

Spring 2020



Partnering for Health

Board of Directors' Corner: The Voices of Frontline Public Health Workers are Important - Especially Now

By: Amy Belflower Thomas, North Carolina Institute for Public Health (NCIPH) at UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health

National Public Health Week on April 6-12 passed in a bit of a blur, didn't it? In a way, it was fitting that the greatest public health challenge of our lifetimes ramped up just when we were supposed to celebrate our work. After all, public health works quietly every day and only gets notoriety in a crisis. We are all aware of the effect that loss of public health infrastructure in recent years has had on our ability to respond to COVID-19. We stepped up regardless and have done amazing things despite these challenges, but what more could we have done if we were supported appropriately? Maybe it is time that we are not so silent anymore.



The public health voice matters. We have to help the general community, but also our partners, understand what we do and how we respond to emergencies, how we work to prevent the next one, and what we do every day to protect and promote health in our communities. Doing this is not about finally "getting the credit we deserve" but rather to gain support for our work by attracting partners and building credibility in our communities. If we don't communicate how the work we do is vital to the health of our communities, who will?

Your voice matters. Conveying this message is not just the responsibility of Health Directors and state leaders. Frontline public health workers have unique perspectives and experiences to share that traditional leaders can't do as powerfully and fully. Don't be humble or shy. Although you are busy during this pandemic, telling *your* story and *public health's* story can be tremendously powerful. Moreover, frontline, local stories are what impact policy makers.

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Voices of Frontline Public Health *(continued from p. 1)*

So, **how can you share your story?** The de Beaumont Foundation has started the #WhyPublicHealthMatters campaign (<https://whypublichealthmatters.org>). It encourages public health professionals to record 60 second videos about what people should know about the public health response to COVID-19. I was hesitant to record a story. I thought, "I am not a high-level leader... they don't want to hear from me." But, in giving it more thought, this initiative DOES need to hear from ALL levels and types of public health professionals. And they need to hear what it is like in Northeastern NC!

At NCIPH, we are starting a storytelling initiative to amplify the professional and personal experiences of frontline public health and healthcare workers. By the end of June, we hope to stand up an ESRI StoryMap that will embed stories (narrative, but also photos and videos) alongside the spatial and temporal progression of the COVID-19 pandemic across NC to show a compelling visualization of the true impact behind the numbers. We hope to begin collecting experiences by mid-May and ask participants to complete a short Qualtrics survey every two weeks throughout the coming months so we can show how experiences are changing through time. We'll share the survey with NENCPPH when it's ready, and we hope many of you will participate!

I can't tell you how amazed I am to hear about what local public health is doing in Northeastern NC. Note that I didn't say surprised – because I am not. I know that this is simply "what we do." But, know that the work you do is truly appreciated and acknowledged – by many, but not all. So, please tell those stories to let **everyone** know about the important work you are doing – today and every day!

Preventing Tobacco Exposure at Home During COVID-19 Epidemic

Social Media Message Created by Teresa Beardsley



HOME

PREVENTING TOBACCO EXPOSURE DURING STAY AT HOME ORDER

Tobacco smoke and e-cigarette vapor can be very harmful to the developing lungs of children. Second-hand and third-hand smoke can cause more ear infections, respiratory infections, increased risk for asthma and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

Many families are staying home together, more, during COVID-19 and the stay at home order.

Steps to take to protect your children:

1. Keep a 100% smoke/vape free home
2. If someone smokes outside, wash hands and change clothes when back in the home
3. There should be no smoking in multi-unit housing areas. Contact management to enforce this rule if smoking persists in the building.
4. Try to Quit.

For FREE Help: 1-800-QUIT-NOW

ALBEMARLE REGIONAL HEALTH SERVICES
Partners in Public Health

Beaufort County Syringe Exchange: Window Cling Campaign

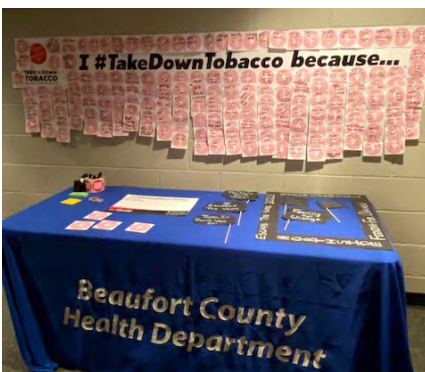
Submitted by Taylor Davenport, Beaufort County Health Department

During the BC360 Behavioral Health Task Force January meeting, members discussed ideas in which the task force could support the county's syringe exchange program through program marketing. Window decals were purchased as a way to promote the program in a discrete way (see sample at right). Businesses that are an exchange location (or support harm reduction/mental health/treatment etc.) can display the window decals for participants, or people who are interested in the program, to know that it's a friendly and non-judgmental place if they want to know more information. The QR Code on the window clings will link to the BCData360 website where people can get more information online about behavioral health services. If a person prefers calling someone for additional information, the phone number included is a direct line to Taylor Davenport, the Substance Misuse Public Health Education Specialist at Beaufort County Health Department. In addition to the window clings, businesses and organizations will be given a one-pager so that everyone will be delivering the same messages. The one-pager includes information on what a syringe exchange is, services our exchange offers, hours and locations, information about BCHD HIV/HepC testing, facts on SEPs in general, and frequently asked questions.



The Vape Event at Northside High School

Submitted by Taylor Davenport, Beaufort County Health Department



In honor of National Take Down Tobacco Day, Northside High School in Beaufort County held an Escape the Vape event on March 12th. Students participated in games and activities that educated them on the dangers of vaping and using other tobacco products. Students also rotated through different classrooms in which skits were acted out by their peers. These skits took them through a journey of how a teenager became addicted to vaping and ended up dying as a result of lung injury. After the students were finished watching the skits, they were encouraged to pledge against using tobacco products and/or state why they

choose to #TakeDownTobacco (see photo above).

The hospital photo to the right is from one of the "skits" or "scenes" that the students acted out showing how dangerous vaping can be. In that particular scene, a teenager had been hospitalized due to lung injury associated with vaping and he was coding so the nurses were trying to give him CPR.



Crumbs and Chaos!

Submitted by Jessica Johnson, Minority Diabetes Prevention Program Coordinator, MTW District Health

During the pandemic, life has changed drastically for all of us. Some are coping better than others managing work situations, home school, limited interactions, and decreased outings. Many of us in public health that focus on community outreach are struggling with ways to social distance while still promoting health and wellness. The Minority Diabetes Prevention Program is no different. We have transitioned our diabetes prevention classes to tele-conference mode and ceased interaction with our participants and community members.

To maintain some essence of a community presence in challenging times, we have teamed up with "The Friendly Spot" in Jamesville, NC to record and post on social media a series of cooking demos entitled: Crumbs and Chaos! "The Friendly Spot" normally serves as a local food bank, library, and gathering spot for the Jamesville community. The volunteers have been kind enough to share their cozy space with us during this time since it is an ideal set-up for



Crumbs and Chaos episode 2

MTW District Health



Martin-Tyrrell-Washington District Health

Promoting Healthier Lifestyles Through Personal and Environmental Health Services

filming cooking segments.

These videos offer new recipes and nutritional information that our viewers may find useful. We hope our audience finds them informative and entertaining, as we are not professionals. We began recording and posting meal ideas the week of April 19, and will continue to post one each week during the self-isolation period. Check out episodes of Crumbs and Chaos on the MTW Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/MTWHealth/>

MTW Prepares Community Garden for Another Season

Submitted by Charisse Costin

Health Director for Martin-Tyrrell-Washington District Health (MTW) - Wes Gray and Health Educator - Charisse Costin were among the MTW staff pulling out rakes and hoes to clear out the winter weeds to get the MTW community garden ready for planting. The community garden at the Plymouth health department was a beautiful and successful garden last year which yielded a variety of vegetables including tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, corn, brussel sprouts, swiss chard, cucumbers, lettuce, and squash. Soon the garden will once again be flourishing with tasty nutritious fresh vegetables.



Pictured Above are Wes Gray and Charisse Costin cleaning out the winter weeds to return the garden to 2019 state.



Pictured at left: and right: MTW's 2019 Community Garden



MTW To Launch Syringe Exchange in Martin County

Submitted by Kirsten Smith Beasley

Martin-Tyrrell-Washington District Health (MTW) is tentatively planning on launching their syringe exchange for Martin County in July, as long as it complies with the phase of reopening for the State for community outreach. They also plan to schedule a lunch-n-learn with the local Sheriff's Office and Police Department to educate and answer any questions/concerns about the syringe exchange program, protocols and laws.



Healthy Food Deliveries during the Coronavirus Pandemic

Contributed by Mary Jane Lyonnais

As unemployment in North Carolina grows, so does the need for emergency food. Not only is there a need for food but there is a need for fresh and healthy food. Many agencies and organizations in our region have demonstrated this importance. The Food Bank of the Albemarle has increased its fresh produce supply to pantries, farmers markets are offering double incentives for SNAP recipients, school systems are feeding children while providing seeds/soil for families, and community organizations are working with local farmers to fill boxes to deliver to the elderly and individuals with underlying health conditions. In Edgecombe County a partnership has formed to fill this need for fresh, healthy food and renew hope.

Ripple Effects is a Non-Profit working with the Conetoe Family Life Center to deliver fresh food boxes to the elderly and disabled in their community. Before the pandemic began, Ripple Effects was serving 15 elderly residents who were food insecure, now that number has risen to over 150 residents. As Keisha Spivey, executive director for Ripple Effects, puts it, "When one [of our clients] told me that our food was the only food that she had, I knew this was what we needed to be doing." Conetoe Family Life Center donates much of their harvest from their community farm to fill Ripple Effects' boxes. The Non-Profit's volunteers assist with the harvest in the hopes that the food will contribute to the health and quality of life of their community during this crisis.



Pictured above: Keisha Spivey, Executive Director of Ripple Effects, and staff in front of Ripple Effects Bus



Pictured above: Ripple Effects volunteers helping Reverend Joyner at the Conetoe Family Life Center

Eat Where You Live, Work, and Play!

Submitted by Wanda Stallings and Mary Jane Lyonnais

Edible Landscaping is a type of landscaping in which a property is used to grow healthy food such as berries or other vegetable plants. Partnerships to Improve Community Health (PICH) and Three Rivers Healthy Carolinians have been at the forefront of edible landscaping in Bertie and Chowan counties. The idea came from a PICH Healthy Communities meeting at the Bertie County Health Department in an otherwise unused area beside the parking lot. Bertie County Extension agent, Jarette Hurry, helped staff at the plant and the staff has taken care of the bushes. Planting will provide both patients and staff with a way to make healthy eating both

The initiative is now being expanded by Three Rivers Healthy Carolinians, funded from the Vision and led by Wanda Stallings, to plant blueberry and blackberry bushes at organizations and

out Bertie and Chowan counties! Blueberry bushes will be planted at The Good Shepherd Food Pantry of Bertie County, Bertie Department of Social Services, Bertie Middle School and the Bertie County Early College. The Chowan Department of Social Services, White Oak Elementary, and the Chowan Health Department are among some of the sites for Chowan County planting. This initiative is fun and easy for anyone to implement in their own communities. If you would like more information about edible landscaping or how we got started, contact Mary Jane Lyonnais at Maryjane.lyonnais@arhs-nc.org or Wanda Stallings at wanda.stallings@arhs-nc.org.



Pictured above from left to right are those who planted blueberry bushes at the Bertie County Health Department: Julie Tunney, Mary Jane Lyonnais, Kia Boone, Adria Bell (Intern from NC Central), and Jarette Hurry (photo taken by Wanda Stallings).

working together to initiate throughout Bertie and Chowan counties. The initiative started from an idea at a PICH Healthy Communities meeting to use an otherwise unused area beside the Bertie County Cooperative Extension, helped staff at the plant and the staff has taken care of the bushes. Planting will provide both patients and staff with a way to make healthy eating both

being expanded by Three Rivers Healthy Carolinians, funded from the Vision and led by Wanda Stallings and blackberry bushes in community areas through-

Pictured at right (from left to right) are Three Rivers Healthy Carolinians members Mary Morris, Jami Williams, Wanda Stallings, and Liz Baker planting blueberry bushes at White Oak Elementary School in Chowan County.



We Are The Champions Conference Postponed - But It Will Be Rescheduled



Due to the pressing needs of local public health staff during the COVID-19 pandemic, we have had to postpone the “We Are the Champions! Moving Public Health Forward TOGETHER” Conference. Stay tune for the rescheduling of the “We Are The Champions! Moving Public Health Forward TOGETHER” Conference.



Promoting Child Passenger Safety in Hertford County

Submitted By: Shayla Hayes, Albemarle Regional Health Services

Rest assured that many Hertford County children have been traveling safely and in style! Hertford County Health Department staff members have been busy installing car seats and educating parents about the importance of child passenger safety. Motor vehicle injuries are a leading cause of death among children in the United States. However, many of these deaths can be prevented through the proper use of child restraints. Car Seat distribution programs help parents and caregivers get access to car seats and allow the opportunity to promote their use while teaching how to properly use and install them. Since February 2020, a total of 30 car seats have been distributed to families in need. In addition to receiving car seats, families received education about how to properly secure their children in a car seat that best fits their needs and hot car safety. ARHS has three certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians on staff who are available to assist families with child passenger safety installs, checks, and education. Due to the current pandemic, car seat distribution has been put on hold to comply with social distancing guidelines. Car Seat distribution was made possible through a Roanoke-Ch



Dare County Commissioners Approve Take Down Tobacco Day

Submitted by Rebecca Woods, Dare County Department of Health and Human Services

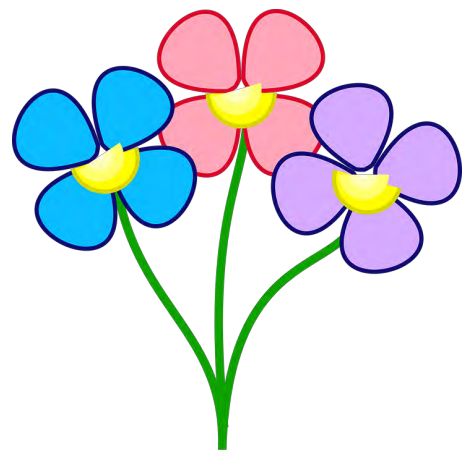
On March 2, 2020 the Peer Power Health Educators from all three Dare County high schools partnered with the Health Education and Outreach staff from Dare County DHHS to present at the Dare County Board of Commissioners (BOC) meeting. The Peer Power Health Educators discussed their initiatives to tackle teen tobacco use and requested the commissioners proclaim March 18, 2020 as "Take Down Tobacco Day". The BOC praised the Peer Power Health Educators for their efforts and unanimously approved the proclamation.

Peer Power is a high school elective course where students are trained as health educators to positively influence elementary and middle schools student's health behaviors. The course is taught by Dare County Department of Health and Human Services Health Education Specialists. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Peer Power Students are continuing the class via an online learning platform.



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Thanks to All Nurses and Public Health Workers!



Chicken and Cheese Quesadillas

Ingredients

- 1 Chicken breast, cooked and chopped (or approximately 1 cup)
- ¼ cup onion, Diced
- 1 Bell pepper, Diced
- 4 Whole wheat tortillas
- 1 cup shredded cheese (Monterey Jack, Pepper Jack, or cheddar)
- ½ Tablespoon Olive Oil (additional olive oil or cooking spray may be needed to lightly grease pan prior to browning tortillas)

Instructions

- Warm the olive oil in a large frying pan and saute the onion and peppers over medium-high heat, transfer to a bowl and set aside
- Return the frying pan to the stove. Place one of the tortillas in the pan.
- Add a ¼ cup of cheese, chicken and some veggies onto tortilla. Place another tortilla on top
- Cook the quesadilla for 2-3 minutes, until the bottom of the tortilla has a nice golden brown crust.
- Flip the quesadilla over and cook an additional 2-3 minutes.
- Remove from the pan, cut pizza style.
- Serve with guacamole, salsa, refried beans, corn, or salad.



Note: This recipe can be adjusted to your taste: try adding hot peppers or other veggies, or leave the onions out, for example.

How to Snack Smart While Working from Home

Posted on April 14, 2020 by Catherine Hill, RD, LDN



Catherine Hill shares on the Eat Smart Move More Weigh Less Online Blog her own struggles and provides some useful tips on how to avoid snacking just to snack when not hungry. Her tips include using a hunger scale to determine if you're actually hungry, or just eating to eat, space meals and snacks out, measure out your snack and stop snacking when the measured amount is gone, and combine food groups to make up your

snack. Preferably start with some vegetables and then add some protein and fruit or other whole-grain carbohydrate. Click on this link to see more details. Happy healthy snacking! <https://esmmweighless.com/how-to-snack-smart-while-working-from-home/>. Happy healthy snacking!



Northeastern NC Partnership for Public Health



Bertie · Beaufort · Camden · Chowan · Currituck · Dare
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**“Healthy Communities Through
Leadership and Collaboration”**

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Calendar of Events

May 8	PICH Tobacco-Free Living and Healthy Foods Coalition Virtual Meetings
June 24-26	EDNCPHA Spring Conference, Kill Devil Hills
June 30	NENCPPH LHD Substance Misuse Forum
July 6	NENCPPH Finance Committee Conference Call
July 8	NENCPPH Board Meeting
Aug 4	Items Due for Spring NENCPPH Newsletter

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

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Amy Belflower Thomas
NCIPH at Gillings Global School of Public Health,
UNC at Chapel Hill

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.