

Summer 2020



Partnering for Health

Board of Directors' Corner:

Successes During the Pandemic Response

A message from R. Battle Betts, Jr., Health Director, Albemarle Regional Health Services— Originally featured in the ARHS Connections August 2020 Newsletter

Mr. Betts' message is re-posted here especially because his positive message regarding leadership and partnership seem apropos for public health departments throughout the region during these challenging days.

Recently, I was asked what I thought was our agency's biggest success to date during this pandemic response. That question really made me think and so I wanted to share the answer I provided: The biggest success lies not in what ARHS has accomplished through widespread testing clinics, investigation, and contact tracing efforts, but in the public health leaders who have stood up to protect their community and taken on true leadership roles throughout the response. These leaders have emerged throughout our organization in our clerical staff, health educators, clinical nursing staff, administration, bus drivers, and landfill attendants. Our day to day operations, while different to some extent, never stopped; they grew as the stress level grew and our staff learned new ways to serve their community.

The biggest success lies not in what ARHS has accomplished through widespread testing clinics, investigation, and contact tracing efforts, but in the public health leaders who have stood up to protect their community and taken on true leadership roles throughout the response.

Through these efforts, our staff has led over 56 ARHS Health Department drive through clinics (with eight clinics continuing each week for the foreseeable future), conducted four congregate care point prevalence testing events, and assisted with nine additional community screening events. Staff have investigated over 900 lab confirmed cases, with contact tracing accompanying each case,

while also coordinating and directing efforts to manage more than 13 COVID related outbreaks and clusters. Unfortunately, our efforts will not stop here, but we are better prepared and have competent and capable staff leading the effort.

Our local and regional partnerships are stronger and will be vital throughout the continued response effort.

In addition to the public health clinical response, we have truly emerged as the local resource and trusted leader

(Continued on page 2)

Inside this issue:

Successes (continued)	2
Edgecombe Drive-Thru COVID-19 Testing	2
We Are The Champions Conference this spring	2
Beaufort County Update	3
Dare Health Ed and Outreach Adjusts Delivery Method	4
MTW Substance Use Services and COVID Testing	5
Supporting Farmers and Families during COVID	6
MTW (continued)	7
NENCPPH Regional Walking Challenge	7
Building Solid Foundation in Hyde County	8
Dare County Hosts Mass Testing Events	9
Windsor Church Participates in Virtual Walking Challenge	10
Summertime Means Grilling Time!	11
Calendar of Events	12
What is the NENCPPH?	12

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Successes During the Pandemic Response *(continued from p. 1)*

throughout our community and developed an even stronger presence through local business and other partner agencies including emergency response, USCG, schools, providers, hospitals, faith-based institutions; social media; and even with traditional media. Our local and regional partnerships are stronger and will be vital throughout the continued response effort.

Your actions and your dedication reflect daily on our agency and, together, we will overcome this unprecedented pandemic. So in short, **your success is our success, and once again, I thank you!**

R. Battle Betts, Jr., MPA
Health Director, Albemarle Regional Health Services

Edgecombe County Health Department Conducts Drive-Thru COVID-19 Testing in Community



Submitted by Thomas Stebner, Edgecombe County Health Department

Since June 19, 2020 the Edgecombe County Health Department has conducted drive-thru COVID-19 testing 2-3 times a week in key locations throughout the county from 9-11:30 am. During the month of June, drive-thru testing was conducted in Rocky Mount, followed by Tarboro, Pinetops and Leggett in July. Appointments were encouraged, however, not required. This testing provided residents with the opportunity to seek services in their neighborhood. The Edgecombe County Health Department also partnered with the Edgecombe County Detention Center to provide testing to inmates and staff. For more information regarding future dates, locations, times and updates for COVID-19 drive-thru testing sites, please check our website at https://www.edgecombecountync.gov/departments/health_department/index.php.

We Are The Champions Conference Coming This Spring!



“We Are The Champions! Moving Public Health Forward TOGETHER” workforce development conference has been rescheduled for spring 2021. The Northeastern North Carolina Partnership for Public Health conference planning team is working with Eastern AHEC to provide the same, or similar, one-day conference offerings as originally planned. The Conference will be on **April 16 and April 20, 2021**. The conference will be offered in Elizabeth City and Plymouth. If the situation requires it, the conference will still be held but may need to be offered virtually. Be on the look at for registration information.

Beaufort County Update

Submitted by Ja'Nell Lewis, Beaufort County Health Department

COVID-19 Testing

Update regarding testing (as of 7/22/20): Beaufort County Health Department has conducted two mass testing events, one on July 7th and one on July 8th. In addition, they conducted at least two outreach testing events per week targeting marginalized populations. Through their mass testing events they tested 351 individuals. So far, they have held 5 targeted testing events, and through those they have tested 114 individuals. They continue to partner with local leaders amongst the marginalized populations to ensure partnership, promotion, and trust. For additional information on the mass testing, please see the link to an article in the Washington Daily News: <https://www.thewashingtondailynews.com/2020/07/07/health-department-hosts-drive-thru-covid-19-testing/>

Diabetes Prevention Program

Beaufort County Health Department is back up and conducting their Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP). They have added a lot of safety measures in order to be able to hold the DPP classes. Their next class will start September 2020. If anyone is interested, they should contact Anna Parker at 252-940-5096. See the promotional image below for more information.



WANT TO LEARN HOW TO...

- Lose Weight?
- Eat Healthier?
- Decrease Stress?
- Exercise More?

Call 252-940-5096
to learn about our
DIABETES PREVENTION PROGRAM!



BEAUFORT COUNTY
PUBLIC HEALTH
NORTH CAROLINA

Dare Health Education and Outreach Adjusts Delivery Methods

By: Rebecca Woods, Health Education and Outreach Supervisor, Dare County Department of Health and Human Services

In March of 2020, it became clear that health education and outreach services in Dare County were going to be significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. There was no question that services needed to continue. But what would continuity of services through a pandemic look like? Initiatives began to examine programs and services to determine how service delivery could continue. The feasible solution was to adapt through teleservice or virtual provision. Staff diligently went to work to make this happen. As a result, community members are able to continue accessing services contributing to their well-being.

- ◇ The WIC program continued to provide support to women and children through telephone methods. Since stress is a complication of the pandemic and also contributes to low milk supply, WIC staff has dedicated additional time to spend with patients to assist with stress management skill training. Additionally, WIC patients are able to receive their materials through mail delivery or curbside options.
- ◇ The Peer Power Program, which provides health education to high school students for an academic credit, transitioned to virtual means and completed the academic year. It is anticipated that the program will continue through virtual means at the start of the 2020-2021 school year.
- ◇ Recovery programs, including the Women of Worth program and the Recovery Circles Peer Support program are being offered virtually. Individual peer support is also being offered through virtual means.
- ◇ Naloxone kits are being provided to community members along with education on recovery resources. Coordination of in-patient treatment has also continued through telephonic means.
- ◇ Support for parents of children 0-5 is being offered with a virtual option through the CMARC program.
- ◇ The Diabetes Education program has a telehealth delivery option and the Prevent T2 program is being offered virtually.
- ◇ A resource list was developed and placed on the Dare County COVID-19 specific website. The resource list contains information on mental health, physical health and food resources for community members to easily access.
- ◇ The Keeping Current Program, which is an interactive program to educate adult caregivers of adolescents on substance use and mental health topics, has been offered twice through online meetings. For the online offerings, Dare County Health Education and Outreach Unit partnered with Albemarle Regional Health Services Regional Tobacco Manager, Teresa Beardsley. The current focus is on providing general education and health education on e-cigarettes. Intervention methods, including cessation references are also provided.

While face-to-face delivery options are certainly valuable and many times optimal, the virtual provision of services has broken down barriers that were initially unforeseen, such as travel barriers for some of our community members. During a time that has undoubtedly caused uncertainty and elevated levels of stress, we are honored to continue supporting our community.



MTW Launches Syringe Services Program, Recovery Court, and COVID testing

Submitted by Kirsten Smith Beasley and Samantha Campbell, Martine-Tyrrell-Washington District Health

Martin-Tyrrell-Washington District Health (MTW) has been busy with substance use related services and COVID-19 testing and follow-up.

The Hope Exchange has officially opened! The original opening date of the syringe services program was scheduled for August 5th, however due to continued power outages from Isaias, it is now scheduled to open on August 12th. Services that will be offered include: baggies with sterile injection equipment (syringes, tourniquets, cookers, sterile water, cottons/filters, alcohol pads, healing jelly and Band-aids). We will also be providing bagged lunches, hygiene kits (shampoo, soap, comb, toothbrush, toothpaste, razor) and wound care items. When a participant walks up, they will have the opportunity to fill out a "What Can We Help You With Today?" form for additional items that are offered at the exchange that day (these items will change based on what we have in-stock). Examples of items are: fiber gummies, vitamin C, lotions, sunglasses, sunscreen, Pedialyte drink mix, petroleum jelly etc. Once a month, we will have free HepC testing on site. Participants will also be referred to substance use disorder treatment, peer support and medical treatment if they need help.



Pictured at left is Samantha Campbell prepping baggies and above is the Hope Exchange flyer

District Two Recovery Court held its first session in July! They welcomed their first participant (who was very emotional and excited to get started!) and will be signing up more in the coming weeks. Their goal is

to have 10-12 participants enrolled by the end of the year. District Two Recovery Court is a five-phase program where a participant undergoes a minimum of 9 hours of treatment per week, random drug screens, curfew, supervised probation and court hearings every other week. They will also have support with job training, school, medical, housing and transportation throughout the program. After all five phases have been completed, participants will graduate with all of the support they need to become productive citizens. (Pictured at left is the District Two Recovery Court team)



Continued on page 7



Martin-Tyrrell-Washington District Health

Promoting Healthier Lifestyles Through Personal and Environmental Health Services

Supporting Farmers and Families During COVID-19

By Mary Jane Lyonnais & Simone Gummere

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, we have seen the detrimental effects a disruption in our food system can have on farmers and families alike. As a result we have relied on our local farmers to provide fresh, safe food off of their farms to fill these gaps. Both the Cultivator Book Mobile in Hertford County and the Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL) Collaborative in Beaufort County and have taken creative approaches to support their local farmers while providing access to healthy foods in their communities.

The Cultivator Bookmobile in Hertford County has demonstrated a unique strategy to support their community and farmers during this time. Over the years the Cultivator has provided free books by way of book drops at community locations all over Hertford County with a mission to improve book access in Northeastern North Carolina. As the need for food has risen during the pandemic, the Non-Profit has seen the importance that local food has on supporting the community and has partnered with Partnerships to Improve Community Health (PICH) this summer to purchase vegetables from a local farm, the Brown Family Farm, to supplement their book drops with fresh produce. To further promote the importance of farming families, the Cultivator has put together a short series about the Brown Family Farm father-daughter duo that you can find at: <https://vimeo.com/422215540>.



Pictured Above: Mr. Brown and family in front of planted rows of vegetables for the 2020 season

Pictured on Left: Caroline Stephenson, owner of Cultivator Bookmobile, at a book drop event in Windsor, NC.

A little further down south in Beaufort County NC, members of the HEAL Collaborative have joined forces to purchase farm boxes from Moore’s Produce Family Farm in Blount’s Creek, North Carolina and distribute them to families during the summer. They are working with Cooperative Extension to provide healthy recipes for the produce in the boxes directly to the families for Roberson, who has taken a helping hand and to hear cited for their vegetables made ing.” HEAL, under the leadership of Washington Harbor District Cornerstone Church, along with many other HEAL partners, will continue the farm box program throughout the summer while supplies last. Mr. Moore harvest for this initiative – a

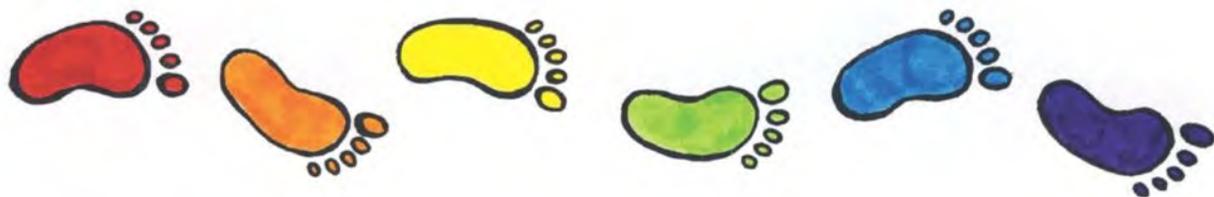
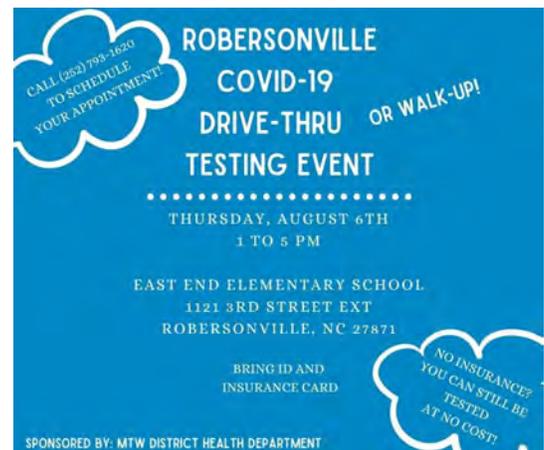


Pictured Above: is an example of a farm box distributed by the HEAL group

and the Rotary Club to deliver the boxes one less trip to the store. As Shirley lead on securing funding, coordinating the boxes put it “I really do love ‘thanks lady!’ from a small child excited happy about what we were doing.” HEAL, under the leadership of Washington Harbor District Cornerstone Church, along with many other HEAL partners, will continue the farm box program throughout the summer while supplies last. Mr. Moore harvest for this initiative – a

MTW Services *(continued from page 5)*

MTW has partnered with Washington Regional Medical Center to provide weekly COVID-19 drive-thru testing events in Washington County. Martin and Tyrrell County events are scheduled on alternating weeks. So far we have had three testing events in Tyrrell County, two in Martin County and weekly testing events in Washington County since July. (Below are flyers for August testing in Plymouth and Robersonville)



Sign-up by August 31, 2020

for the

NENCPH Regional Walking Challenge

to be held

September 14 - October 25, 2020

Walk for fun, for better health, for stress relief, to get rid of quarantine pounds, to show your colleagues what you're made of, or to beat Dare County Department of Health and Human Services :) Whatever the reason, make a team of five and sign-up with your health department coordinator today!

Building a Solid Foundation in Hyde County

Submitted by Dustin Eaton, Hyde County Health Department

At Hyde County Health Department, JD Rea (Regional Peer Support Coordinator), Mike Wheeler (Post-Overdose Response Coordinator), and Dustin Eaton (Substance Awareness Coordinator) are the new kids on the block. All having their start earlier this year, JD coordinates Peer Support in Hyde, Beaufort, Martin, Tyrell, and Washington counties; Mike, a certified Peer Support Specialist himself, conducts peer support in Hyde and performs both community outreach and outreach in the event of an overdose; and, Dustin coordinates outreach, education, and naloxone distribution. In addition, Mike and Dustin co-operate Hyde County's syringe services initiative and treatment navigation services, both of which have grown significantly and proved vital for the community.

Taking a "person-centered, grass-roots" approach, the trio, collectively known as 'the boys' around the office, have been working diligently to build a solid foundation for the growth of the Substance Awareness program in Hyde County. According to 'the boys', success in serving the entirety of Hyde County, and particularly people who use substances, lay in the wake of organic relationship building within the community. Meeting people where they are at, both physically and mentally, has allowed the three to make great strides in communities that are otherwise seemingly impenetrable. In this space lies an opportunity for education and awareness campaigns, which have done wonders in eliminating the prevailing stigma surrounding substance use that proves so common in isolated, rural areas such as Hyde County.



Future goals are plentiful for the program, and include establishing peer support specialists in each of the five counties that JD covers, starting an Narcotics Anonymous group in Hyde County, starting a celebrate recovery group in Hyde Correctional Institute, reinstating the Hyde County Substance Use Task Force, and providing education in schools and churches as soon as it is deemed safe to do so. As one can imagine, accomplishing some of these goals has been hindered by the spread of the novel coronavirus, but 'the boys' at Hyde County Health Department have accepted that challenge and continued their push forward, displaying their commitment to serving the community of Hyde County along the way.



Pictured at left is Jenna Brinn as she hands over the syringe services program to Dustin Eaton and Mike Wheeler of Hyde County Health Department.

Pictured at right is Dustin Eaton reviewing the syringe services program checklist after a day out in the community.



Dare County Department of Health & Human Services Hosts Mass COVID-19 Testing Events

Submitted by Kelly Nettin, Dare County Department of Health and Human Services

Like many counties once the spread of COVID-19 began to emerge in the county, Dare County Department of Health & Human Services (DCDHHS) had many residents request testing opportunities for individuals who may be asymptomatic. In March and April, the testing guidance did not support testing individuals who did not meet very specific criteria, which included having specific COVID-19 symptoms. DCDHHS determined that testing the asymptomatic would help reduce some of the burden to our local healthcare providers and provide concerned individuals with peace of mind. Our team set out to make it happen in collaboration with multiple county departments and Mako Medical Laboratories.

The first two events held provided diagnostic tests only. These events were held on May 26, 2020 at First Flight High School in Kill Devil Hills and on June 2, 2020 at Nags Head Event Site. A total of 384 diagnostic tests were performed at these events: all samples were negative except 3, which were invalid. Participants were able to drive-thru the testing site and never required to leave their vehicles.

In efforts to further meet the requests of our residents, on June 30, 2020 antibody testing was added to the testing events. Since then, a total of 4 clinics have been offered. These events were held on June 30, 2020 at Dare County Parks & Rec in Kill Devil Hills, July 9, 2020 at the Fessenden Center in Buxton, July 14, 2020 at Dare County Parks & Rec in Kill Devil Hills, and July 28, 2020 at the Dare County Center in Manteo.

"This has been a tremendously successful collaboration between DHHS, Emergency Management, Public Relations, our EPI team and Mako Medical Laboratories," commented Health Director, Dr. Sheila Davies. "These events have also been appreciated by our local healthcare providers as we promote these for asymptomatic individuals and strongly encourage anyone with symptoms to visit their local healthcare provider or urgent care center."



Since testing first started in Dare in early March, local healthcare providers have tested 5,932 individuals and an additional 1,559 have been tested at these community testing events. DCDHHS plans to continue to provide these events as long as COVID-19 remains a public health threat and residents are interested in participating.

Pictured are DCDHHS staff operating testing events in Kill Devil Hills and Buxton



Windsor Church Participates in Virtual Walking Challenge

Submitted by Wanda Stallings, ARHS and Liz Baker, NC Cooperative Extension

St. Elmo's Baptist Church in Windsor, NC recently participated in the Faithful Families Virtual Walking Challenge (#2020FFVirtual Walking Challenge). They are also actively involved in the Faithful Families Thriving Communities Eating Smart and Moving More Curriculum. This program has facilitators and Lay Leaders trained to co-deliver Faithful Families' Eating Smart and Moving More Lessons, which include nine sessions on healthy eating and physical activity strategies, including nutrition, meal preparation, cooking, food safety, and increasing daily physical activity. Through group discussions, recipe taste tests, and activities, individuals and families are encouraged to set goals to lead healthier lives. The curriculum also prompts discussions about changes that can be made in their organization and local community to improve other's health, as well.

The Faithful Families classes at St. Elmo Baptist Church were recently being hosted by: Mrs. Ellen Cherry, St. Elmo's Missionary Baptist Church Windsor; Mrs. Elizabeth Baker, FCS Area Agent with NC Cooperative Extension Bertie and Martin County Centers; Ms. Kathy Copeland, NCCE-Bertie EFNEP Program Assistant; and Mrs. Wanda Stallings, Health Educator with Albemarle Regional Health Services. The classes were held on Wednesday evenings from February 26, 2020 – March 11, 2020 until the COVID-19 pandemic occurred; causing the classes to be put on hold. The program participants, however, continued to stay connected and be physically active while staying socially distanced by participating in the Faithful Families Virtual Walking Challenge.

The year 2020 marked the first year of the #WalkwithFF2020 Virtual Walking Challenge, which ran for four weeks from Monday, June 8 – Sunday, July 5, 2020. The challenge was a way to help participants walk more and to continue with their physical activity after the challenge ended. The challenge had a good turnout in North Carolina, with teams signed up from nine counties, and individuals from 14 NC counties. Windsor had one team with 6 participants, Chowan had one individual participant, and Edgecombe had 8 teams with 94 participants.

Ms. Cherry did such an amazing job with motivating her team! Some of her efforts included sending encouraging text messages to team members, informing team members of alternative forms of walking during inclement weather, and calling her team members in the wee hours of the morning to get up to go walking! Ms. Cherry shared that she called her walking partner every morning at 5:30, five days a week, to go walking. When she would call, her partner would respond, "I'm not up, but I'm getting up!"

Good job St. Elmo Baptist Church! Your efforts are inspiring!

Read more at:

<https://faithfulfamilies.com/celebrating-successes-in-the-walkwithff2020-virtual-walking-challenge/>



Pictured at left: Ellen Cherry from St. Elmo Baptist Church in Windsor, NC

Summertime Means Grilling Time! Don't Forget the Vegetables!

Posted on May 17, 2017 by *Kelly Nordby, RDN, LDN*

Eat Smart Move More Weigh Less Blog (<https://esmmweighless.com/summertime-means-grilling-time-dont-forget-vegetables/>)

What is better than a warm summer night than cooking out on the grill? Grilled chicken and fish are delicious and your healthy vegetables can be grilled right alongside them! There is no need to dirty extra dishes on the stove or oven. Just throw everything on the grill!

One of many great things about grilling vegetables is that they are done in a snap. Potatoes take about 12-15 minutes to cook on the grill, while less dense vegetables like broccoli, snap peas, summer squash, bell peppers, onions, mushrooms, and corn take just 5-7 minutes, depending on how tender you like them.



The best thing about grilled vegetables is that they are delicious! The slight charring brings out the sweetness and adds a nice smoky flavor.

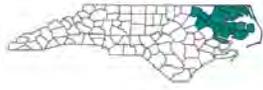
Marinades are key to delicious grilled vegetables, as they add moisture and flavor; click on the blog link for marinade recipes and tips.

Try these four different ways to grill your vegetables:

1. **Use a grill basket.** Line the basket with aluminum foil to prevent drippings from the marinade. If you do not have a grill basket, fold a 24-inch long piece of heavy-duty foil in half and fold up and crimp the edges to create a lip and prevent spilling.
2. **Make kabobs.** Cut the vegetables into thick, chunky pieces so that they stay on the skewer. Smaller vegetables like cherry tomatoes work well on kabobs. Pineapples also work well on skewers and are delicious on the grill. When grilling both meat and vegetables at the same time, make separate skewers for each, as the vegetables do not take as long to cook and will need to come off first.
3. **Wrap in a foil packet.** Use a 24-inch long piece of foil and fold in half. Open the foil and on one-half arrange thinly sliced vegetables in a single layer, slightly overlapping. Once you have assembled the vegetables, fold the foil in half over top of the vegetables. Fold over and pinch the edges of the bottom and top together to create a tight seal. Close the grill and cook until the vegetables are tender. Use caution while opening, as the steam is HOT.
4. **Put directly on the grill.** Cut into thin, long pieces so that the vegetables do not fall through the grates. Try to cut your vegetables the same size so that they will cook uniformly. Also, keeping vegetables thin will maximize the amount of surface area in contact with the heat allowing them to cook quickly and to get that crispy outside. Corn, either shucked or unshucked, cooks well on the grill. If you choose to shuck the corn, just lightly brush with some olive oil and a little salt.



Northeastern NC Partnership for Public Health



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Edgecombe · Gates · Halifax · Hertford · Hyde · Martin
Pasquotank · Perquimans · Tyrrell · Washington

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**“Healthy Communities Through
Leadership and Collaboration”**

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Calendar of Events

Aug 21	NENCPPH LHD Substance Misuse Taskforce
Aug 31	Regional Walking Challenge Registration Due
Sept 9	CHNA Fall Convening
Sept 11	PICH Tobacco-Free Living and Healthy Foods Coalition
Sept 14	Regional Walking Challenge Starts
Sept 21	NENCPPH Finance Committee Conference Call
Sept 23	NENCPPH Board Meeting
Oct 7-9	NCPHA Fall Educational Conference
Oct 16	NENCPPH Workforce Conference Planning Meeting
Oct 25	Regional Walking Challenge Ends
Nov 4	Items Due for Fall NENCPPH Newsletter

For full calendar view: <https://www.nencpph.net/calendar>

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What is the Northeastern North Carolina Partner- ship for Public Health?

The Northeastern North Carolina Partnership for Public Health (NENCPPH) is a partnership of health departments in Northeastern NC which have come together with support from the Division of Public Health, East Carolina University, and the NC Institute of Public Health at UNC Chapel Hill, to collectively address the community's health by sharing best practices and resources. Currently the NENCPPH represents seven health departments and sixteen counties.