office

The Harrison County Health Department's WIC program is a federally funded contract that provides special supplemental nutrition for Women, Infants and Children.

This year has brought many changes to our WIC clinic. The COVID-19 pandemic has put strain on the whole world and the WIC program has been no exception. In April, the USDA allowed WIC to be done remotely with certain waivers in place to postpone weights and the blood work required while our office was closed to the public. It also allowed reviewing qualifying documents and visits with the nutritionist to be completed over the phone, along with mailing paper check benefits to participants. These waivers in place brought additional tracking and documentation.

The much anticipated eWIC card transition took place beginning in August. Training for completed, two and the transition was tember. This means serve had to be seen, tive measures, within benefits transferred to



all of our WIC staff was additional clinics held, then completed by Sep- every WIC family we with additional protec- the month, to have their the card.

With eWIC taking off to a great start and transitioning well, our latest change has been the WIC contract formula change to Similac from Enfamil. This change made at the state level has seemingly went well through the local level without any major difficulty.

To qualify for this program, income guidelines are followed based on the 185 percentile of the federal poverty level along with the size of the family.

If you have any questions about WIC or to see if you qualify please call us at (660) 425-6324 to setup an appointment.



\$176,596 Amount of benefits provided in 2020



160 WIC households were served in 2020



Health Educator Report

We were still able to plant and harvest a garden this year. No volunteers planted a plot but we were still able to harvest 555 pounds of vegetables and fruit and donate to the local food pantry.



Public Health Week:

Public Health week was the week of April 6th-10th. On Monday we focused on Mental Health. We made a Facebook post focusing on Mental health and resources that are available. We also teamed up with Lips to Hips again this year and they made 100 healthy snack cups filled with fruit and cheeses bites. I delivered to businesses with essential workers in Bethany, Ridgeway, Gilman City and Eagleville. Forty of the snack cups were delivered to our local hospital and doctor offices. Tuesday was maternal /child health awareness. I read Once I Was Very Very Scared which is a book that is focused on child anxiety and coping. This was read live on our Facebook page. It had 587 views. Wednesday focused on Violence Prevention. I went to all county schools and put up child abuse awareness banners and blue windmills. I also displayed the banners and windmills at the Harrison County Court House.



Stepping Into Spring 2020

was a free 12-week community walking challenge designed to promote wellness by encouraging participants to walk more often during the day. The challenge ran from February 24th to May 17th. We had 42 participants, 20 of them were consistent and turned in their steps every week. We gave out weekly prizes and a grand prize for the participant that walked the most steps during the whole 12-week challenge. Dick Graner was our grand prize winner! He walked an average of 13 miles a day, that's over 200,000 steps a week. He walked a total of 1,264 MILES during the challenge. That is like walking from Bethany MO to New York City. He was awarded a smart watch of his choice.

Health Educator Report

Continued.....



National Child Passenger Safety Certification:

July 20-23 I went to Kansas City for Child passenger safety training. Now I am officially training in installing car seats of all sizes. So far I have installed 3!

CAR-SEAT STAGES

In general, as a child grows, they should have three different car seats. It's important that parents adhere to the guidelines for each of these stages and make the necessary adjustments for their child.



REAR-FACING SEAT
Any child under the age of 2



FRONT-FACING SEAT
Children 2 years old and up to 40 pounds.



BOOSTER SEAT
Booster seats can be used for children between 40 and 80 pounds who have outgrown their front-facing car seat.

Health/Safety Fair:

We had our third annual Health/Safety fair on August 12th. Six businesses donated 100 individual specific school supplies and we filled 100 backpacks. BTC bank also donated \$500 to help purchase supplies that were needed. We also partnered again with Shoes from the Heart and 50 children got new shoes! The fair was a little different this year due to COVID. We had a drive through in our parking lot! Each family drove through our parking lot and we handed out the full backpacks.

~Shila Callaway, BSN, RN



Environmental Specialist Report

One of the more common calls I get throughout the year involves bed bugs and how to get rid of them. The first thing to do is to actually identify that you do in fact have bed bugs. An adult bed bug is about a ¼ of an inch long with a reddish brown and oval shaped body. Adult bed bugs live solely off the blood of people and animals while they sleep, but can live up to a year without a blood meal. Female bed bugs can deposit up to 5 eggs a day that are almost impossible to see without magnification. Therefore, one of the many problems involving this parasite is that it can go unnoticed for a while until you actually have an infestation



Bed bug infestations usually occur around or near the areas where people sleep. These areas include apartments, shelters, rooming houses, hotels, cruise ships, buses, trains, and dorm rooms. They hide during the day in places such as box springs, bed dresser tables, inside hind wallpaper, or any around a bed. Bed bugs are usually transported from place to place as people travel. Bed bugs travel in the seams and folds of



The size of an adult bedbug compared with a US penny

rooms. They hide during as seams of mattresses, frames, headboards, cracks or crevices, beneath clutter or objects bugs have been shown 100 feet in a night but of where people sleep. transported from place to The bed bugs travel in luggage, overnight bags,

folded clothes, bedding, furniture, and anywhere else they can hide. Most people do not realize they are transporting stow-away bed bugs as they travel from location to location, infecting areas as they travel.

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Environmental Specialist Report

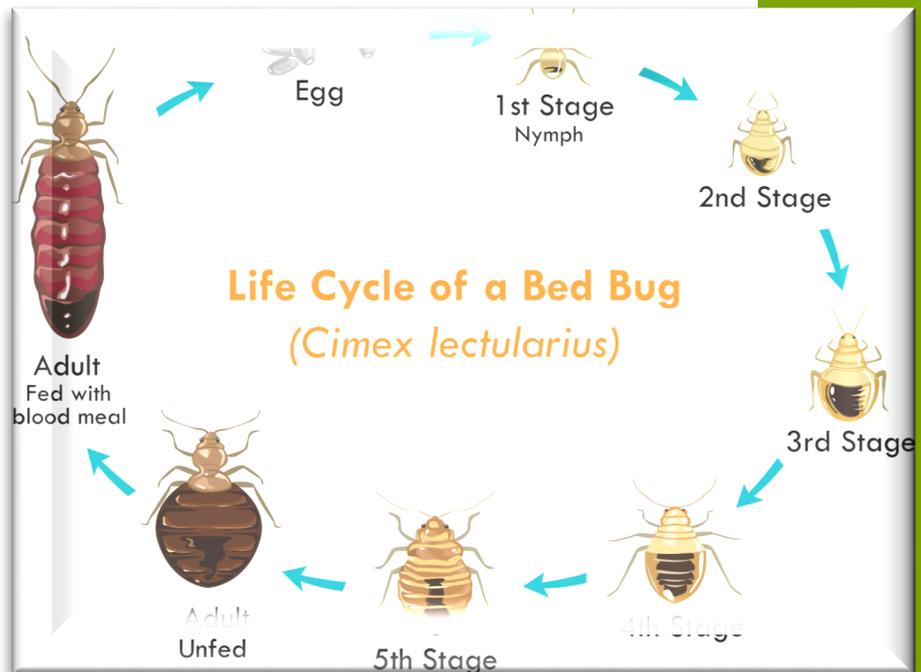
One of the easiest ways to identify a bed bug infestation is by bite marks on the face, neck, arms, hands, or any other body parts while sleeping. However, these bite marks may take as long as 14 days to develop in some people so it is important to look for other clues when determining if bed bugs have infested an area. These clues are bed bugs in the folds of mattresses or sheets and rusty colored blood spots

anywhere close to your sleeping area. Most people do not realize they have been bitten until bite marks appear anywhere from one to several days after the initial bite. The bite marks are similar to that of a mosquito or a flea with a slightly swollen and red area that may itch and be irritating. The bite marks may be random or appear in a straight line. Other symptoms of bed bug bites include insomnia, anxiety,

and skin problems that arise from profuse scratching of the bites. Bed bug bites usually do not pose a serious medical threat. The best way to treat a bite is to avoid scratching the area and apply antiseptic creams or lotions and take an antihistamine.

Bed bug infestations are commonly treated by insecticide spraying or heat treatment. Clean bedding, linens, curtains, and clothing in hot water and dry them on the highest dryer setting. Place stuffed animals, shoes, and other items that can't be washed in the dryer and run on high for at least 30 minutes. Place any cleaned items in a sealed plastic bag to ensure they remain bug free. Vacuum the infested area thoroughly and place the vacuum bag in a sealed plastic bag and put in an outside trash can. Always be sure not to bring any new items such as couches or mattresses into your house until the infestation is under control. The best thing to do if you have an infestation is to contact a professional pest control company that is experienced with treating bed bugs.

~Colt Bohannon, EPHS



Public Health Totals

Public Health Visits	37	Head Lice Screenings	150	Lead Tests	77
Office Visits	1610	Flu Shots	573	TB Tests	40
Immunizations Given	725	WIC Caseload as of 12/31/2020	125	Animal Bites	9
Blood Pressure Clinics	92	CPR Classes	9	CPR Attendees	66
Dental Screenings	142	Birth Certificates	294	COVID Presentations	5
STD Cases	19	Death Certificates	1109	COVID Presentation Attendees	91
Tai Chi Classes	4	Meningitis Shots	173	COVID Positive Cases	656
Tai Chi Attendees	22	Pneumonia Shots	144	COVID Probable Cases	111
H.A.W.C. Virtual Meeting	2	Communicable Disease Cases	29	COVID Close Contacts Called	1515
H.A.W.C. Attendees	23	Car Seats Given	15	COVID Community Testing	168
Food Inspections	57	Car Seat Inspections	1	COVID Long Term Care Testing	298
Licensed Childcare Inspections	6	Safe Cribs	2	COVID Public Hearing	165
Lodging Inspections	4	Food Follow Ups	8	Licensed Childcare Consultations	1
Valid Complaint's	2	Licensed Childcare Follow Ups	0	Lodging Consultations	0
Recalls	93	Lodging Follow-ups	4	Environmental Consultations	7
Onsite Wastewater Consultations	24	Food Consultations	20	Food Resources (for COVID)	20

Hospice Totals

Hospice Skilled Visits	548	Hospice Social Worker Visits	89	Hospice Aide	237
Hospice PT Visits	0	Hospice Chaplain	70	Hospice Homemaker	16
Hospice OT Visits	0	Hospice Speech Therapy Visits	0		1



Vaccines
are everybody's business

