

TORRINGTON AREA HEALTH DISTRICT
ANNUAL REPORT: JULY 1, 2017 – JUNE 30, 2018

The TAHD served over 133,000 people in twenty boroughs, cities and towns covering 611 square miles.

The TAHD **Community Health Program** partnered with DPH and FoodCore to investigate: **2** cryptosporidium, **7** giardiasis, **19** campylobacteriosis, **13** salmonellosis, and 4 shiga toxin producing organisms. TAHD completed case management for 1 case of tuberculosis (diagnosed in FY 17). TAHD provided guidance to school nurses, daycares and community members on a variety of health issues. TAHD nurses administered **490** doses of flu vaccine to local residents. TAHD consulted with **31** residents regarding potential rabies exposures which resulted in TAHD submitting **22** raccoons, bats, and other animals to the State of CT Laboratory for rabies testing. Guidance on post exposure prophylaxis was provided as well. Ticks brought in by **122** residents were sent to the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station for Lyme disease bacteria testing.

TAHD is a member of Fit Together, a Northwest Connecticut Healthy Eating and Active Living Initiative. In April of 2018 Fit Together received a five year, \$500K grant received from Hartford HealthCare (HHC) as a result of their new affiliation with Torrington's Charlotte Hungerford Hospital. This financial support allowed the group to move forward on several health initiatives and has allowed the program to hire an Executive Director, and a 5210 Coordinator. Fit Together focuses on identifying policy changes and environmental improvements in area towns that effectively promote healthy habits and food choices. The program is based on assessments and research which has consistently shown that healthy eating and active living promotes productivity at work and school, maximizes mental and physical functioning, and prevents chronic diseases.

The TAHD continues to be an active member of the Litchfield County Opiate Task Force. This task force continues to work on strategies and solutions to the heroin/opiate addiction and overdose epidemic. The task force focuses on intervention, prevention, and community education.

In addition, the TAHD, along with other Health Districts/Departments across CT, was awarded a four-year contract to implement a comprehensive prevention strategy that raises community awareness and brings prescription drug abuse prevention activities and education to communities, schools, parents, prescribers, and their patients. TAHD is using the CT state wide "*Change the Script*" campaign for this awareness. TAHD is also providing prescriber education to increase the use of the CT Prescription Monitoring & Reporting System (CPMRS) to reduce prescription drug misuse, overdose, and death.

The TAHD-**Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Program** continued with their "*Project Mitigate*" trainings. Project Mitigate was designed to bring harm reduction strategies, overdose recognition and reversal skills to participants. The TAHD MRC Project Mitigate has won a National MRC Innovator Award of Excellence. The TAHD MRC provided volunteers for an emergency flu clinic at TAHD held in response to large numbers of illness in CT. TAHD MRC provided volunteers for a WEST CONN functional needs shelter following the tornadoes in western CT. TAHD MRC received a level II NACCHO Challenge Award Grant of \$7,500. This will pay for "*Project Apprise*", an opioid prevention program, which is focusing on rural high schools, which are in the TAHD service area, but outside of the McCall Center for Behavioral Health and Area Health Education Center (AHEC) service areas. Current membership is 23 members.

The TAHD **Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program** provided case management for more than 52 children with blood lead levels ($\geq 5\mu\text{dl}$) as well as provided educational information to more than 100 families. Abatement / Remediation Orders were issued for 2 properties. Four properties completed abatement. Currently 12 properties have open environmental cases. TAHD continues to focus on prevention services: healthy home assessments, cleaning supplies and home teaching of the "3 bucket" system of cleaning to decrease blood lead levels. TAHD **Healthy Homes Program** conducted 16 initial home inspections and 4 re-inspections.

The TAHD **Immunization Action Program** (IAP) continues to work with local providers and hospitals to ensure compliance with immunization laws for the infants and young children population. The focus for this year has been on transitioning from CIRTS (Connecticut Immunization Registry and Tracking System) to CT WiZ the new Immunization Information System.

The TAHD **Emergency Preparedness Program** worked with community partners to refine emergency protocols and plans. A focus this year was developing a regional healthcare coalition. TAHD also participated in many local and regional drills. TAHD provided an emergency Saturday flu clinic in February in response to the Commissioner of Public Health's request to provide unvaccinated citizens with the opportunity to get vaccinated while Connecticut was experiencing widespread high flu activity statewide.

The TAHD partners with Phoenix Labs for its **Water Testing Program**. Phoenix Labs, a full service lab located in Manchester, CT offers a wide range of testing of drinking water, wastewater, groundwater/landfills, storm water, soil and more. TAHD collects samples when requested, and offers free technical advice on water testing results.

TAHD **Environmental Health Program** resulted in the following inspections/licenses/permits: **1741** food inspections, **817** temporary food permits, **92** new septic systems, **233** repaired septic systems, **179** private well permits, **64** private pool permits, **141** beauty salons & barber shops inspections, **520** house addition permits, **256** soil tests, **35** subdivision lots, **58** public pools and beaches were inspected, and **28** daycare centers inspected. Records show that approximately **366** samples were submitted to the state lab for testing of drinking water, beach and pool water, lead in water, soil, and dust, and stool samples for pathogens. Sanitarians investigated **279** complaints of various public health concerns; **34** legal orders/voluntary compliances were issued for enforcement purposes.

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