

Putnam County Health Department

2023 Annual Report

Greeting

While cleaning my office this summer, I found a real gem...a binder with the title, "History of the Putnam County Health Department". The first page reads "Celebrating a Heritage of Health - 75th Anniversary 1920-1995: Promoting Health, Preventing Disease, Providing Care". While reading the report, it was interesting to see how public health has evolved and the amazing things the field of public health has done to increase life expectancy and improve the lives of the residents of Putnam County.

In the 1920's and 1930's many entries in the timeline showed what the department did to address communicable diseases. The Hugh's Act, legislation from 1919, changed Public Health in Ohio following the 1918 influenza pandemic. Many highlights included diseases that we no longer see including polio, smallpox and diphtheria. Vaccines and the control of infectious diseases, two of the United State's greatest public health achievements, have greatly improved health outcomes for many individuals.

In the 1940's we began seeing the addition of Environmental Health measures such as regulations for the production, distribution and sale of milk and milk products, regulations governing sewerage tanks, and installation and operation of water supplies and privies. These measures, along with other Environmental Health directives developed since the early days of public health, were designed to protect our surroundings and have greatly improved the quality of our lives. We take for granted clean water and safe food because of the great strides made by this profession.

Later entries in the journal focused on programs that addressed the public health needs of our community such as the establishment of migrant labor clinics and programs made possible through the Preventive Health and Health Service Block Grant. The Putnam County Health Department and community partners continue to assess our community so that we can identify health concerns, develop programs, and help establish policies to address the needs of Putnam County.

Public Health continues to evolve. It began as a quest to decrease deaths to infectious disease, and now we focus our attention on things like chronic diseases and diseases of despair such as addictions and mental health issues. I am proud to work in public health and be part of a profession that is rooted in science and has been successful in improving the health and well-being of our community.

It is with great pride that I share with you Putnam County Health Department's Annual Report, highlighting the hard work of our staff in 2023. We are excited to work in programs that will shape the health of our community well into the future. These programs, as well as the programs we work on in 2024 will improve our resident's lives for years to come. I can't wait to see our accomplishments shared in documents for future generations!

Stay well!



Kim Rieman, RN, MPH, CHES
Health Commissioner

About Us

Putnam County Health Department
256 Williamstown Road
Ottawa, Ohio 45875
419-523-5608

Mission: Protect, promote, and improve the health, safety, and quality of life of the Putnam County community.

Vision: The Putnam County Community will be free of preventable disease, live and work in a healthy environment, and have access to quality care.



Core Values

Professionalism: All people are treated with respect, empathy, and professionalism

Quality: A skilled workforce provides exceptional quality services for all

Collaboration: Work in collaboration with community partners to identify community needs and opportunities to strengthen and broaden resources



(Left) Medical Director- Dr. Jacinta Eickholt, Board Members: Mary Kay Verhoff, Dr. Kent Brandeberry, Joe Burkhardt and Cory Unverferth. Absent: Kyle Stechschulte

Board of Health

The Putnam County Board of Health serves as the governing board for both the Putnam County Health Department and Putnam County HomeCare and Hospice.

Members of the 2023 Board of Health include:

Mr. Kyle Stechschulte, President

Mr. Joe Burkhardt, Vice President

Mrs. Mary Kay Verhoff

Mr. Cory Unverferth

Dr. Kent Brandeberry

Dr. Jacinta Eickholt, Medical Director

The Board of Health holds meetings on the second Wednesday evening of each month at 6:00 p.m. For more information, visit our website at www.putnamhealth.com or call the Health Department at 419-523-5608.

About Us

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256 Williamstown Road
Ottawa, Ohio 45875
419-523-5608

Putnam County Health Department Staff



Back Left: Jodie, Dawn, Beth, Dunel, Abby, Sherri, Stacy

Front Left: Abigail, Lisa, Kim, Rachael, Laurie, Angela

Missing: Allison and Lori



Terri Rayle retired in 2023. She worked for PCHD for 6 years as our Fiscal Clerk.

Kim Rieman, RN, MPH, CHES
Sherri Recker, RN, MSN
Jodie Lammers
Dawn Schmenk, RN, BSN
Dunel Fry, RN, BSN
Rachael Ruhe, RN, BSN
Allison Rosebrock, RN, BSN
Beth Skulina, M.Ed., REHS
Lisa Pope
Lori Trame
Abigail Greve
Laurie Meyer
Angela Recker, EMT
Abigail Morman
Stacy Meyer

Health Commissioner
Director of Nursing
Fiscal, Grant and HR Specialist, Registrar
Public Health Nurse
Public Health Nurse
Public Health Nurse
Public Health Nurse
Registered Environmental Health Specialist
Environmental Health Technician
Registered Environmental Health Specialist in Training
Environmental Health Administrative Assistant
Billing/Deputy Registrar
Emergency Preparedness Coordinator
Receptionist
Receptionist

Public Health Nursing

Communicable Disease

One of the ten essential public health services is to diagnose and investigate health problems and health hazards in the community. In 2023, we focused our attention on outbreaks happening in congregate care settings such as nursing homes. We utilized grant funds for our epidemiologist to help these congregate care settings address their COVID-19 outbreaks. The 2023 Reportable Disease Summary is shown in the adjacent table.

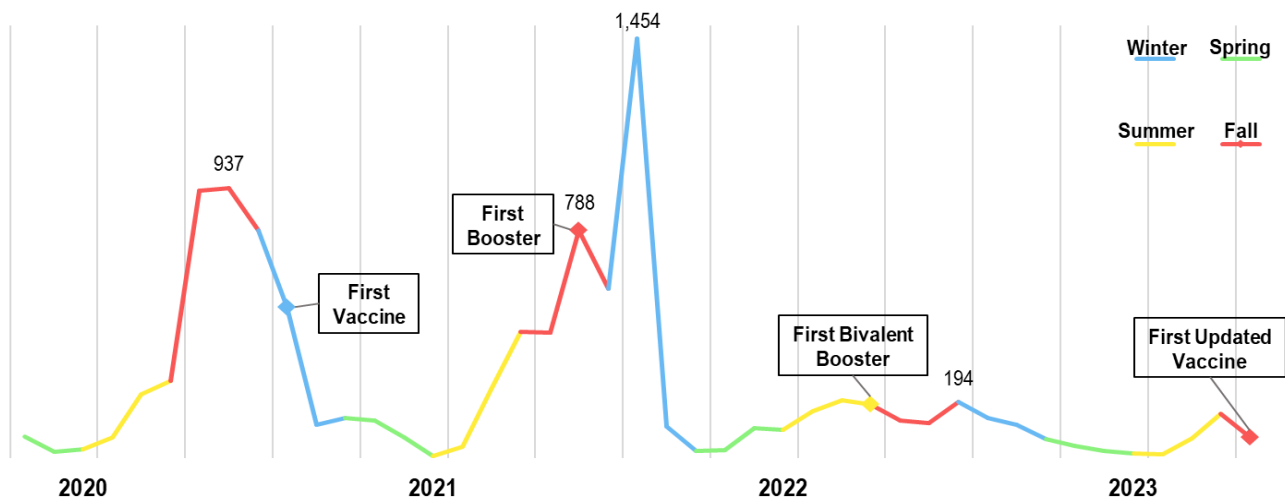
Figure 1 shows the cases of COVID-19 from 2020 - 2023. The spikes show how the different variants spread in the population with the first spike being the original strain, the second spike with Delta, and the third one with Omicron. The graph also shows when the vaccine recommendations were updated.

2023 Communicable Disease Reporting Summary

Amebiasis	1
Campylobacteriosis	13
Chlamydia	46
COVID-19	1056
CP-CRE	2
Cryptosporidia	2
Cyclosporiasis	2
E. Coli, Shiga Toxin Producing	1
Giardia	1
Gonorrhea	11
Hepatitis B chronic	4
Hepatitis C chronic	5
Influenza-associated hospitalization	18
Lyme Disease	4
Meningitis - viral	1
Pertussis	1
Salmonellosis	14
Shigellosis	1
Streptococcal Group A - invasive	3
Streptococcus pneumoniae-invasive	4
Vibriosis	1
Yersiniosis	3

COVID 19 Trends Down!

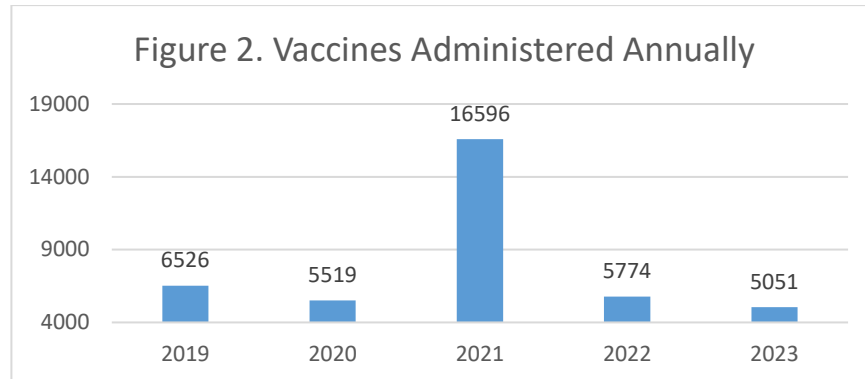
Figure 1. Monthly Putnam County COVID-19 Cases



Vaccines Save Lives!

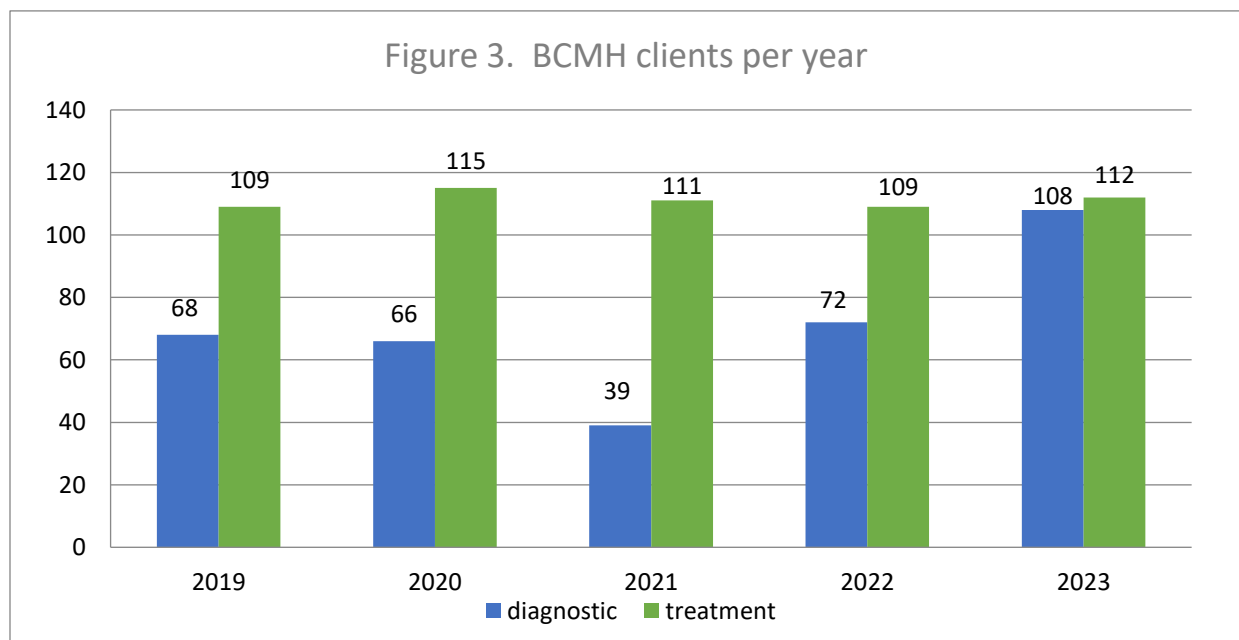
Vaccination remains a primary prevention strategy for communicable diseases. We have seen a decrease in the number of routine immunizations given, including the COVID-19 vaccines, compared to previous years.

Our nursing staff and volunteers have facilitated both on-site and off-site immunization clinics to increase access for county residents.



Helping our Children Get the Care They Need

The nurses provide case management for children seeking a diagnosis for a medical condition and also those diagnosed with a qualifying medical condition. The Nursing Division focused on increasing awareness of this program with the public and health care providers in 2023. Our efforts were successful as we saw an increase in the number of clients served, specifically in the diagnostic area of the program.



Other Nursing Programs

Vision Screenings

2,952

The Nursing Division completed vision screenings throughout Putnam County Schools in Kindergarten, 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11th grades.



Car Seat Program

45

Car seat installations were done in 2023. PCHD has two Certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians that perform car seat checks and provide new car seats to qualifying families.



Lead Testing

20

Lead tests were completed in 2023.

Children should be tested for lead poisoning when they:

- live or spend time in a house or building built before 1978
- are from low-income households
- are immigrants, refugees, or recently adopted from less developed countries
- live or spend time with someone who works with lead or has hobbies that expose them to lead



Children with Medical Handicap (CMH) Program

220

CMH clients in 2023.

PCHD's nurses provide case management for children seeking a diagnosis for a medical condition and also those diagnosed with a qualifying medical condition.



Environmental Health

Environmental Health Programs

The Environmental Health Division supports the 10 Essential Public Health Services in many ways. Our dedicated staff work to address environmental issues that affect the overall population health by playing a critical role in helping to make safe the food we eat, water we drink, and the environment we live. The food safety program provides inspections which play an important role in farm to table food safety. Safe drinking water is vital to overall health. The private water program works to ensure that water from private sources such as wells and ponds are safe to drink and will not cause contamination of other sources of water. The sewage programs help to minimize the impact of the wastewater, that we all generate, in our environment. The sewage Operation and Maintenance program helps to ensure nuisances caused by sewage management systems are identified and minimized. The public swimming, school environment, campground, and rabies surveillance programs work to keep the areas we live, work, and play safe.

Trends of Environmental Health Programs

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
FSO/RFE Licenses	316	344	331	261	305	304	250
Inspections of FSO/RFE *	507	595	641	377	457	502	536
Violations Cited *	868	1258	2007	1053	1179	1592	937
Pools and Spas Licenses	9	8	8	8	8	9	9
Campgrounds Licenses	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
School Inspections	30	28	28	3	10	17	35
STS Permits	49	49	46	46	35	49	52
STS Site Evaluations	56	47	44	57	61	47	54
Operation Permits	50	629	651	828	803	1070	1330
PWS Permits	50	51	59	54	74	62	68
Water Samples	180	182	147	131	222	172	150
Animal Bites	42	42	60	49	45	53	66
Nuisances	12	8	11	10	3	7	11

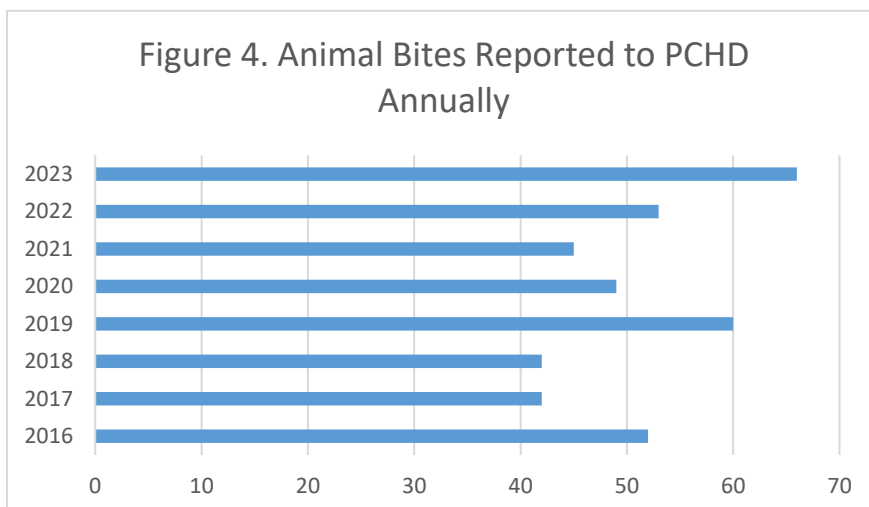
*The number of violations and inspections does not include temporary food facilities.

Operation and Maintenance Program

In 2015, the Ohio Department of Health, through the sewage rules that became effective January 1, 2015, mandated that each homeowner with a septic system obtain an operation permit through the Putnam County Health Department to ensure septic system maintenance. The proper operation and maintenance of a sewage treatment system is critical to its longevity. Just as a car needs regular maintenance to function properly, so does a sewage treatment system. The Putnam County Health Department used an innovative approach to a phased 10-year implementation. 2023 began the 7th year of the program with 1,330 Operation and Maintenance Permits being issued. While the program continues to be challenging, most residents recognize the importance of the program which helps Putnam County care for Ohio's waterways.

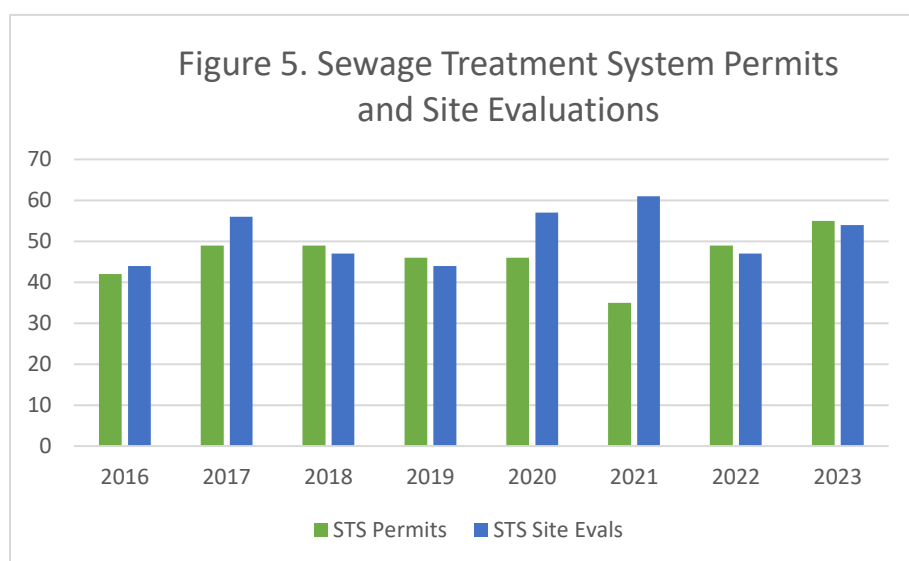
Rabies Surveillance Program

In 2023, the health department received 66 animal bite reports. This is the highest number of bites reported in 8 years! The health department works with physician offices and emergency rooms on reporting animal bites, as well as animal owners and veterinarian offices to follow up on quarantine requirements.



Sewage Treatment Systems

The Putnam County Health Department was recently awarded \$150,000 by the Ohio EPA's Water Pollution Control Loan Fund. This program helps PCHD assist low-income homeowners with the repair or replacement of failing sewage treatment systems. There is an application that must be completed to determine participant eligibility. If the applicant is eligible, funding may be awarded to cover 50%, 85% or 100% of the repair or installation cost of a sewage treatment system. This program depends on registered Sewage Treatment Installers to bid on each project, and we appreciate their willingness to be a part of this program. For more information on this program, please contact the Environmental Health Division.



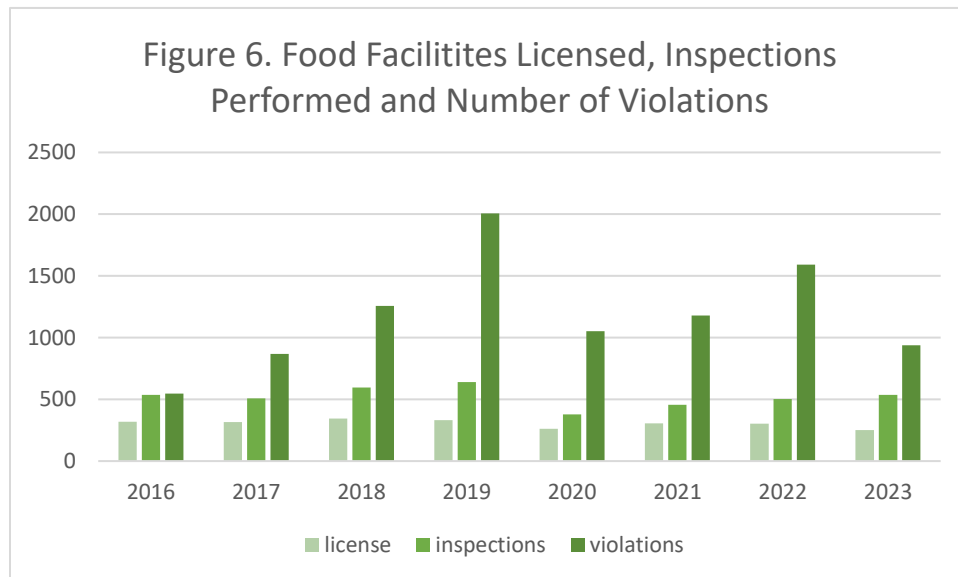
Our Septic Program was very busy with 55 Sewage Treatment System permits issued and 54 evaluations completed in 2023. In December, Beth Skulina, Registered Environmental Health Specialist, worked with Paulding County Health Department to provide a Sewage Contractor Training, allowing contractors to obtain their needed hours to remain certified with the State of Ohio.

Food Safety Program

The Environmental Health Division recently completed a Quality Improvement project which focused on the reduction of violations at food facilities. PCHD staff recognized some facilities face challenges with training employees properly regarding food safety due to constant employee turnover. This can result in increased violations of Ohio's Food Code. Violations are indicators of potential food safety issues which could cause foodborne illness. We recognized that this was an opportunity for the health department to help our food facilities train their staff and decided to begin a quality improvement project.

The quality improvement process started by identifying the most cited violations. Educational material was created by our staff to specifically target issues causing these violations. The materials were intended to provide information to help increase food facility employee knowledge which would help them recognize potential

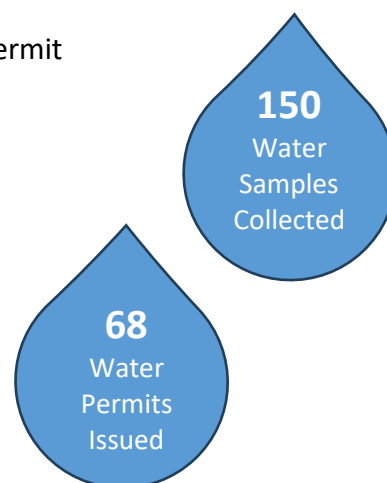
violations and prevent the conditions that cause them. A packet of durably constructed educational materials were delivered to each food facility building in the county. The results indicated there was a 40% reduction in the top 10 most cited critical violations at Risk Level III and IV food facilities between the 2022 and 2023 license year. The decrease in violations in 2023 is shown in the chart above.



Private Water Systems

All newly constructed and altered private water systems require a permit from the health department before work on the system begins.

Water samples are collected for each new or altered private water system. Water samples are also collected from citizens, such as individuals needing tests for foster care and adoptions, or local business by request.

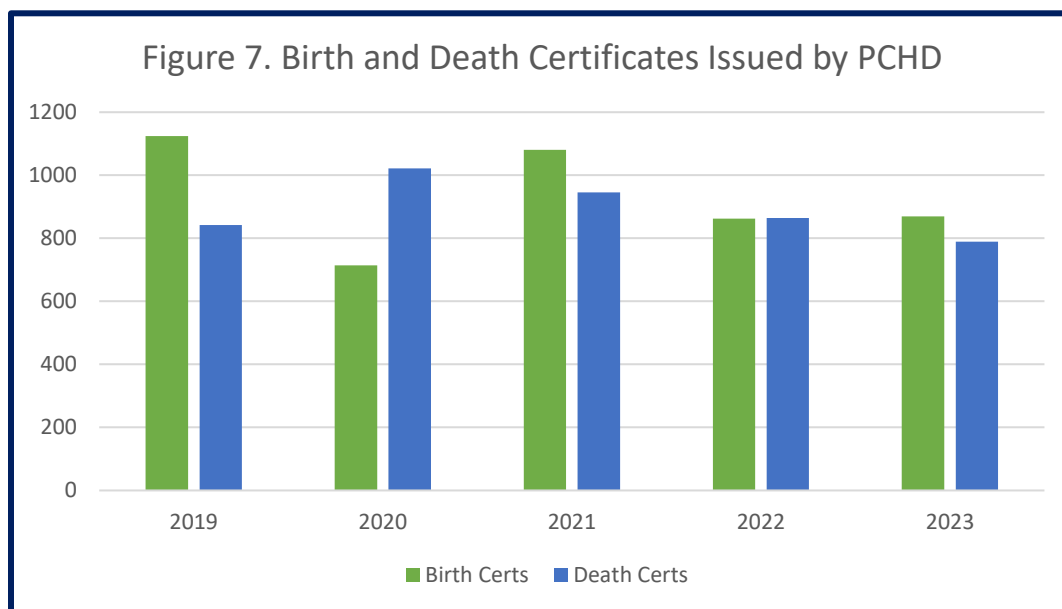


Vital Statistics

Certified Birth and Death Records

The Putnam County Health Department registrar is responsible for filing all births and deaths that occur in Putnam County with the Bureau of Vital Statistics in Columbus. Since 2011, Ohioans have been able to obtain a certified copy of any Ohio birth record at the local health department. Birth records are available from 1908 – Present. Death certificates, however, must be obtained from the county in which the death occurred. In 2023, the Putnam County Health Department issued 869 birth certificates and 789 death certificates.

The Putnam County Health Department processes requests for certified birth and death records Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. The cost is \$27.00 per certified record. Cash, check, debit or credit cards are accepted (an additional fee will apply for debit and credit cards).

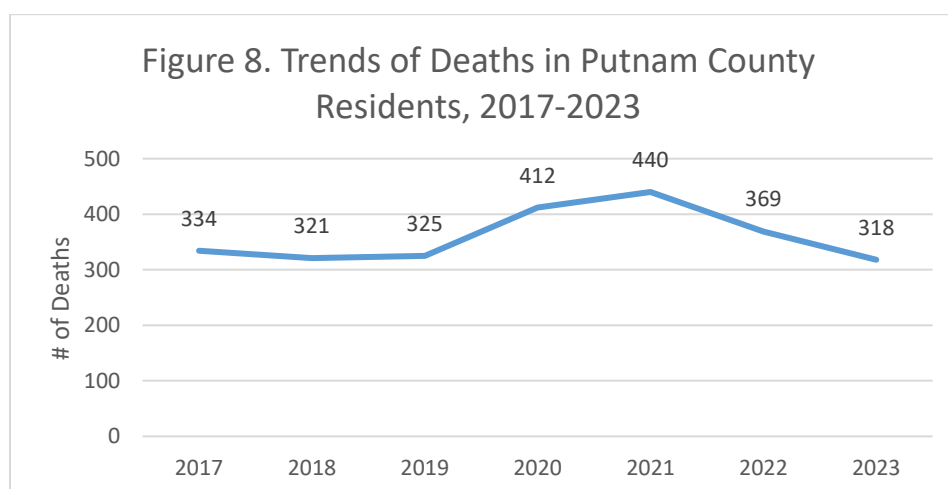


Cause of Deaths

The table to the right is displaying the leading causes of death for Putnam County residents in 2023. There were a total of 318 deaths in Putnam County. There were 2 pending deaths at the time this report was finalized; this means the investigation is incomplete. Heart Disease continues to be the number one cause of death in Putnam County.

The life expectancy in Putnam County is 80.5 years and is higher than that of the State of Ohio. Recently, the life expectancy in America has declined. COVID 19, drug overdoses and accidental injury are factors leading to this decline.

Leading Causes of Death for Putnam County Residents 2023	
Heart Disease	102
Cancer	60
Pulmonary Disease/Pneumonia	51
Neurodegenerative Disease (Dementia, Alzheimer's)	21
Diabetes mellitus	8
Accidents (Motor Vehicle, Accidental Drowning, Unintentional Deaths, Etc)	3
Cerebrovascular diseases (Stroke)	21
Failure to thrive	13
Suicides	2
Renal Failure	0
Other Causes	30
Pending	2
Covid related deaths	5
Total Deaths for Putnam County Residents in 2023	318



Emergency Preparedness and Community Partnerships

Preparedness in Practice

Putnam County Health Department (PCHD) was awarded the Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) grant for 2023. As a PHEP grant recipient, PCHD completes preparedness activities to strengthen response capabilities. Preparedness activities include writing and revising plans, trainings, drills, and exercises.

The PHEP grant was first created over twenty years ago to strengthen local response capabilities in the event of a large-scale bio- terrorism attack. In 2018, after years of planning, training, and exercises, a goal was set by the state of Ohio to conduct a full-scale exercise that tested public health's ability to respond to a large scale anthrax attack. After five years of planning (and a global pandemic), PCHD participated in the first state-wide full scale exercise in the fall 2023. PCHD successfully responded to the anthrax incident, by appropriately assessing the situation, requesting medical countermeasures (antibiotics; such as Ciprofloxacin or Doxycycline), receiving the medications from the region via the state, and inventorying and accounting for received materiel. The exercise solidified PCHD's ability to respond and manage a complex incident, safeguarding the health of Putnam County residents.

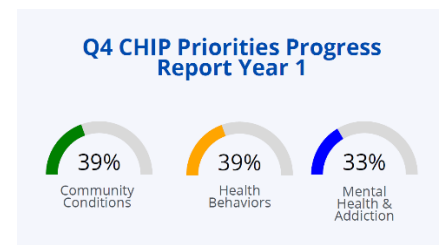
Putnam MRC (Medical Reserve Corps) learning Tourniquet and Bleeding control through "Stop the Bleed"



CHIP Dashboard

The first year of the current CHIP is now complete. Our dashboard is released quarterly and shows the progress of our CHIP. The dashboard can be accessed on our website.

One strategy of our CHIP was to launch a combined media campaign in collaboration with other community partners. Below is a picture of the logo that the group created, "Putnam County Healthier Together", and two examples of the media messages from the campaign that you may see.



Other Public Health Highlights

Public Health Service Awards

Years of Service Awards

In 2023, **Rachael Ruhe** celebrated 5 years with the Health Department. Rachael works in our CMH (Children with Medical Handicaps) program, provides immunizations, works with schools to provide vision screenings, and helps with the Get Vaccinated Program. In addition to these programs, she also helps us fulfill our contract with Pathways Counseling Center. She has also been active on our Quality Improvement Committee.

Dunel Fry celebrated 10 years in 2023. As a member of our nursing division, Dunel works with our CMH program and provides immunizations and school screenings. In addition, she is our Communicable Disease Nurse and provides Car Seat education. Dunel participates in our agency's Wellness Committee.

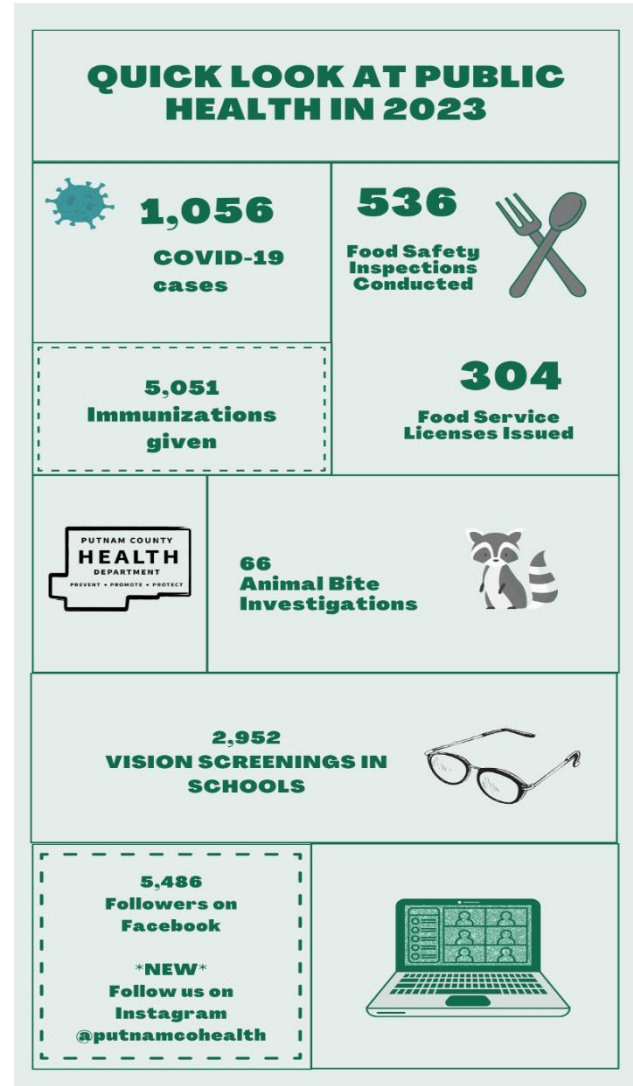
Laurie Meyer also celebrated 10 years with the department in 2023. Laurie also works in our nursing division, keeping our immunization clinics running smoothly and billing for our nursing services. She may also be found assisting our Vital Statistics department. Laurie participates in our Ethics Committee and will be taking an active role in preparing information for reaccreditation.

Thank you to Rachael, Dunel and Laurie for your years of service to the Putnam County Community.

Welcome - New Employees

Jodie Lammers joined us in January 2023 to fill the role of Grant/Fiscal and Human Resource Specialist. Jodie has spent 27 years with Putnam County HomeCare and Hospice and has also brought with her experience from another Health Department where she started her career in Public Service. In addition to her fiscal and HR duties, she serves as the Vital Statistics Registrar. Jodie serves on our Ethics Committee and assists with reaccreditation. Welcome Jodie!

Stacy Meyer was hired in September 2023 and assists in billing and our immunization clinics. Two days a week, she can be found at the front desk, linking clients to the proper division for assistance and working in our vital statistics department. Stacy is a member of our Wellness Committee. It is great to have Stacy with us!



Fiscal

PUBLIC HEALTH: A Wise Investment

Balance as of January 1, 2023 **\$1,673,729.08**

REVENUE	
Putnam County Tax Levy	\$457,060.13
Other Local Government Funds	50,417.45
Federal/State Grants/Subsidy	759,406.25
Service Fees	770,880.52
Misc. Grants/ Receipts	242,718.67
TOTAL REVENUE	\$2,280,483.02

January 1 Balance + Receipts **\$ 3,954,212.10**

EXPENSES	
Administrative Costs	\$1,444,107.26
Supplies (Medical, Office, Program)	447,660.87
ODH Grants	214,481.41
WPCLF Grant	309,681.76
Share to State	49,944.32
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,465,875.62

Balance as of December 31, 2023 **\$1,488,336.48**

The PCHD proudly serves the residents of Putnam County by offering the following programs and services.

Immunizations/Flu Clinics

Birth and Death Certificates

Children with Medical Handicaps

School Screenings

Car Seat Program

Private Water and Septic Permits

Emergency Preparedness

Communicable Disease Monitoring

Food Service Inspections

Water Samples

Health Education

Lead Testing

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Putnam County Health Department

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Health Department

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