



# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

Chautauqua County Department  
of Health and Human Services

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# CONTENTS

A Message from the Director . . . . . 2

Organizational Wheel . . . . . 3

At A Glance . . . . . 4-5

Employee Recognition . . . . . 6-7

Administrative Services . . . . . 8

Human/Social Services . . . . . 9-29

    Temporary Assistance . . . . . 9-11

    Medicaid . . . . . 12-15

    Adult, Children & Family Services . 16-22

    Legal Division . . . . . 23-24

Public Health Division . . . . . 25-43

    Board of Health . . . . . 25

    COVID-19 Pandemic . . . . . 26-29

    Coroner Program . . . . . 30

    Environmental Health . . . . . 31-36

    Children & Youth with Special  
    Health Care Needs . . . . . 37

    Nursing /Community Health. . . . . 38-39

    Maternal & Infant Health . . . . . 40

    Community Health Education &  
    Planning . . . . . 41-43



Cover Photo:  
Lennon Faulk, age 5 of Bemus Point  
received her COVID-19 vaccine in 2021

## A MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR, CHRISTINE SCHUYLER



On behalf of the dedicated management and staff of the Chautauqua County Department of Health and Human Services, I am pleased to present to you our 2021 Annual Report. This report provides an overview of the meaningful work and services that we provide to our residents and our community.

2021 was another unprecedented year for this public health and social services agency as we strove to manage the unpredictable nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on Chautauqua County. The efforts of our staff, community, schools, business partners, and County leadership proved to be relentless. This was our second year with a full-fledged pandemic response, but we were able to adjust and maintain other agency services to assure that the public received critical services. Our staff proved to be flexible, innovative and resilient in the face of ever-changing federal and state guidance and regulations while continuing to serve the public to the best of their ability.

Public Health staff has persevered to educate, engage, test and vaccinate residents in mitigation efforts to reduce the burden of COVID-19, while enduring the brunt of some very challenging situations. I could not be more proud of their professionalism, dedication, compassion, and work ethic. A balanced approach was necessary to navigate the ever-changing federal and state guidance while lessening the burden of illness in our community. Staff worked very closely with our health care facilities and providers, school districts, colleges and universities, businesses, community organizations, and faith-based communities to offer guidance, advice, and resources to mitigate the spread of an infectious disease and safely continue operations. This report can never capture the full efforts and humanity of this local health department in 2021, but I hope it shows how we continually adapted and did our best to address the public health needs of our citizens while managing pandemic response efforts.

During these most uncertain of times, social services staff demonstrated exceptional resiliency and continued to find resourceful ways to serve the public. This year's report demonstrates their ongoing commitment and strong record of investment in the support of our most vulnerable. Economic services staff had to quickly modify work processes to ensure federal and state COVID-19 waivers were followed. Child welfare and adult protection staff witnessed the widespread impacts of the pandemic on children, adults and families in our community. The reports of suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation decreased during the height of the pandemic but quickly returned to prepandemic levels. The challenges of persistent poverty, homelessness, alcohol and substance misuse, mental illness, domestic violence and social isolation are true community issues but ones that we are working on collaboratively with public and private partners.

As a Department, we are proud to serve the residents and visitors of Chautauqua County. We are thankful for each other and our community partners that assist us every day in our work. We are appreciative of county leadership that continues to support our mission.

As Director, I am thankful for my staff who prove to me every day that they are here to serve the public and our community, and support each other. I am constantly impressed by them, their remarkable passion and their knowledge and skills. I have always felt it an honor and privilege to serve as your Public Health Director and Social Services Commissioner but I feel an even greater sense of appreciation after navigating the last two years with you and witnessing the resilient spirit that makes Chautauqua County strong.

Sincerely,

  
Christine Schuyler, BSN, RN, MHA  
Director



# Who We Are

The Chautauqua County Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is a community of public health and social services professionals. In collaboration with our partners, we protect and promote the health, safety, and self-reliance of all those in Chautauqua County through the prevention of disease, proliferation of meaningful life, protection of the environment, provision of essential human services, and provision of leadership in public health and social crises.

Our divisions include Administrative Services, Adult Children & Family Services, Legal, Medical Assistance and Services, Temporary Assistance, Public Health and Youth Bureau.

## OUR MISSION

The Chautauqua County Department of Health and Human Services is dedicated to building a healthy, safe and strong community. We protect and promote the health of all County residents and provide essential human services, especially for those who are least able to help themselves.

## VALUES/PRINCIPLES

- We believe in improving the health and quality of life of our community through the prevention and treatment of disease and other physical, mental health and social conditions.
- We believe that families should be protected from violence and gain support for their efforts to be self-sufficient.
- We value work as a foundation of independence, a means to connect with others and a tool for personal growth and family preservation.
- We believe in measuring our work by the difference it makes for clients and community. We strive to continually improve so that our interactions with clients and the community are efficient, focused, and understandable.
- We value our commitments to others: urgency with the time and lives of clients; thoughtful investment of support from the community; careful consideration for the ideas and efforts of partners.
- We value relationships—with clients, colleagues, and the community—as gifts to be nurtured. We invest in those relationships with honesty and respect. It is through the diversity of our relationships that we make change and are changed.

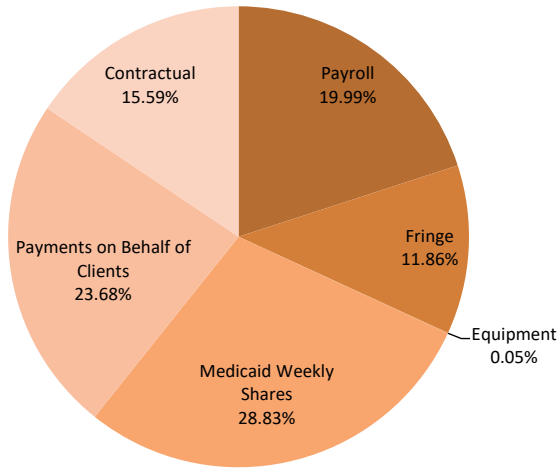
# Organizational Wheel



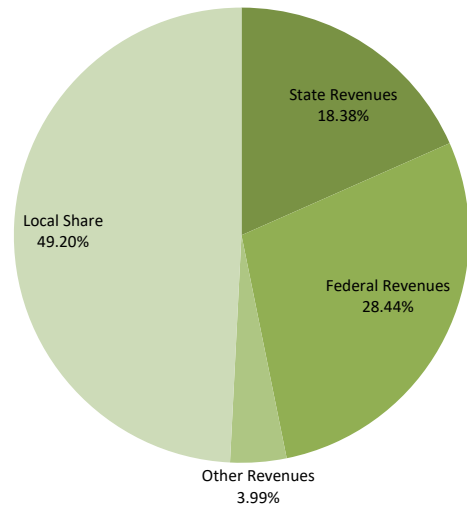
# At a Glance

2021 Budget Expenditures totaled \$ 87,853,436. The charts below reference percentages for expenditures and funding.

## 2021 HHS Expenditures by Type



## 2021 HHS Funding by Source



## Program Activities & Caseload Summary

### CASELOAD REPORT Caseload on December 31st

	2020	2021
Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF)	1,587	1,436
Medicaid (MA)	9,167	8,833
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	11,271	11,109
Adult Protective Services Cases (APS)	370	425
Children in Foster Care	97	87
Children in Day Care	949	632

### PROGRAM ACTIVITIES Cumulative for year

	2020	2021
Abuse/Neglect Reports Resulting in Investigations	2,274	2,378
TA & SNAP Applications Received	14,574	11,642
Managed Care Enrollment	30,096	31,765
Sanctions	130	172

## Social Services Client Expenditures by Program

PROGRAMS	2020	%	2021	%
Medical Assistance	28,015,430	55.5	25,327,942	55.1
TANF	6,047,152	12.0	5,836,255	12.7
Safety Net	6,023,488	11.9	5,325,514	11.6
Day Care	3,299,807	6.5	2,854,492	6.2
Foster Care/Institutional	5,584,870	11.1	5,704,559	12.4
Juvenile Delinquent Care and State Training School	1,249,566	2.5	582,241	1.3
Emergency Aid for Adults	63,774	0.1	33,854	0.1
Other	199,109	0.4	337,053	0.7
<b>TOTAL Expenditures</b>	<b>50,483,196</b>		<b>46,001,910</b>	

## Health Revenues

PROGRAMS	2020	%	2021	%
Preschool Special Education	3,976,378	54.2	4,038,924	45.4
State/Federal Grants	1,397,520	19.1	2,483,360	27.9
State Aid	1,055,390	14.4	1,438,533	16.2
Fees for Service	440,069	6.0	413,341	4.6
Early Intervention	396,794	5.4	497,354	5.6
Other	67,459	0.9	18,530	0.2
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>7,333,610</b>		<b>8,890,041</b>	

# The COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic introduced unprecedented challenges that impacted Chautauqua County residents in a number of ways. As Chautauqua County, and the world, work to recover and rebuild, HHS has re-tooled the ways it provides critical safety net programs. With the waiver of in-person visits for some of our programs, HHS has reimagined various ways to maintain connections with our vulnerable clients to ensure their overall health and well-being, help assess any immediate unmet needs and address those needs with linkages to county and community-based services, as well as coordinate deliveries of essential food and supplies.

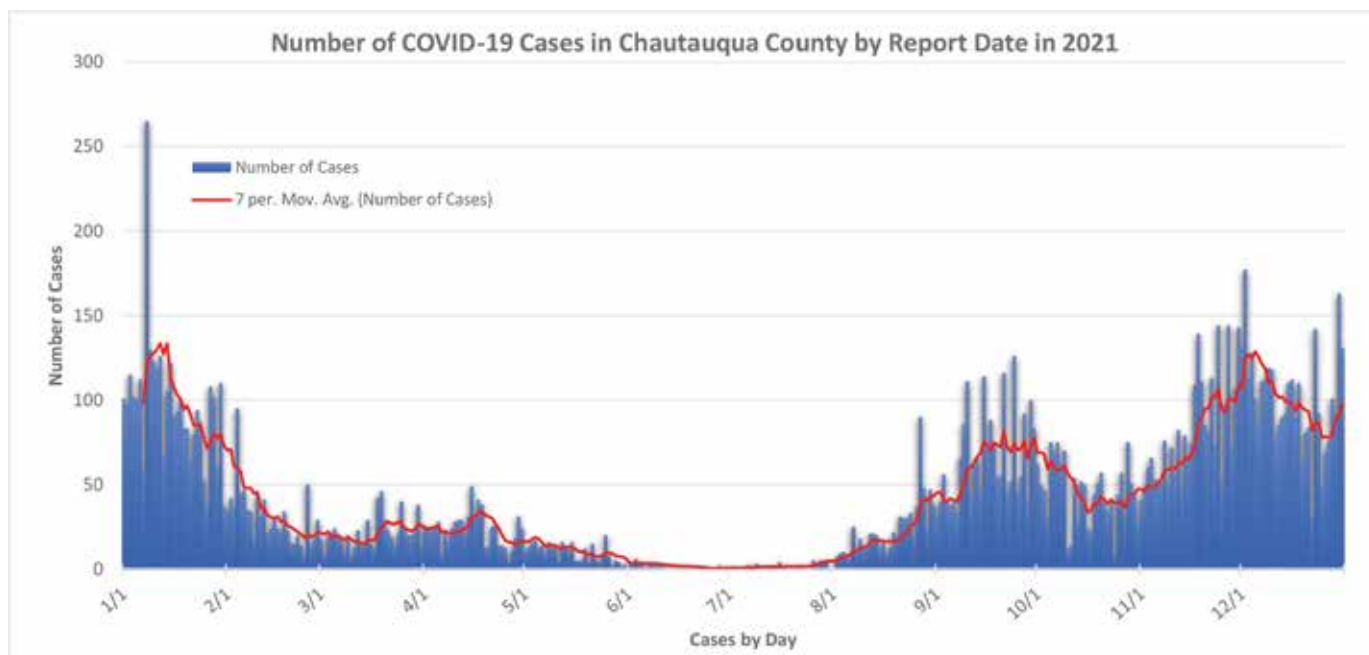
Since the start of the pandemic, many changes have been made to how the Human Services Division operates. There is now a way to electronically submit applications and required paperwork; in-person interviewing was suspended for some programming and time limits for some programs was suspended. In-person contact was reduced by nearly 50% as a result of these changes.

To assist with the many COVID-19 efforts the Public Health Division was tasked with, staff were pulled from other departments, several retired county workers returned, and additional temporary staff were hired. Staff from Environmental Health, Early Intervention, and Health Education/Planning were reassigned to the Nursing Unit as needed to conduct disease investigations or contact tracing, make monitoring calls, or work at testing and vaccination clinics. All Environmental Health staff responded to COVID-related complaints. This division worked every single day in 2021, including weekends and holidays. The Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator committed the entire year to COVID response. A team effort was needed to pull off the monumental task of responding to the pandemic, and our staff responded with unprecedented support and sense of duty.



In 2021 the HHS Public Health Division held 173 COVID-19 vaccine clinics administering more than 40,000 COVID-19 vaccine doses. Clinics were held at various locations throughout the County. The largest clinic was held at SUNY Fredonia where 2,100 vaccines were administered at a single event. We provided first and second dose clinics to 16 schools and 4 BOCES locations. Additionally, the Department administered vaccine to homebound residents, the county jail, homeless shelters and soup kitchens, senior housing complexes and day centers, as well as centers for persons with developmental disabilities.

In 2021 our Department conducted 2,015 COVID-19 tests directly. We provided supplies for school nurses to administer tests on-site, and reported 907 test results on their behalf. We provided testing resources for schools to collect and submit 6,664 pool-testing specimens. In total, we conducted or partnered to complete 9,586 COVID-19 tests.



# EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION



## The Employee Recognition and Appreciation Program

Here at HHS, we value and appreciate our employees and want to make sure that they are being recognized for their efforts. The Employee Recognition and Appreciation Program is designed to do just that! This self-funded program provides structured, creative and genuine recognition to help our staff feel valued, to enhance good employee relations, to raise morale for all employees in the agency, and improve agency operations overall. The goal is to engage, align, and recognize our employees to inspire success. Various efforts highlight those who go above and beyond the call of duty, encourage and recognize team work, and provide motivational messages with opportunities for engagement. Staff and supervisors are encouraged to nominate employees for recognition based on criteria that demonstrate excellence. Communications highlight new employees, years of service, retirements and more. The ERA Program also sponsors fun, health and self-care focused initiatives throughout the year like, Capture the County Photo Contest, World Walking Challenge, and the 'Almost High Five' contest. A monthly 'Good Newsletter' with inspirations and encouragement is sent by email. Various display boards are provided throughout the department to share the recognition and appreciation messages and expand the reach of the program.

## Employee of the Month Program

The HHS Employee of the Month program recognizes employees who demonstrate outstanding dedication to attaining our mission and goals or service to the community while focusing on our values. This award recognizes an employee who goes beyond the call of duty, understands their role in the agency, treats individuals with respect, values diversity, shares credit for success, demonstrates positive work habits, encourages high standards and displays a positive attitude. It is a method to offer Supervisors and Directors the opportunity to reward someone believed to be worthy to receive the distinction of Employee of the Month. The 2021 Employee of the Month recipients are Cindy Cook, Nicole Kimball, Lynn Schaffer, and Joanne Tofil.



Cindy Cook



Joanne Tofil



Nicole Kimball

## Rock Stars

Employee of the Month Runners-Up DESERVE TO BE RECOGNIZED! These awesome individuals are awarded with Rock Star recognition. Each recipient receives a Rock Star certificate and pin.

Other exceptional employees can be awarded Rock Star recognition through nomination by Supervisors and Director, too. 2021 Rock Star recipients are Megan Bak, Sarah Black, Steve Hansen, Amy Josephson, Christina Lawson, Dianna Monn, Gladys Rivera, and Vicki Seiberg.

## Special Recognition

The Special Recognition component is designed to give Directors and Supervisors additional options to recognize multiple individuals or unit(s). This year Special Recognition Awards were given to the Fiscal Unit Payroll Team, Environmental Health Division, Adult Protective Services Unit, and the SNAP Unit.

## High Five Program

The HHS High Five Program is an employee recognition program designed to allow all HHS employees the opportunity to shine a light on a deserving co-worker. Great things are happening at HHS every day, and we are celebrating those who go out of their way to make a difference! Nominees demonstrate outstanding work in customer service, innovative ideas, positive attitude, encouragement or team spirit. Each month, all employees who received High Five recognition during that month will be entered into a drawing to win a high five gift and gift certificate! 2021 High Five recipients are Kim Alguire, Judith Anderson, Melissa Barnes, Daisy Berrios, Gavin Bishop, Anna Brosius, Alysson Carson, Danielle Colburn, Cindy Cook, Oscar Cordero, Justin Corey, Morgan Cornell, Jim Curtin, Samantha Dorler, Penny Erb, Jaimie Ericson, Kristen Ernewein, Jenny Ewing, Justina Farley, Anne Frankson, Christine Galbraith, Kim Gates, Daisy Gonzalez, Jennifer Graham, Tina Gross, Laurel Gugino, Katherine Hamernik, Steve Hansen, Shirley Hedlund, Amy Heglund, Carla Houle, Jennifer Johnson, Joelanis Kercado-Martes, Sue Kestler, Trish Kleinfelder, Brenda Lemke, Sheryl Ludemann, Tammy Luke, Destini Malta, Laurel McKotch, Melvin McLaughlin, Anita Morales, Roy Newman, Christine Perez, Brandi Perkins, Varsi Peterson, Nancy Pfeiffer, Christine Potts, Gregory Powell, Karen Putnam, Shalimar Ramos, James Rasmussen, Rosita Rivera, Marissa Santiago, Casey Schroder, Sharon Schwertfager, Melissa Senear, Michelle Shoemaker, Lori Skellie, Jennifer Smith, Tammy Spontarelli, Alaska Sprague, Michele Steward, Mark Stow, Julee Streck, Travis Stursa, Julie Swanson, Nichole Swanson, Chels Sweeney, Joanna Teeter, Shania Trippy, Candy Westerlund, Natalie Whiteman and Hannah Yezzi.





**ERA AND EMPLOYEE FUN!**

One of the ERA Program’s goals is to make HHS a fun place to be. This starts with happy employees! Being recognized and feeling appreciated can have a significant impact on an employee’s outlook, happiness and performance. Employees who don’t feel recognized are more likely to leave an organization than those who do feel recognized for their work and accomplishments.

The ERA Program hosted events, contests and interactive experiences like raffles, photo contests, celebratory events and provided some recognition prizes along the way. All of the funds used for the program are generated through raffles and no county dollars are used for any gifts or prizes awarded to staff.

Since we have a staff of nearly 400, we encourage divisions to engage their staff by offering more grass roots opportunities to keep staff involved. Some of those programs are the TA/MA Otter to Ducky Group, the HRC Fun Committee and the SCOB Stressbusters.

Chautauqua County Government participated once again in the Battle of the Businesses. This is a team effort where all county employees are encouraged to participate. Several members of HHS showed up with their team spirit representing in softball, volleyball, 2 mile walk/run, golf, predicted mile, curling, bowling, scavenger hunt, miniature golf, bike relay, corn hole, pickleball, talent show and even cake decorating!



Holiday Basket Raffle



Winners of Virtual High Five Contest



## Employee Generosity

**Preventive Angels**

During the Holiday season, Department staff purchases Christmas gifts for nearly 100 children we provide services to. This is a long standing program that we are proud to be a part of.

**United Way**

Department employees pledged to give more than \$5,000 to the United Way in 2021. Every dollar donated to the United Way stays in Chautauqua County assisting residents through over 35 community partners, offering services like day care, tutoring, mentorship, trauma counseling, afterschool care and many others.

**OFA Gift Baskets**

Our staff helps the Office for the Aging by donating items for their Santa for Seniors Christmas Bags each year (right).



# ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

The Administrative Services Division is responsible for the supervision and coordination of the fiscal and operating functions that support the operation of HHS.

## Fiscal

Fiscal responsibilities include issuing benefits to eligible social services clients; auditing and processing administrative invoices and employee travel reimbursements; representative payee accounting for clients; processing employee payroll; processing cash receipts; managing credit cards; preparing contracts; tracking vendor insurance certificate renewals; preparing and filing reports and claims for reimbursement; assisting with grant application processing; preparing bank reconciliations; originating purchase orders; dealing with various audits and process reviews; budgeting and managing that budget; and preparing resolutions.

	2020	2021
Checks issued to social services clients	11,093	10,499
Electronic benefits issued to social services clients	42,359	40,451
Bills paid for representative payee clients	16,829	15,754
Open contracts	325	384



## Personnel

Personnel has the responsibility of coordinating and completing all personnel related functions for the department. This includes coordination with supervisors and staff during the new hire process, evaluations, promotions, leaves of absences, intradepartmental moves and separation process. Personnel coordinates Civil Service regulations and procedures and acts as a liaison to Chautauqua County Human Resources Department.

	2020	2021
Number of employees	395	387
Position change requests processed	78	162



## Staff Development

The HHS Staff Development Unit is operated by a two-person team, in partnership with Jamestown Community College, who perform a wide variety of tasks designed to strengthen the department's ability to function effectively in a rapidly changing, resource lean operating environment while maintaining a focus on the training needs of the front line staff. Special emphasis includes assessing training needs, creating and maintaining an environment in which staff have timely access to information and training resources to advance their success and ensure greater attention to agency performance outcomes and promoting life-long learning and continuing education opportunities.



Hours of Training	2020*	2021*
Local	4,111	4,588
State	3,710	4,741
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,821</b>	<b>9,329</b>
Employees in Degree Programs	4	4

*\*Due to COVID-19 and ongoing guidelines for the health and safety of HHS employees, trainings continued to be prioritized both locally and at the State level for modification to virtual formats in a variety of platforms. Ongoing throughout 2021, additional State trainings were updated to the virtual format to accommodate necessary training for specific units and job titles/roles.*



# HUMAN/SOCIAL SERVICES

Human/Social Services Division encompasses Temporary Assistance, Medicaid, Adult, Children and Family Services and Legal with over 300 staff members to accommodate the needs of Chautauqua County residents.



Jon Anderson  
Deputy Commissioner of  
Social Services

## Temporary Assistance Division

The Temporary Assistance (TA) Division is responsible for the administration of Temporary Assistance, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as Food Stamps), Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), Employment and Child Care programs.

The goals for each of these units are as follows:

- Assist clients in achieving self-sufficiency;
- Provide accessible and timely services to applicants and recipients; and
- Provide a high level of customer service.

### Temporary Assistance

Temporary Assistance is the program that provides cash assistance to eligible recipients. Recipients receive a cash benefit either paid to them or directly to a vendor, such as a landlord or utility company. The cash grant is based on their household composition, shelter and heating type. Income received by the household may affect the amount of the grant. Resources are also reviewed in determining eligibility for Temporary Assistance.



Temporary Assistance Supervisory Staff:  
Diane Anderson (middle) – Director of Certification  
Malinda Stoller (left) Jennifer Mikula (right)  
Principal Social Welfare Examiners

<b>Applications</b> <i>Family Assistance, Safety Net and Emergency Assistance</i>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Received	5,414	5,289
Approved	1,329	1,506
Denied/Withdrawn	2,790	2,742
Open/Closed	1,285	1,643

Dunkirk Assistance Staff  
Emergency Assistance, Eligibility, TA, MA, HEAP, Child Support



### Temporary Assistance Caseload (as of 12/31)

<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
1,587	1,436

## Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

SNAP (formerly known as Food Stamps) is a federally funded program administered by the Department of Health & Human Services for the United States Department of Agriculture. The goal of the program is to provide a higher level of nutrition to income eligible individuals and families by enhancing their ability to purchase food. Eligibility for the program is determined by financial criteria.

<b>SNAP Caseload</b> (as of 12/31)	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Temporary Assistance SNAP	405	380
SNAP Only (Non TA Households)	10,866	11,109
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>11,271</b>	<b>11,489</b>

<b>SNAP Applications</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Received	7,568	6,353
Approved	2,909	5,388



SNAP Unit

### Expedited SNAP

All SNAP applications must be screened in order to determine those households that qualify for expedited SNAP benefits. This includes, for example, individuals who have terminated income, or pending income. Identification is required of all applicants. Any income received within the month of application, together with liquid resources, is budgeted against amounts to determine eligibility. Interviews are conducted on an immediate basis so those eligible households may receive their SNAP benefit within 5 calendar days.

## Employment Unit

The employment unit consists of 13 Case Managers, 2 Clerical staff and 2 Senior Social Welfare Examiners. The unit offers a variety of programs and services to Temporary Assistance recipients to help them gain and retain employment and become self-sufficient.

The programs and services include employability assessment and planning, job readiness training, work experience and job search. Other activities include the Transitional Employment Advancement Program (TEAP) and On-The-Job Training programs.

	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Non-Compliant Sanctions	130	172



Employment Unit

## Fair Hearings

Fair Hearings is the process applicants and recipients have to review Agency decisions made on their application or active case. The Fair Hearing Representative is responsible to represent the Agency in this process.

<b>Fair Hearings Activity</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Hearings Requested	208	137
Held	23	16
Affirmed	14	12
Reversed	9	4
Withdrawn	114	95
Defaults	49	26



### Child Care

The Child Care Unit provides child care subsidy to recipients of Temporary Assistance who are participating in employment activities (subsidized employment, unsubsidized employment, work experience, job search, education, training, etc.). Child care subsidy is also provided to recipients of Child Protective Services or Preventive Services. Low income working families and recipients who are transitioning from Temporary Assistance to employment may also qualify for a child care subsidy. These benefits are provided to assist families in obtaining and maintaining employment and self-sufficiency.

	2020	2021
Families Receiving Child Care Services <i>(average per month)</i>	509	453
Children Receiving Child Care Services <i>(average per month)</i>	716	651

### Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

HEAP provides energy assistance to low income households through payments to their fuel and/or utility suppliers. The program also provides emergency assistance for repair or replacement of essential heating equipment and in fuel emergency situations.

The Chautauqua County Department of Health & Human Services HEAP unit is responsible for the processing of all HEAP applications for those households who do not receive Temporary Assistance or SNAP.

The 2017 – 2018 administrative allocation for Chautauqua County totaled \$333,681. Payments authorized by the County are sent directly from Albany to the vendors. The allocation is for administrative costs only. HEAP is 100% federally funded.

	2019-2020	2020-2021
Administrative Allocation	\$570,497	\$536,793
<b>Applications</b>	<b>2019-2020</b>	<b>2020-2021</b>
HEAP Only	4,610	4,563
Furnace Repair/Replacement	79	97

Undercare Unit



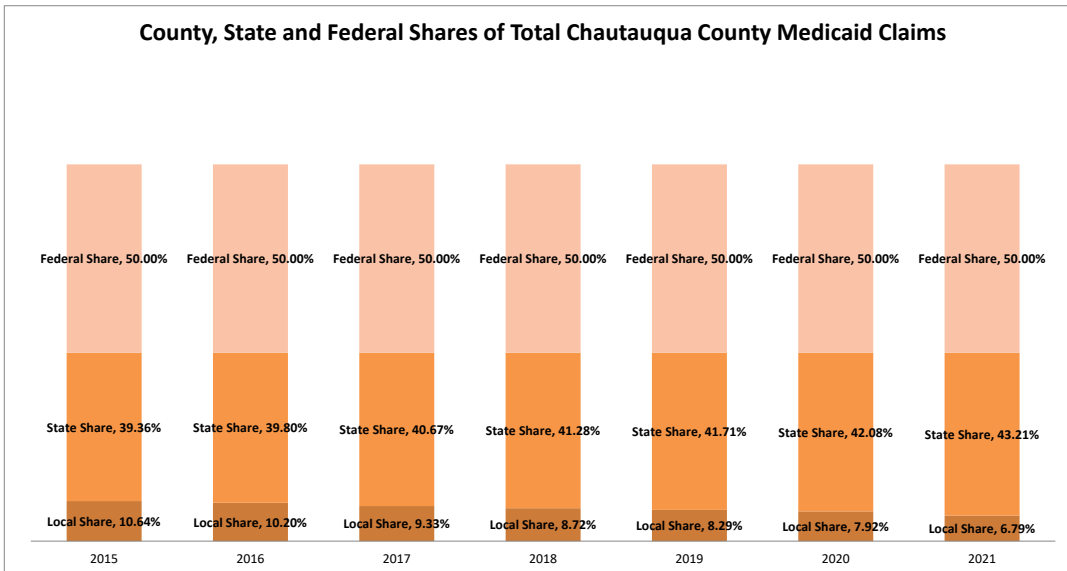
# Medicaid Division

## Overview

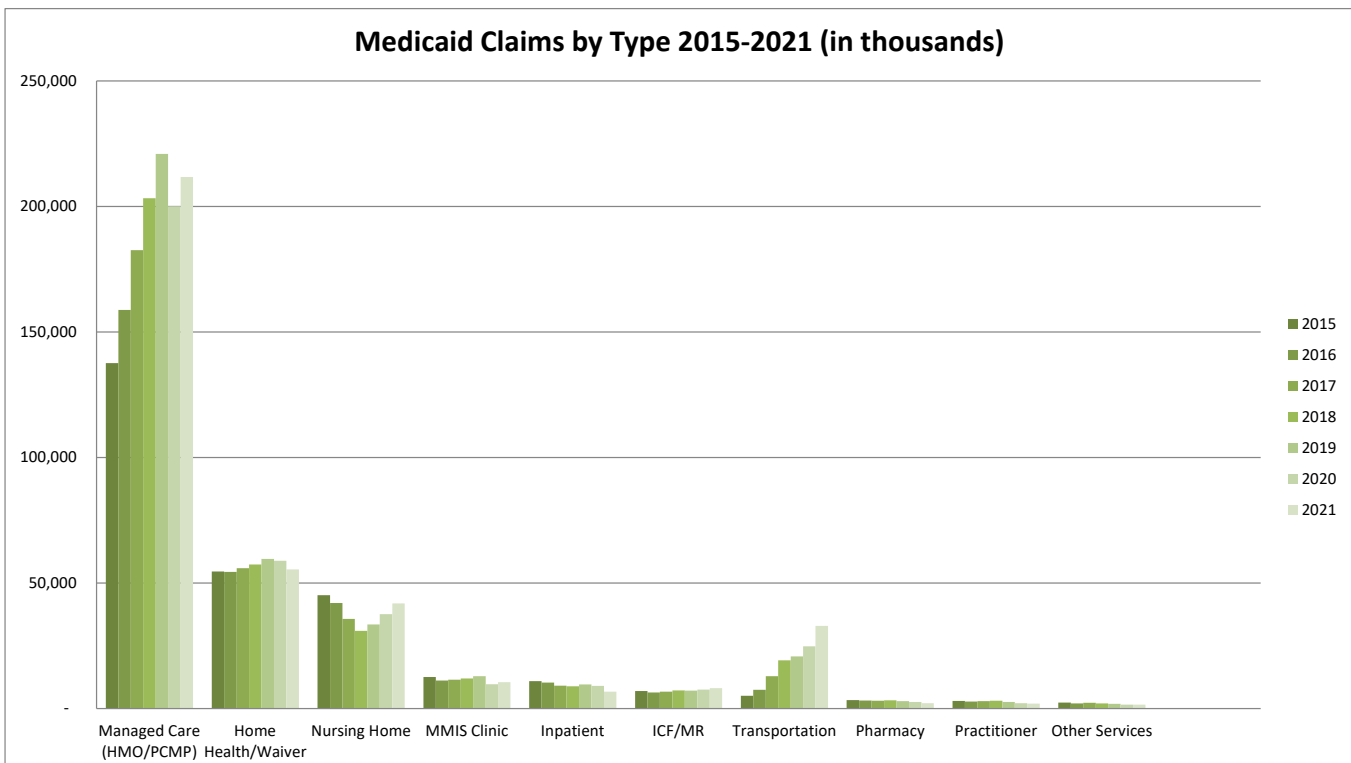
Generally, the medical plan for low-income Americans, Medicaid, is financed jointly at the federal (50%) and state (50%) levels. In New York State, however, responsibility for the State's 50% share is borne by both the State (25%) and county (25%) governments. New York is one of the few states in the nation that requires a local contribution. Because of the dramatically rising cost of Medicaid to local governments, New York State enacted a Medicaid cap effective January 1, 2006. This cap limits the growth of each county's Medicaid costs to no more than 3% per year. Chautauqua County is currently responsible for approximately 10% of the cost sharing.



Carmen Hlosta  
Director of Certification



Michelle Shoemaker  
Principal Social Welfare  
Examiner





The mission of the Chautauqua County Medical Assistance Division is to provide access to cost-effective medical services to all eligible persons in a professional manner through the use of enrolled healthcare providers. The Department of Health and Human Services staff provides application assistance, case management and other duties related to the administration of the Medicaid Program.

The NYS Department of Health began the takeover of Administration of the Medicaid program in 2011. Also occurring simultaneously is the implementation of the Affordable Care Act which includes an increase in the income level for Medicaid eligibility to 138% of the federal poverty level.

In addition to the increase in income levels, the New York State of Health Marketplace was opened in October of 2013. It has been a slow transition and our renewals were taken over by the state in March of 2018.

### Community Medicaid

Cases	2020	2021
<i>Measured by case, not individual</i>		
Medicaid	3,298	2,912
Medicaid Social Security Income (SSI)	5,869	5,921
<b>Applications combined</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Received	956	790
Approved	339	246



Community Medicaid Staff

### Cost Avoidance Unit (CAU)

#### Managed Care Enrollment (individuals)

HHS is a Mandatory Medicaid Managed Care County. In 2010 Governor Cuomo signed Executive Order #5 which created the Medicaid Redesign Team (MRT) in January 2011. The MRT is aimed at redesigning New York’s outsized Medicaid program. One overarching theme of the redesign team proposals is to move all Medicaid recipients from Fee for Service reimbursement to Managed Care. If recipients do not select a managed care plan, the State assigns one for the recipient. Each mandatory Social Service District is to maintain a minimum 20% auto-assign rate. Due to successful education and outreach efforts by the Medical Services staff, we remained well below the 20% auto assignment rate.

Plan	2020	2021
Fidelis (NYS Catholic Health Plan)	24,181	24,940
HealthNow (BCBS)	3,155	3,815
United Healthcare	820	924
Molina (replaced Your Care)	1,940	2,086
<b>TOTAL Enrollment</b>	<b>30,096</b>	<b>31,765</b>



Cost Avoidance Unit

#### Third Party Resources (TPHI)

In an effort to save Medicaid dollars, clients are encouraged to utilize TPHI. For those applicants eligible for Medicaid that have TPHI, the Cost Avoidance Unit will verify the policy and load into the eMedNY system to block Medicaid from being billed first. Applicants can also apply to have their TPHI premiums reimbursed; for those that have insurance available to them, this is an incentive to pick up that insurance rather than be enrolled in Managed Care, when found cost effective. CAU staff verifies and loads the TPHI, then processes the reimbursements of health insurance and Medicare premiums.

	2020	2021
Care at Home waiver enrollments	14	12



Medical Assistance Support Staff

## Long Term Care Unit

The Long Term Care unit consists of Skilled Nursing Facility (nursing home) and Assisted Living cases. The Assisted Living cases are considered community cases as they come and go from the Assisted Living Facilities. The Skilled Nursing Facility cases can be budgeted with spousal Medicaid to help keep the community spouse in their home and not losing income. There is a five year look back for Skilled Nursing Facility cases and they can join a Managed Long Term Care Plan (MLTC). Currently Assisted Living cannot join MLTC but will be able to in the future at some point.

Long Term Care Unit



<b>Applications</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Skilled Nursing Facilities	522	412
Assisted Living Programs	254	183
<b>TOTAL Applications</b>	<b>776</b>	<b>595</b>
<b>Cases</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Skilled Nursing Facilities	1048	830
Assisted Living Programs	312	278
<b>TOTAL Cases</b>	<b>1,460</b>	<b>1,108</b>

## Managed Long Term Care

Chautauqua County HHS is a Mandatory Medicaid Managed Care County. In 2010 Governor Cuomo signed Executive Order #5 which created the Medicaid Redesign Team (MRT) in January 2011. The next phase was NY State’s Medicaid Redesign Initiative (MRT#90) to which is to transition Dual Eligible individuals, age 21 and over, requiring more than 120 days of community based long term care services (CBLTCS) to Managed Long Term Care Plans (MLTCP). CBLTCS are defined as: Home Health Care, Personal Care Services, Adult Day Health Care, Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program, and Private Duty Nursing. This went into effect in Chautauqua County July 1, 2015.

<b>Enrollment</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Fidelis Care at Home	136	161
Kalos	152	112
Nascentia (formerly VNA)	146	134
Total Senior Care (PACE)	1	2
I Circle Care	16	28
<b>TOTAL Enrollment</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>438</b>

## Other Medical Services

### Health and Recovery Plans (HARP)

Introduced in July 2016, HARP is a managed care product that manages physical health, mental health, and substance use services in an integrated way for adults with significant behavioral health needs (mental health or substance use).

### Disability Review

Medicaid Aid to Disabled is a special program to maximize federal reimbursement through the use of the Aid to Disabled category in Medicaid that assists the NYS Department of Health in demonstrating cost neutrality for the 1115 Managed Care Waiver.

	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
HARP Enrollment	1,546	1,664

	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Cases reviewed	22	16
Cases eligible	19	14

### Medicaid Fair Hearings

A Fair Hearing is the process applicants and recipients have to review Agency decisions made on their application for Assistance Programs. The Fair Hearing Specialist is responsible to represent the Agency in this administrative process.

### PARIS Match

PARIS Match is a Public Assistance Reporting Information System (PARIS) to locate individuals who are in receipt of public assistance benefits in other states and may be ineligible to receive cash and/or SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits in NYS. A federal agency known as the Defense and Manpower Data Collection Department compare lists. When duplicate matches are found local offices are notified. Our local Program Integrity Unit and Cost Avoidance Unit work together to dis-enroll and recover Managed Care capitation fees.

	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Heard	8	18
Affirmed	1	8
Reversed	7	9
Decision correct when made <i>(new information provided)</i>	0	1
Withdrawn	32	12
Default	5	2
<b>TOTAL Medicaid Hearings</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>32</b>

### Money Recovered from PARIS Match

<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
\$23,150	\$51,137.62



## CASA Services

The CASA (Community Alternative Systems Agency) Unit monitors service provision in Personal Care Services, nursing home and other long term care programs. This includes informing patients of their rights, and insuring appropriateness of care and level of care requested.

CASA is the central access point for the consumers of long term care, from home care to nursing home. CASA helps families, regardless of age or payer source, to navigate their way through the myriad of long term care options available in Chautauqua County. We are partners with Office for The Aging for NY Connects.

The Long Term Home Health Care Program was closed in May of 2016 by the State as the clients were enrolled into MLTC plans which covered the services they received under the program that closed. Waivered services will be added into state plan services under the Community First Choice Options effective January 1, 2020. This will require the County to contract with the waived services and it will be billed through the MMIS system as FFS MA services are billed currently. MLTC plans will be implementing this at the same time. Care at Home has been moved into the children’s waivers effective 4/1/19 so we will not be involved in these cases longer unless they need state plan services.



CASA

<b>End-of-Year Caseload Report</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Traditional Personal Care I & II	56	53
Managed Care- Personal Care I & II	0	10
Shared Aid I & II	8	7
Consumer Directed	49	46
UAS Waiver TBI/Nursing Home Transition Diversion Waiver	1	1
Care at Home (CAH)	1	0
Private Duty Nursing (LPN)	5	5
Drug Restriction (DUR)	28	22
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>144</b>

<b>Personal Care Aides</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
<b>Level 1</b> <i>(housekeeping)</i>		
Hours Authorized	9,936	9,216
Money Paid Out	\$207,364	\$202,107
<b>Level 2</b> <i>(housekeeping, bathing, dressing, etc.)</i>		
Hours Authorized	20,436	18,072
Money Paid Out	\$435,491	\$404,632

*Clients hours go un-serviced when personal care aides are not available. There is currently a shortage of personal care aides in our area for this type of service.*

# Adult, Children and Family Services

The Adult, Children and Family Services Division assists the most vulnerable and at-risk children and adults in our community and includes Adult Protective Services (APS), Child Protective Services (CPS), Preventive Services, Foster Care, Adoption, and Juvenile Services units. The role of Adult Protective Services is to provide protective and preventive services to individuals over 18 where there is an inability to act on their own behalf with the aim of ensuring self-determination, and the ability to live as safely and independently as possible in the community. Child Protective Services role is to investigate, intervene and support family and caregivers ability to safely care for their children where there are allegations of abuse and maltreatment of children. Preventive Services works in the homes of at-risk children providing supportive and rehabilitative services that are trauma-informed, solution-focused, child centered, and strength based to prevent out-of-home placement and to assist families to return their children from foster care at an earlier time, while foster care offers children a safe living environment while assistance is offered to families and caregivers. Finally, the Juvenile Services Team is a community-collaboration aimed at preventing out of home placement and institutional care for juveniles and adolescents to reduce the likelihood of contact with the criminal justice system.



Leanna Luka-Conley  
Deputy Commissioner of Adult Children and Family Service

## Adult Protective Services

Adult Protective Services (APS) provides protective services for clients over 18 years of age who are unable to act on their own behalf due to mental or physical impairment, while respecting a client’s right to self-determination. Preventive services are also available.



Adult Protective Services

	2020	2021
Intake referrals received	370	425
Referrals accepted for assignment	274	346
Guardianship petitions filed	1	1
Guardianships assigned to HHS	13	8
HHS Commissioner served as Guardian	28	31
Case Types	2020	2021
Abuse	110	111
Self-Neglect	180	223
Significant Case Factors		
Mental Health	166	152
Financial Exploitation	72	59



Robin Rafan  
A Supervisor  
Adult and Juvenile Services

## Juvenile Services and Independent Living Teams

Juvenile Services and Independent Living Teams provide preventive services and foster care for children and their families where a child is having behavioral or emotional problems and a child service need may also exist.

Juvenile Services Team (JST) is a collaboration between HHS staff and the Office of Probation. While there are some placements out of the home, the focus of the team is preventive. PINS diversion services, HHS preventive services, and CPS assessment and response all work toward preventing out of home placement for children/ adolescents while developing the parental protection factors and strengths to reduce the family stressors and also address child service needs.

	2020	2021
Person in Need of Supervision (PINS)	110	103
Juvenile Delinquents	136	10
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>113</b>

Juveniles in Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) Care and Custody	2020	2021
Number of Juveniles Served	8	4
Care Days	2,124	628
Average Length of Stay	266	157



## Child Protective Services (CPS)

CPS receives and investigates reports from the State Central Registry (SCR) concerning the abuse or maltreatment of children. CPS also strives to help families provide for the future safety of children by direct service and referrals.

### CPS Standards of Practice:

The role of CPS is to investigate allegations of maltreatment reported to The State Central Registry and to offer rehabilitative services to families as needed, to build on parents' strengths and protective factors to reduce risk of maltreatment in the future. CPS uses a trauma-informed approach to working with families and solution-focused skills to engage families as they focus on the safety of children.



Chris Kowalewski  
A Supervisor  
Child Protective Services

SCR Reports	2020	%	2021	%
New Reports	1,842		2,120	
Subsequent Reports	432	23.45%	258	12.17%
Consolidated Reports	543	29.48%	570	26.89%
<b>Investigations</b>				
Reports Resulting in Investigations	2,274		2,378	
Determined	1,621		1,469	
Indicated	488	30.10%	397	27.03%
Unfounded	1,133	69.90%	1,072	72.97%

### Definitions:

**New Reports** – also known as initial reports are reports received from the State Central Register (SCR) on a family that we are not currently working with.

**Subsequent Reports** – reports received from the SCR on families we are currently working with.

**Consolidated Reports** – subsequent reports that are consolidated into the initial (new) report. Subsequent reports require a separate investigation of the same family whereas consolidated reports do not. Consolidated reports required the allegations in the report be addressed, however forms and reports associated with the initial report do not need redone. While we strive to consolidate as many subsequent reports as possible special circumstances do not allow us to consolidate all.

**Indicated Reports** – reports where upon investigation the Department has determined there is some credible evidence (Legal Standard of Proof) to support the allegations of abuse or maltreatment.

**Unfounded Reports** – reports where upon investigation the Department has determined there is no credible evidence to support the allegations of abuse or maltreatment.

Child Protective Services



## Preventive Services

Preventive Services provides in-home supportive and rehabilitative services that are trauma-informed, solution-focused, child-centered, family-focused and strength based. This guidance to at-risk families is intended to prevent out of home placement of children, enable a child in care to return to his/her family at an earlier time, and to reduce the likelihood that a child will return to foster care once discharged. Creative and individualized family goals will promote safety and self-sufficiency, build on parental protective factors and skills, enhance family dynamics, preserve the family, and envelope the family with a community support system.

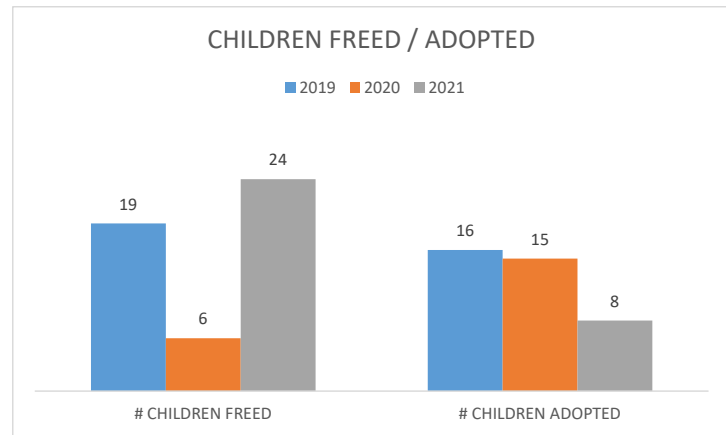
Our preventive casework staff use critical thinking skills, case conferences that support group decision-making, and motivational interviewing. A thorough assessment of contributing factors and underlying conditions will be used to build a service plan with the family. The family is seen as the experts on their own lives and a partner in the planning process.



Melissa McMahon  
Director of Certification

The following is a comparison of key activities regarding children who have been placed in foster care:

Children	2020	2021
Placed- all levels of care	45	35
Discharged- all levels of care	68	45
Freed for adoption	6	21
Freed with no home identified	0	3
Adoption Finalized	15	8
<b>Children in care</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
In foster homes (12/31)	55	56
In institutions (12/31)	10	3
In group homes (12/31)	2	4
In therapeutic foster homes (12/31)	30	24
<b>Total children in care</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>87</b>



## Foster Care Services

Foster Care services in Chautauqua County provide out-of-home care for children in the custody of the Commissioner of Social Services. Foster care plays an important role in providing temporary, safe and nurturing homes to children when their parents are unable to care for them. Children are placed in foster homes in situations where they have been removed from their own families due to abuse, neglect or other family problems that endanger their safety. The children may range from infancy through 18 years of age and may have special medical, physical or emotional needs; the children may belong to any ethnicity or race and be part of a group of brothers and sisters who need to be placed together.



Services and Child Protective Staff



## Adoptive and Foster Home Finding

Our Home Finding & Adoption Teams work diligently at recruiting new foster parents, equipping our foster parents with the tools they need to succeed and finding forever homes for children in Chautauqua County.

<b>Certified Foster Homes</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
South County ( <i>Jamestown &amp; surrounding area</i> )	13	20
North County ( <i>Dunkirk/Fredonia &amp; surrounding area</i> )	3	8
Central County ( <i>Rural areas including Westfield, Mayville, Cassadaga, Sherman, Clymer, Ripley, Panama</i> )	32	22
Out of County	6	4
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>54</b>

## Youth Bureau

The role of the Youth Bureau is to actively work in collaboration with other government entities, public and private funding agencies, service providers and other segments of the community to develop a comprehensive range of opportunities for positive youth development to promote a positive future for all youth of Chautauqua County.

The County Youth Bureau functions as a fund giver, by acting as a conduit for state aid from the New York State Office of Children and Family Services. The annual funding process provides state aid to public and private not-for-profit agencies to implement quality youth service programs that address identified needs. In addition, the Youth Bureau advocates for the funding and implementation of programs that fill gaps in the youth service system.



Nicole Kimball  
Youth Bureau Coordinator

<b>2020/2021 Programs Funded</b>	<b># Youth Served</b>	<b>2020 Allocation</b>	<b># Youth Served</b>	<b>2021 Allocation</b>
Youth Development – Year Round Programming Partner With Chautauqua Striders- Main Site Tutoring; Children’s Safety Village-Safety Education Program; Salvation Army- Children & Family Outreach Program; WCD BGC- Junior Staff; CAP- Bilingual Victim/witness Assistant Program; Girl Scouts of Western New York- Afterschool Program; Infinity –Scholarship and group classes; Salvation Army- Basketball and tutoring; Boys and Girls Club Northern Chautauqua County-Triple Play	1,942	\$106,101	4,318	\$124,480
Youth Development – Summer Programming* Local City & Town Summer Recreation Programs & GSWNY	-	-	593	\$10,500
Runaway Homeless Youth Act	83	\$51,202	100	\$60,054
OCFS Gun Prevention Funds (new for 2021)	-	-	15	\$35,000
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2,025</b>	<b>\$157,303</b>	<b>5,026</b>	<b>\$230,034</b>

\*We did not fund summer programs as a separate entity in 2020, as all requests were withdrawn due to the pandemic.



Chautauqua County Youth Board



## Collaborative Programs

Chautauque County Department of Health and Human Services partners with many organizations throughout the county to enrich the lives of our residence and provide much needed services. Below are a list of a few programs that we sponsor.

### Mental Health Association Chautauqua

The Department of Health and Human Services has partnered with the Mental Health Association in Chautauque County (MHA), a community-based peer organization. MHA has recovery centers in Dunkirk and Jamestown and peers available to connect with anyone in all of Chautauque County. Peers work with participants from a foundational point of shared recovery experiences. Hope, support, and engagement develop quickly when the peer spark is available.

MHA’s Peers make up Chautauque County’s OD (Overdose) Mapping Response Team, responding to overdoses to connect citizens and their families with treatment, harm reduction services and peer supports. MHA peers also focuses on working with inmates as they transition out of the Chautauque County Jail, and working with the Better for Families program at Chautauque County Family Court. This program was developed with the support of Chautauque County



(from left) Elizabeth Witherspoon, Steven Cobb, Dorothy Carlson, Allison Johnson, Bethany Vanderburg, Jessica Crooks

Family Court and many other community partners and has become a model for other counties in NYS. The program reverses the often-punitive treatment court model to a model that meets participants where they are, supports harm reduction, encourages connections with HHS Caseworkers and validates small steps forward in the recovery process to achieve success, lasting recovery and strengthening of the family.

Starting in 2020, our partnership with the MHA grew to include the Strong Starts Chautauque Program. MHA provides peers traditionally trained, with the added tools of the Positive Directions Model (PDM). The PDM provides specific tools and education to support Moms with SUD’s during pregnancy and the weeks after birth. The peers provide the hope, inspiration and figuratively, the glue that helps make recovery possible. This is directly responding to the prenatal infant exposure crisis in Chautauque County in cooperation with over 20 community partners with concrete results.



Arrick Davis, Community School Coordinator

### Supervision and Treatment Services for Juveniles Program (STSJP)

The Community School Coordinator position funded through the STSJP and Jamestown Public School District assists with community and school engagement for students and their families, as well as coordination of services and communication with juvenile justice system/child welfare. Outcomes measured are an increase in school attendance, increase in grade point average, avoidance of out of home placement and decrease in legal/behavior activity. Students continuously show measureable growth in self-confidence and positive identity resulting in better decision making. In some instances, these decisions and increase in self-confidence led to getting involved in extra-curricular activities, allowing the student to part of something that is positive and promotes developing character exhibiting integrity, commitment, and having the self-efficacy to overcome adversity.

### Chautauque Family Empowerment Program (CFEP)

The CFEP is funded by Chautauque County HHS through SJST funds, and administered by Hillside. The Chautauque Family Empowerment program works in partnership with the PINS and Preventative services units, to serve families with youth ages 10- 18 who are at risk for out-of-home placement.



The Chautauque Family Empowerment Program works with families in the home on a weekly basis, to help identify challenges, barriers, needs and patterns of dysfunction that may be contributing to the youth’s ongoing struggles. CFEP workers partner with the family to help link them with needed resources, complete a thorough assessment process (to identify needs and strengths), and develop a plan/skills to increase family stability and improve youth functioning. Participation is voluntary and length of service is approximately 9-12 months.

### Salvation Army Anew Center

The Children and Family Outreach Program (CFOP) provides services to children and families who are past or current victims of family abuse. This may include child abuse/domestic violence, and/or sexual abuse. The program goal is to build on family strengths. The staff work to improve protective factors, reduce risk factors and to reduce the likelihood of future abuse with a focus on enhancing and supporting family functioning and resiliency. Some of the services provided include; in home or office interventions, small group counseling, domestic violence education classes and family workshops. Services are free, confidential and client driven, with a trauma-informed standard of care. Evidence based curriculums, lesson plans and family goals are developed with the assistance of the family members.

Transportation is provided when needed to groups. Referrals can come from agencies or client’s reaching out to the program themselves and can be made through their hot line at 661-3897.

## Collaborative Programs *continued*

### Child Advocacy Program (CAP)

CAP's vision is to see healthy children and families create a safe and engaged community. The Chautauqua County Child Advocacy Program is a safe, child-friendly center that supports a multi-disciplinary investigative approach to child physical and sexual abuse allegations. Our Center brings together agencies in one child-friendly setting that is physically and psychologically safe. In doing this we reduce unnecessary duplication of interviews thereby lessening the trauma experienced by child victims and non-offending family members, and holding individuals accountable for their victimization of children.

### Safe Harbour- Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth/Sex trafficking

Safe Harbour is housed within The Child Advocacy Center, Safe Harbour is a systems-level, trauma-informed approach to the prevention and identification of, and service provision to survivors of commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) and child trafficking.

CSEC refers to a range of crimes and activities involving the sexual abuse or exploitation of a child for the financial benefit of any person or in exchange for anything of value (including monetary and non-monetary benefits) given or received by any person. Child sex trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a person for the purposes of a commercial sex act, in which the commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age (Federal Law). This collaborative program leverages existing local resources to create a more effective and efficient coordinated response to youth who have been identified as survivors and those considered at-risk. The Safe Harbour Coordinator is responsible for streamlining Chautauqua County's Safe Harbour policies and procedures, educating allied professionals and community members to recognize the signs, and raising awareness about child trafficking and CSEC.

*Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 [United States of America]. Public Law 106-386 [H.R. 3244]. 28 October 2000. Section 103(9).*

### The Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA)

The Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) was signed into law as part of Public Law (P.L.) 115-123 in 2018 and has several provisions to enhance support services for families to help children remain at home, reduce the unnecessary use of congregate care, and build the capacity of communities to support children and families. The law enables states and territories to use funds for prevention services, such as:

- Evidence-based mental health programs
- Substance abuse prevention and treatment
- In-home parent skill-based programs
- Kinship navigator programs

NYS implementation began 9/27/21. NYS goal is to increase kinship foster care placements to 50% of all placements and reduce congregate care placements to less than 12% of all placements. As of 12/31/21, of the 87 children in care in Chautauqua County, 28.7% in Kinship foster care and 3.4% were in congregate care settings. Chautauqua County has responded to the FFPSA implementation by:

- Evaluating our data
- Engaging key Stakeholders including Voluntary Foster Care Agencies, Mental Health service agencies, Community-based substance abuse programs, and Family Court
- Implementing a KinFirst Policy and Firewall
- Examining racial equity and cultural competency data, awareness and knowledge
- Utilizing Evidence-Based Programs in the community such as the Jamestown Learning Council Parent as Teachers program
- Enhancing Family Support Services by contracting with Hillside Family of Services



*County Executive Proclaims January 'Human Trafficking Prevention Month'*

### Strong Starts Chautauqua

Strong Starts Chautauqua (SSC) is a local network of organizations and partners dedicated to improving the health, development, and well-being of all children – prenatally through age five. SSC believes that strong, healthy children are the foundation of our community's future and is committed to building bright futures for Chautauqua County children and families.

Using proven national practices, Strong Starts Chautauqua helps to :



- Empower families and care providers so they can give children the best possible start in life.
- Support all of the county's young children and their families through community education and outreach, information and referral, maternal and early childhood risk screening, and connection to resources that help young children thrive.
- Educate the community on the importance of early life experiences as a foundation for lifelong health, well-being, and achievement.
- Enhance the community's ability to assist with life challenges faced by pregnant women, children aged birth-5, and their families.
- Support families and caregivers in Chautauqua County by improving access to resources and services that help all young children thrive.
- Create a strong local support system for organizations working with young children and their families using national, proven strategies.

For more information on Strong Starts Chautauqua or to make a referral, please visit their website at [strongstartschaut.com](http://strongstartschaut.com)

## Collaborative Programs *continued*

### GA Accountability and Responsibility Program

The Accountability & Responsibility Program (A&R Program) through G.A. Family Services located at 210 Gustavus Ave, Jamestown, NY 14701, and it is made possible through a collaboration with GA Family Services, Chautauqua County HHS, and STSJP. The A&R program is an after school leadership program that aims to support and guide at-risk teens by focusing on life skills while encouraging positive decision making. In 2021 it was awarded an expansion to focus more on Independent Living Skills for youth in the community as a whole and on the 14-21 year old youth in foster care in Chautauqua County. Breanne Emery took on the IL Caseworker role as this is a wonderful growth opportunity for her and bringing four years of experience in working with teens to the position. Group Facilitator Billy Torres has been with the A&R program since its inception in 2013, and the expansion for the Independent Living addition brought in a new Lead facilitator, Lisa Schmid-Miller who has a passion for engaging and connection with the youth and making sure we are helping them meet their goals on an emotional and cognitive level as well as behaviorally and educationally. The Three person A&R team has had resounding success this year with the expansion, serving more youth than ever throughout Chautauqua County, and making lasting connections for the teens in the program.

The program engages youth in community service projects that matter to them, like cleaning up graffiti and trash in local parks, which improve their daily lives, as well as the community. They get to have cultural experiences they would not have access to otherwise on special outings

to aquariums, zoos, and many other locations. And they also have time to build connections with other youth and positive adult mentors, and always have a meal when they come to program. Some of the other highlights each session include tours of colleges and jobs in the region. The A&R Program serves over 50 youth a year, and with the expansion of services will reach even more, and continued to run in-person throughout all of 2021.

At each session graduation the program tries to include a special speaker from the community to spend time with the youth and speak on how they are proud of them and get to know them. At a recent 2022 graduation trip the youth got to experience the Niagara Aquarium and not only see the shows, but interact with sea-life. It was a wonderful experience and they all enjoyed the outing very much. The next session is already full with 10 youth referred from across the north and south ends of the county.



GA Graduation with Mayor Sunquist

### Adult Protective Services Initiatives

In collaboration with the Center for Elder Law and Justice (CELJ) and the New York State Unified Court System (NYS-UCS), the Department of Health and Human Services has continued to support the work of the Elder Advocacy Program (EAP). The EAP, initially the result of a federal grant from the Administration for Community Living, began as a pilot project in Chautauqua County, with the aim of empowering elder abuse survivors by addressing systemic barriers to our justice and social systems, and improving court and long-term outcomes for survivors of elder abuse. The Program, which acts as a single point of entry for survivors, linking them to appropriate legal and non-legal services, while also providing education on elder abuse, is now in its fifth year and continues to grow.

A major component of the Elder Advocacy Program is community education, to the public at large, allied professionals, and community partners. Trainings on elder abuse and the role of the EAP have been presented to the courts, law enforcement, Area Offices for the Aging, financial institutions, residential facilities, and various other community organizations.

The Elder Abuse Enhanced-Multidisciplinary Team (E-MDT), another essential component of the Elder Advocacy Program, reviews complex cases of elder abuse with the purpose of increasing prosecution and restitution. The E-MDT is composed of representatives from HHS, Adult Protective Services, OFA/NY Connects, the DA's Office, law enforcement, Center for Elder Law and Justice, financial institutions, a forensic accountant, and other community stakeholders.

### #Be the Change

#IntegrityFirst operated a multi-week Be the Change mentoring program in Southern Chautauqua county. Funding for the program was administered through the NYS Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) for participation in "Safe Summer NY 2021".

The program matched each youth with a mentor. The mentors consisted of players and coaches associated with the Jamestown Jackals, a professional basketball team in Jamestown, and members of The Basketball League (TBL), where players are hired as mentors and positive role models. The mentoring relationships aimed to enrich the lives of the mentees and provide an opportunity to be involved in something bigger than themselves, while developing a sense of belonging. Through the program, mentees participated in a wide range of activities, attended unique events, and actively engaged with their community.



The mission of #IntegrityFirst, Inc. is to help individuals develop their potential and achieve success academically, athletically, financially, socially, and professionally by fostering integrity, motivation, responsibility, hope, perseverance, confidence, and sportsmanship.



# Legal Division

## Legal Unit

The function of the Legal Unit is to represent the Department effectively in court and administrative hearings, and to advise and furnish legal services in support of the Department’s programs. The Legal Unit is responsible for prosecuting in Family Court all cases involving child abuse, child neglect, termination of parental rights, paternity, child support child and all associated appeals. The Legal Unit also represents the Department during Fair Hearings involving reports from the State Central Registry. The Legal Unit also handles Adult Protective Services that may seek court orders for entry into a home, short term intervention orders and establishment of financial and/or personal guardianship for incapacitated adults. The Unit seeks to recover local, state and federal tax dollars through claims on real property, claims against personal injury settlements and verdicts, claims in estates, and claims against any other source of funds obtained by someone who is or has received public assistance benefits.

<b>Caseload</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Child Abuse/Neglect – New Children Receiving Protection	150	128
Foster Children Having Legal Proceedings Commenced to Free for Adoption	7	21
Protective Services for Adults-Guardianships	22	29
<b>Recoveries</b>		
Medicaid Nursing Home Care	\$38,705	\$34,519
Casualty Recoveries	\$3,530	\$22,891
TA Recovery Liens	\$711	\$19,724
<b>TOTAL Recoveries</b>	<b>\$42,946</b>	<b>\$77,133</b>

## Program Integrity Unit (PIU, Fraud and Recovery Unit)

The Program Integrity Unit investigates complaints received on applicants and recipients of benefits including Public Assistance, SNAP, HEAP, Medicaid and Child Care as well as complaints regarding vendors. Furthermore, due to fraud, error on the recipient’s part or agency error, the Department is entitled to seek recovery for overpayment of benefits. The PIU also establishes and monitors the payment of over-issued benefits.



Program Integrity Unit

<b>Caseload</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2020 Costs Avoided</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2021 Costs Avoided</b>
FEDS (Front End Detection System) Number of applications detecting fraud at application	134	\$1,140,252	223	\$1,811,574
PARIS (Public Assistance Reporting Information System) Detecting out of state residency and duplicate benefits	56	\$226,056	37	\$133,896
VED (Verified Employment Data) Detecting unreported income on TANF adult cases	46	\$109,866	27	\$50,946
Prison Computer Match	10	\$15,720	5	\$7,860
IPV (Intentional Program Violations) Disqualification sanctions for those found guilty	18	\$31,836	25	\$41,850
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>\$1,523,730</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>\$2,046,126</b>

## Child Support Enforcement Unit (CSEU)

The Child Support Enforcement Unit (CSEU) is responsible for establishing the paternity of children born out of wedlock through signed Paternity Acknowledgements or through filing of Paternity Petitions in Family Court. The CSEU is responsible for commencing the court process to establish Orders of child support and enforce the child support Orders against legally responsible relatives, on behalf of public assistance applicants/ recipients, as well as non-applicant/recipient individuals who make an application for child support services. The CSEU also has a responsibility to secure a court Order for Third Party Insurance on behalf of all children in receipt of Public Assistance and Medicaid only benefits. Additionally, the CSEU has primary responsibility to collect, monitor, distribute and enforce all support as ordered and made payable through it by any court of competent jurisdiction to petitioners within Chautauqua County and throughout the United States.

<b>Case Management Performance</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Paternity Establishment <i>(cases with paternity established / cases)</i>	96.71%	96.14%
Support Establishment <i>(cases with Support Orders established / cases)</i>	92.73%	92.17%
Cases with Current Collections <i>(Amount Collected / Amount of Current Support Due)</i>	70.75%	72.27%
Cases with Arrears Collections <i>(cases with Collection on Arrears / cases)</i>	44.42%	47.66%
Medical Support <i>(cases with Medical Support established)</i>	49.37%	49.11%
Case Load	10,910	10,069

<b>Child Support Collections</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Temporary Assistance	\$2,376,827	\$1,509,826
Medical	\$542,123	\$490,092
<b>Total Retained Social Services Collections</b>	<b>\$ 2,918,951</b>	<b>\$1,999,918</b>
Total General Public Collections	\$ 11,696,083	\$11,093,128
<b>Total Collections</b>	<b>\$14,615,034</b>	<b>\$13,093,046</b>

<b>Petitions Filed</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Paternity	85	76
Support	187	120
Enforcement	473	580
Reciprocal	40	47
<b>Total Petitions Filed</b>	<b>785</b>	<b>823</b>

Child Support Enforcement Unit



# PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION

Prevention and wellness are essential components to good health and a high quality of life. The Chautauqua County Department of Health and Human Services is dedicated to improving the health and quality of life for individuals, families, and communities. Good health comes not just from receiving quality medical care, but also from making good choices and having access to clean air and water, safe outdoor spaces for physical activity, safe worksites, healthy foods, violence free environments, healthy homes.

## Purposes and Practices of Public Health

To prevent epidemics and the spread of disease, protect against environmental hazards, prevent injuries, promote and encourage healthy behaviors and mental health, respond to disasters and assist communities in recovery, and assure the quality and accessibility of health services.

## County Physicians



Robert Berke, M.D.



Michael Faulk, M.D.,  
FACEP



Alicia Snow, PA-C  
Physician Assistant



Brian Walters, D.O.,  
FACEP, FAAEM

## Board of Health

As the overseer of Sanitary Code of Chautauqua County, the nine member Board of Health is a vital force in preventing disease, promoting health and promulgating public health policy. The group represents a broad range of public health related disciplines. Over the years, the Board has enacted countless measures to improve the wellbeing of Chautauqua County residents and visitors.



### 2021 Chautauqua County Board of Health Members:

Top Left: Lillian Ney, MD (President); Elizabeth Kidder, MD (Vice President); Thomas Erlandson, PhD; Tariq Khan, MD;  
Bottom Left: Elisabeth Rankin; John Tallett, MD; and Mark Tarbrake



# COVID-19 Pandemic

In 2021, the Chautauqua County Health Department continued efforts to mitigate the spread and severity of COVID-19. Our staff persevered through an incredibly challenging year, adjusting to constantly changing guidance on topics ranging from isolation and quarantine, travel restrictions, vaccination, testing, capacity limitations, social distancing, congregate settings, and enforcement.

To assist with the many COVID-19 efforts the Public Health Division was tasked with, staff were pulled from other departments, several retired county workers returned, and additional temporary staff were hired. Staff from Environmental Health, Early Intervention, and Health Education/Planning were reassigned to the Nursing Unit as needed to conduct disease investigations or contact tracing, make monitoring calls, or work at testing and vaccination clinics. All Environmental Health staff responded to COVID-related complaints. This division worked every single day in 2021, including weekends and holidays. The Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator committed the entire year to COVID response. A team effort was needed to pull off the monumental task of responding to the pandemic, and our staff responded with unprecedented support and sense of duty.



## COVID-19 Vaccination Campaign

In the middle of the winter 2020-2021 COVID-19 surge, our team was additionally tasked with the responsibility to vaccinate as many eligible persons as possible. State and Federal guidance scripted which sectors of the population were to be granted early access to the vaccine. As those populations were served, accessibility widened to other groups. This was a point of contention among the public, with many people seeking vaccine but only a short supply available. Clinics grew from a few hundred individuals to thousands as vaccine supply increased. Throughout 2021, 173 COVID-19 vaccination clinics were held and more than 40,000 COVID-19 vaccine doses were administered. Clinics were held at various locations throughout the County. The largest clinic was held at SUNY Fredonia where 2,100 vaccines were administered at a single event. First and second dose clinics were provided to 16 schools and 4 BOCES locations. Additionally, the Department administered vaccine to homebound residents, the County Jail, homeless shelters and soup kitchens, senior housing complexes and day centers, as well as centers for persons with developmental disabilities.

As vaccines were issued emergency use authorization from the FDA and approved by the CDC, age groups were expanded, and third doses and boosters were recommended for various populations. Department staff ordered, stored, managed, and administered 3 different brands of COVID-19 vaccine (Moderna, Pfizer (adult and pediatric), and Janssen/Johnson & Johnson). Upon request, vaccine was redistributed to health care providers, nursing homes, hospitals, and pharmacies.

## COVID-19 Case Investigations and Contact Tracing

In 2021, 15,335 COVID-19 cases and 247 deaths were reported among Chautauqua County residents. Cases came in waves, aligning with holiday gatherings and surging with each new variant. January 2021 saw the greatest volume of COVID-19 cases and deaths up until that time. Communicable disease staff, in conjunction with the State of New York Contact Tracing Virtual Call Center (VCC), were completely overwhelmed, working as hard as they could to reach as many cases as possible to conduct case interviews and contact tracing. With each surge, the Communicable Disease team had to adjust to the work levels and prioritize cases for interview.



As vaccination rates climbed and natural immunity was gained through infection, COVID cases declined, with under 50 cases in both June and July. Cases were expected to rise again in fall 2021, but the wave came sooner than expected in mid-August with the introduction of the Delta variant, which was able to breakthrough the protection presented by vaccination. Vaccination generally prevented against severe disease, hospitalization, and death, but breakthrough cases became more common. The Omicron variant was introduced in late December, resulting in surges equaling those of early January 2021.

**COVID-19 Testing Clinics**

In 2021, COVID-19 testing clinics were held for school staff/students, emergency responders, and the community at large. In total, 2,015 COVID-19 tests were provided directly by Department staff. Additionally, the Department provided testing supplies to and reported results for schools totaling an additional 907 tests. Testing resources were provided for schools to collect and submit 6,664 pool-testing specimens. In total, we conducted or partnered in the collection of 9,586 COVID-19 tests.

**Providing Emergency Housing, Food and Supplies to Residents in Need**

Local Health Departments are required to provide emergency housing, food, and supplies to individuals in need who are issued public health orders for isolation and quarantine. The Office for the Aging was contracted to compile meal packs that included shelf-stable and frozen meals for those in need. Meals and supplies were delivered by the Sheriff's Office. In 2021, 2,769 emergency meal packs containing 21 meals each were delivered to county residents, totaling 58,149 meals.

Through contracts with local hotels, emergency housing was provided to 7 people in isolation or quarantine for a total of 49 nights.

**Providing Support to Chautauqua County Schools and Colleges**

The Department spent a significant amount of time in 2021 assisting schools, colleges, and day cares with technical support in how to adjust operations in order to comply with the ever-changing guidance issued by New York State.

In partnership with Erie-2 Chautauqua Cattaraugus BOCES, and with a grant from NYSDOH and CDC, the Department provided COVID-19 testing resources to all school districts in Chautauqua County. Quadrant Biosciences, Inc. was contracted to analyze pool testing samples for all unvaccinated school staff who were required to test weekly. Our staff ordered supplies (rapid and pool test kits, PPE, cleaning supplies), and worked with BOCES to distribute these to schools. Supplemental Health Care, Inc. nurses were contracted to support school testing programs across the county. Staff worked closely with school nurses and leadership, answering numerous questions and emails.

Staff assisted colleges with navigating the vaccination guidance for domestic and international students, clarified event capacity and cleaning requirements, interpreted isolation and quarantine guidance, and provided input on decisions made regarding student living arrangements. Monthly meetings were held to provide support to the colleges.

**Reporting COVID-19 Metrics to the Community**

In 2021, the Department publicized 200 COVID-19 dashboard reports to the public via the County website, and updated a ZIP-code level map monthly with case totals. The COVID-19 dashboard included key metrics, which varied according to community trends, data availability, and public requests. These metrics included: total and new COVID-19 case numbers, deaths, hospitalizations, active cases, individuals in quarantine, CDC Community Transmission Level, percent of tests that were positive, vaccination rates, cases by age, deaths by age, number of cases and case rate by ZIP code, vaccination rate by ZIP code, and weekly case rates.



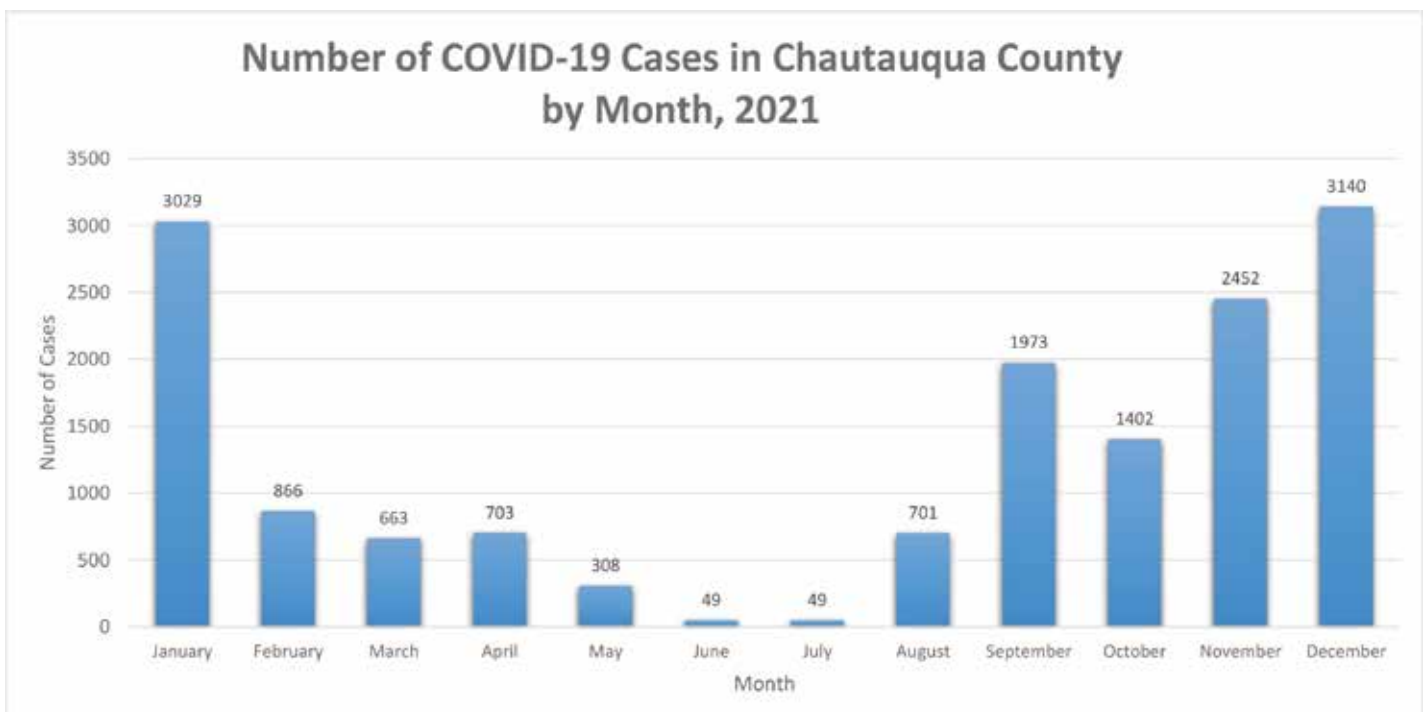
Getting ready for a large vaccination clinic at JCC



Below: One of many COVID-19 Press Conferences held during the pandemic  
From left: Sheriff Jim Quatrone, County Executive PJ Wendel, Public Health Director Christine Schuyler



Above: COVID-19 vaccination clinic in Findley Lake, New York





## Enforcing Violations of COVID-19 Executive Orders

The myriad of restrictions imposed by NYS led to both public cooperation and defiance. The Environmental Health Unit was charged with responding to complaints ranging from lack of masking to improper social distancing in public buildings and businesses to workers coming into work sick, among others. In 2021, the Environmental Health Unit responded to 135 COVID-related complaints. Each complaint was investigated and if found to be valid, a cease and desist order was issued as a written warning. A second valid complaint resulted in additional action including, in rare cases fines. In 2021, three legal actions were issued against individuals or business owners for COVID violations. HHS staff also conducted COVID compliance checks at businesses and manufacturing facilities in response to complaints or disease spread. These resulted in recommendations for reducing COVID infections within each facility.

## Public Education and Outreach

The Department regularly issued press releases, public service announcements, and social media updates throughout 2021 focusing on the status of COVID-19 in the community, vaccination promotion, vaccination and testing opportunities, rules and regulations, and general guidance on how to prevent COVID-19. Throughout the year, 61 COVID-related press releases were issued either by the division or in conjunction with the County Executive. The Health Education Division also recorded and publicized interviews with individuals affected by COVID-19. The Health Education Division participated in the Health Equity Task Force, which guided vaccination clinic planning to ensure equitable access to vaccine for community residents. The Task Force evolved into the Chautauqua Health Collaborative, which continues to grow and raise funds for the purpose of providing education about vaccination, addressing vaccine hesitancy, and ensuring equitable access to vaccine opportunities.



Facility Inspection

## Wastewater COVID Surveillance

In 2021, the Chautauqua County Health Department laid the groundwork to begin a pilot project which aims to detect COVID-19 levels present in wastewater. Wastewater sampling is scheduled to begin in March 2022 in partnership with the New York State Department of Health, the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), and the University at Buffalo Department of Civil, Structural & Environmental Engineering. The cities of Dunkirk and Jamestown have been selected for our pilot program and will be pulling composite samples from the treatment plant entry point once per week. The samples will be representative of the entire sewershed; there is no ability to identify individuals or groups who are positive for COVID-19. Trends will be monitored over time and results will be publicly available so that community members, hospitals, and health care providers may understand the level of risk in the community.

## Comments from Community Partners

### Brian Durniok, President, UPMC Chautauqua

2021 was a challenging year for all of us in Chautauqua County due to the impact of the Covid pandemic. Fortunately, the burden of this challenge was reduced because of outstanding collaboration amongst healthcare providers and our Local Chautauqua Health department. UPMC Chautauqua is especially grateful for the communication and support provided by our local Health Department. This cooperation ensured that vital information and resources were shared so that our communities were cared for and vaccinated. It was very apparent that The Chautauqua County Health department was fully committed to keeping our citizens safe and healthy. We are very proud to have partnered with them on behalf of our communities.

### David O'Rourke, Ph.D.; District Superintendent and Chief Executive Officer; Erie 2-Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES:

Throughout the pandemic, the Chautauqua County Health department has been an essential partner to our schools. What's especially notable is the extent to which the county has worked to understand school systems and their needs. We could not have navigated the pandemic without the CCDOH. The exciting thing is that these partnerships will continue to serve our communities in new ways in future years.

### Daniel DeMarte, Ed.D.; President & CEO; SUNY Jamestown Community College

We have all endured great hardships through the pandemic. JCC has been fortunate to have had the skill, expertise, and constant assistance from our partners at the Chautauqua County Health Department. We are grateful for the guidance and support they provided keeping our communities as safe as possible, and for the opportunity to host vaccination clinics.

### Deborah Dibble, MS, FNP-BC; Director, Student Health Center; The State University of New York at Fredonia:

The presence of COVID-19 disease in the Western New York area not only changed the delivery of medical care in the region, but on a positive note, it enhanced the collaboration between university based health services and the county health department. Early on in the pandemic, processes were established for the notification of positive cases between SUNY Fredonia and the Chautauqua County Health Department. This was an ever evolving process, with the two entities working tirelessly around the clock to not only identify and isolate positive covid cases (376 cases in 2021) in the campus population, but to perform contact tracing and subsequent quarantine (699 cases in 2021) of those who were direct contacts. Although there were ebbs and flows in our positive case rates over the course of the pandemic, these collaborative efforts helped mitigate the spread of COVID-19 on the SUNY Fredonia campus, allowing in-person classes and on-campus activities to continue. I am truly grateful for the care and professionalism of the staff of the Chautauqua County Health Department as we have navigated this pandemic together.

# Coroner Program

In July, 2018, oversight of the Chautauqua County Coroner Program was transferred from the County Legislature to the Department of Health and Human Services.

A County Coroner is responsible to respond to the scene of an incident in order to perform preliminary investigation on cause and manner of death. The Chautauqua County Sheriff's Department dispatches the Coroners. In certain instances, a case may be referred to the Erie County Medical Examiner for comprehensive medicolegal death investigation services including autopsy and post-mortem toxicology, if applicable. The Coroners also play a role in developing the county's Mass casualty/Fatality Plan in preparation for any catastrophic incidents, which could be caused by natural, accidental, criminal or infectious means.

Although deaths need to be reported to the Coroner, not all people who have died require further examination. If a death appears to be natural or related to natural diseases, then the body will be released to a funeral home of the family's choosing.

Common situations where the Coroner takes custody of a person who has died include:

- A young person without documented medical history.
- A person with no legal next-of-kin or one that cannot be determined or identified during the initial investigation.
- Any person who has died due to unnatural circumstances including:
  - Suicide
  - Homicide
  - Accident

There are four coroners who conduct death investigations throughout the County. One change to the program implemented in 2018 was the exclusion of deaths in nursing homes or to Hospice patients as coroner cases. This change has resulted in a drastic reduction of the number of coroner cases.

Coroner Cases	2020	2021
<b>Cause of Death</b>		
Natural	256	277
Accident-Non Drug Related	21	17
Accident- Drug Related	42	53
Suicide	16	11
Homicide	1	4
Undetermined	2	3
Pending	0	13
<b>Total Cases</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>378</b>
<b>Coroner cases sent for Autopsy</b>	91	113

In 2020 and 2021, Coroners took on the additional responsibility of collecting postmortem specimens for COVID-19 and Influenza testing. Coroners collected these specimens when a decedent had been experiencing COVID-19 or flu-like symptoms, or when the manner of death was apparently natural, but the cause was unknown. UPMC Chautauqua and Westfield Memorial Hospital partnered with the Coroner Program to analyze specimens and report results.



Coroners (from left)  
Kenneth Haley, Richard Mackowiak, Douglas Sanderson (Lead Coroner), and Eugene Steele

# Environmental Health Services Division

The Environmental Health Services Division preserves a safe and healthy environment for County residents and visitors through inspections, surveillance, and enforcement. Division staff engage in preventative action by monitoring public water supplies, assisting property owners with private water and on-site wastewater treatment systems, inspecting food service establishments and other recreational facilities, and inspecting homes for lead hazards. Division staff address unexpected and emerging concerns by responding to public health emergencies and nuisance complaints.

The various programs, and the manpower Environmental Health Services Division staff spent implementing the programs, are reflected in the chart below.



## Environmental Health Unit Staff Time

Program	2020	2021
Private Water and Sewage	28%	30%
Public Water	15%	15%
COVID-19 Response	17%	16%
Lead	13%	12%
Food Service	7%	11%
Children's Camps, Campgrounds, Mobile Home Parks, Temporary Housing	3%	4%
Rabies	3%	3%
Other Programs	6%	2%
Swimming Pools & Bathing Beaches	2%	2%
Nuisance Investigations	2%	2%
CIA & ATUPA	2%	2%
Public Health Emergency Preparedness	1%	1%



## Water and Sewage

### Water Supply Program

#### Certified Environmental Laboratory for Water Analyses:

Staff maintain and operate a NYSDOH Environmental Laboratory Approval Program (ELAP) certified laboratory. The laboratory analyzes potable and non-potable water samples for indicator bacteria including coliform and Escherichia coli (E. coli).

Samples Analyzed	2020	2021
Potable Water	3031	2949
Non-Potable Water	456	524



#### Public Water Supply Program:

Water resource staff monitor public water supplies to ensure operators are providing safe drinking water to their customers, properly maintaining their water systems, and complying with NYS Sanitary Codes.



	2020	2021
Number of Water Systems Regulated	224	219
- Illnesses reported	0	0
Sanitary Surveys Completed	67	57
- Violation Issued	257	132
- Enforcement Taken	4	41

HHS staff collected 338 surveillance water samples from public water supplies; the samples were analyzed for bacteria in the HHS water laboratory.

Department staff work closely with public water supply owners and operators to upgrade their systems, extend water service when appropriate and respond to water supply emergencies. In 2021, HHS continued to work with the Villages of Fredonia and Mayville on major water system improvement projects; assisted the Town of Pomfret Water District #8 – Lily Dale and Village of Sinclairville on major infrastructure improvements; and worked with small system owners to improve their water supplies to deliver safe and abundant drinking water to their customers.



In 2021 HHS staff provided support to the City of Dunkirk, Village of Fredonia, and North Chautauqua County Water District during major water crises. Several boil water advisories were issued by HHS, requiring prompt action from certified water operators who worked closely with HHS to resolve the issues. On August 31, 2021, the City of Dunkirk suffered a major water main break which left the City and the North Chautauqua County Water District, which includes the Village of Brocton and Town of Portland Water Districts, with no or very limited water service. Due to quick action, crews were able to repair the broken section of water main and restore safe drinking water to over 20,000 residents in just a few days.

Also in 2021, the Village of Mayville installed state of the art, granular activated carbon filtration units on the active well that had been affected by Perfluorononanoic acid (PFNA). Routine testing of the treated water shows the filters are extremely successful at removing the contaminant which caused Mayville to be placed on a month long Do Not Drink Advisory in late 2020.

**Private Water Supply Program:** HHS staff provided technical advice to private water supply owners whose water required some type of treatment. Contamination of private water supplies by bacteria continues to be a problem with nearly a third of all private well samples analyzed in the HHS's water lab failing to meet drinking water standards and requiring some sort of treatment and resampling.

	2020	2021
Technical Advice Provided	391	328
Percent of private well samples fail	33.3%	30.4%



### Annual Drinking Water Contest

2019 Winner: Village of Fredonia  
Due to COVID-19 restrictions the annual contest has been postponed.

## Water and Sewage *continued*

### Private Sewage Permitting and Inspections

The HHS regulates private on-site wastewater treatment systems (OWTS), also known as septic systems. Staff provide guidance for OWTS installation, approve OWTS designs, and inspect the final installation of systems to ensure that all new and corrected systems comply with standards outlined in Article IV of the Sanitary Code of the Chautauqua County Health District and New York State Code 75.

	2020	2021
Septic Permits Issued	324	366
Septic Systems Installed	286	344

### Water and Sewage Surveys

Staff conduct Water and Sewage Surveys, also known as Loan Surveys or Property/Realty Transfer Surveys, for property owners. The surveys are required by the local sanitary code and by most lending agencies. Staff evaluate onsite wastewater treatment systems to ensure that they are functioning in compliance with the local sanitary code. Water system components are also surveyed to ensure compliance with New York State and local sanitary code standards. When Division staff identify violations to local regulations or areas of concern during an inspection, staff provide guidance to property owners to correct the areas of concern.

	2020	2021
Water and Sewage Surveys Conducted	746	695



### Mandatory Septic Inspection Program

In 2016 Environmental Health Services Division staff began implementing the Mandatory Inspection Program. The program aims to improve surface water quality by identifying properties with inadequate onsite wastewater treatment systems and providing guidance to correct the inadequate systems. The inspections are focused on properties within 250 feet of Chautauqua County lakefronts that have either an OWTS installed more than 30 years ago or an OWTS that was installed without a permit from Chautauqua County.

Due to unanticipated demands on staff in 2021, no mandatory inspections were completed. Prior to 2021, the properties of concern around Bear Lake were inspected as were a portion of the properties of concern around Chautauqua Lake. Additional inspections are planned for Chautauqua Lake and Findley Lake properties in areas that are not scheduled to receive public sewers. Many properties that would be subject to inspection under the Mandatory Inspection Program have been inspected under the requirements of the property transfer water sewage survey inspection process.

### Public Sewer Program

HHS assures onsite commercial and private wastewater systems are in compliance with all applicable NYSDOH regulations. Staff assist municipalities and other county departments in the formation and extension of sewer districts to areas with failing commercial and private OWTS. In 2021 HHS staff continued to work closely with the South and Center Chautauqua Lake Sewer District (SCCLSD) on phase one to extend sewer service along the west side of Chautauqua Lake in the Town of North Harmony and with the Town of Ripley Sewer District to extend sewer service to Shortman Road and Route 5 along Lake Erie. Both of these projects will eliminate contamination of county lakes from failing and inadequate OWTS. The SCCLSD west side extension project is progressing nicely and is currently under construction with an anticipated completion date of Spring 2023. Phase two of the SCCLSD west side extension project includes extending sewer mains to Prendergast Point in the town of North Harmony and was granted \$8 million towards the project thus far.



### Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP)

Public health threats are always present, whether caused by natural, accidental, or intentional means, which can lead to public health emergencies. The goal of public health emergency preparedness is to be prepared to prevent, respond to, and rapidly recover from public health threats including infectious disease, natural disasters, biological, chemical, nuclear and radiological events. Through funding from the CDC our PHEP program seeks to build the capacity of our work force to respond to existing and emerging health threats. Specific duties include enhancing our capacity to respond to bioterrorist attacks, establishing communications programs, educating and training public health and health care professionals and the general public in emergency response and preparing to distribute vaccines, drugs and other protective measure or treatments in a timely fashion.

The PHEP program was put to the ultimate test in 2021 by the COVID-19 Pandemic (see COVID19 Section of this report). In May of 2021 our team responded to a foodborne outbreak of Hepatitis A by providing emergent vaccination of individuals who may have been exposed. Our efforts provided Hepatitis A vaccine to almost 400 residents of our county. PHEP also responded to numerous water supply emergencies in 2021.

## Food Service

### Food Service Establishment Permitting and Inspections

The Environmental Health Services Division performs regular inspections of permanent temporary, and mobile food service establishments. In 2021 the Environmental Health Services Division permitted 596 food service establishments

Food service establishments are classified as low, medium, or high risk. Low risk establishments include bar-only businesses; these establishments are inspected every two years. Medium risk restaurants are commonly referred to as “cook and serve” because foods are prepared for immediate consumption; these establishments are inspected once per year.

High-risk establishments prepare foods in advance, cool and reheat food items before they are served to the customer. Food safety practices limit the amount of time foods are held in the temperature “danger zone”. The danger zone is the temperature range between 41 °F and 135 °F where pathogenic bacteria begin to replicate and may reach dangerous levels capable of causing illness. High risk establishments must be inspected either two times per year or undergo one inspection and one Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) review. During the HACCP review, a potentially hazardous food item is tracked from the point of arrival at the establishment, through preparation, until it is served to the customer. The review identifies critical points in food handling when preparers can stop the transmission of foodborne illness.

In the event of a complaint, restaurants are inspected within seven days of the logged complaint. During inspections, sanitarians check to see that service workers are handling food properly, that foods are kept at the proper temperature and are being stored properly. They also ensure that the restaurant environment meets the requirements of the Chautauqua County Sanitary Code which includes the regulations of the New York State Sanitary Code.



	2020	2021
Food Service Establishment Inspections	353	565
Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points	8	24
Red Critical Violations	131	212
Temporary Food Service Establishment Inspections	5	91
Red Critical Violations	0	2

### Food Handler Safety Training

The Chautauqua County Sanitary Code requires all food establishments to have at least one individual complete a food handler training course approved by the Public Health Director. Properly trained food handlers reduce the prevalence of unsafe activities that lead to foodborne illness. Environmental Health staff operated a training program from 2010 to 2020. However the availability of quality food safety trainings has increased such that Division staff no longer operate food safety classes. Staff continue to provide outreach materials and food safety guidance as part of a new food establishment information packages and at the time of routine inspections.

## Lead

### Childhood Lead Poisoning Primary Prevention Program

HHS is a grantee for the New York State Department of Health Childhood Lead Poisoning Primary prevention Program. The NYS Health Department identified the city of Jamestown, NY as a designated area of ‘high-risk’ for children with elevated blood lead levels. Children are exposed to lead based paint due to the areas old housing stock. To prevent lead poisoning in children, the Environmental Health Division inspects homes built before 1978, with children under the age of six that reside in those homes.

	2020	2021
Homes Inspected	87	39
Received Treatment to Mitigate Lead Exposure	11	2

### Lead Testing in School Drinking Water

HHS water staff continued to work closely with public school districts in the County and BOCES to ensure their compliance with NYS’s Lead Testing in School Drinking Water law enacted in 2016. This law requires all public schools to collect samples from all water fixtures used for drinking or cooking, to immediately turn off fixtures that exceed the lead Action Level of 15 parts per billion, and to remediate those fixtures. Once results are received, schools are required to notify parents and staff of any exceedances. The law requires schools to resample drinking water fixtures every 5 years beginning in 2020.





**Lead (continued)**

**Lead Poisoning Prevention Program**

The HHS Lead Poisoning Prevention Program provide services county-wide to children with elevated blood lead levels. In October 2019, NYS reduced the action level at which they consider a child ‘lead poisoned’ to >5 ug/dL, while the previous action level was >10 ug/dL. All children identified as ‘elevated’ receive lead poisoning education, nurse care management, environmental investigation, lead hazard assessment, training and hazard control follow up clearance inspections. Children receive follow up services until they have two blood lead tests under the action level.



	2020	2021
Child blood lead test performed	2,235	2,132
Children followed due to high blood levels	86	85

**Lead - Chautauqua Healthy Homes Program**

In 2021, HHS was awarded a \$3 million grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for Lead Hazard Control. In partnership with Chautauqua Opportunities, Inc., our goal is to make 140 units lead safe for households with children <6 yrs. old. This program consists of window and door replacement, as well as the remediation of all lead hazards identified in the unit. Certified Lead Abatement Contractors are hired to complete the remediation. This year, we have completed our start-up process and program implementation.

16 Lead Inspection/ Risk Assessments have been completed this year and are moving towards completion in 2022.

**Swimming Pools and Bathing Beaches**

Swimming pools used by the public are permitted and inspected annually by the Environmental Health Unit to ensure that pool staff, safety equipment, operation records, and water quality are in compliance with permit requirements. Seventy three (73) pools were permitted in 2021.

Permitted beaches are inspected annually by Environmental Health Services Division staff to determine if beach staff, safety equipment, and operation records are in compliance with permit requirements. Beach water samples are routinely collected throughout the summer season. The samples are analyzed for the indicator bacteria Escherichia coli (E. coli) at the HHS Water Lab. When beach samples are determined to be unsatisfactory the beach operator is notified and the beach is closed for swimming until a subsequent sample shows the water to be satisfactory.

Permitted beaches are typically sampled once weekly during their individual swim seasons. Beaches are sampled more often if unsatisfactory E. coli results require subsequent samples or special projects require more information.



	2020	2021
# of Beaches Serviced	24	29
Staff Collected Samples	439	482

**Harmful algal blooms (HABs)** related to blue-green algae/cyanobacteria are typically observed on Chautauqua and Findley Lakes in late July – August. HABs have become increasingly common and persistent in recent years. The public health risk associated with HABs is the possible release of toxins during bloom events. Currently there is little understanding as to why or when toxins are released during a bloom, consequently HHS treats all HABs as though they may be releasing toxins.

When HABs become widespread in one or more lakes, press releases/alerts, including educational information about water safety and HABs, are sent to local media outlets in an effort to protect human and domestic pet health. Signs to alert the public of the potential danger are also posted at public access points of the affected areas. The Environmental Health Unit looks for signs of current or impending HABs during routine beach sampling in addition to responding to reported sightings at bathing beaches. If a HAB does develop at a bathing beach, the beach is immediately closed for swimming. Once the HAB dissipates and a water test shows that microcystin toxin levels are less than 4 ppb in the swim area, the beach is re-opened.

## CIAA/ATUPA

### Clean Indoor Air Act (CIAA)

The Clean Indoor Air Act (CIAA) law makes smoking at all worksites, including restaurants and bars illegal. The Environmental Health unit inspects local establishments to ensure that the CIAA law is being upheld. Where establishments are found to be in violation of the law, formal enforcement is taken against the facility owner or operator by issuing a Notice of Violation within seven days.

### Adolescent Tobacco Use Prevention Act (ATUPA)

The Environmental Health division is responsible for performing compliance checks mandated by the Adolescent Tobacco Use Prevention Act (ATUPA). In order to assess compliance of tobacco vendors in the County, the Environmental Health unit takes underage youth (ages 15 to 20) without legal IDs to tobacco vendors where they attempt to purchase cigarettes. If vendors agree to sell tobacco to the youths, the violations are reported to the state and enforcement action taken. The Department is also responsible for verifying that all tobacco dealers and vendors are registered with the NYS Department of Taxation and Finance (DTF) to sell tobacco, post required signage, and display tobacco and herbal cigarettes behind the counter or in a locked container. HHS also ensures that vaping products and E-cigarettes sold in the county comply with NYS law.

	2020	2021
Adult Compliance Checks	116	105
Minor Compliance Checks	75	25
Retailers Found in Violation	0	0
Fines Paid	0	0

## Rabies Control

The Environmental Health Services Division is charged with the prevention of human cases of rabies in Chautauqua County. This includes promoting pet rabies vaccinations, investigating all potential rabies exposures (animal bites & scratches) that are reported, and submitting animal specimens to the NYS Department of Health Wadsworth Laboratory for rabies testing when circumstances deem analysis necessary. In accordance with NYS Public Health Law, any person with knowledge of an animal bite is required to report the incident to the Health Department for investigation.

	2020	2021
Rabies Clinics Held	5	12
Dogs, Cats and Ferrets Vaccinated	564	1,347
Post-Exposure Prophylaxis Authorization	0	37
Pre-Exposure Rabies Vaccine	9	38
Incident Reports/Investigations	377	361
Specimens Submitted for Testing	38	38
Animals Testing Positive for Rabies	4	1



Rabies Clinic

## Body Art Establishments and Tanning Facilities

### Body Art Establishment Licensing and Inspections

The Chautauqua County Sanitary Code requires annual certification and inspection of body art establishments. All new body artists, including temporary and guest artists, must pass a County administered test to obtain a body artist certificate of sanitation. Established body artists must renew their certification annually.

	2020	2021
Number of Establishments	18	21
Number of Artists	34	41

### Tanning Facilities

Tanning facilities are permitted and routinely inspected by Environmental Health staff. Tanning facilities must comply with New York State and local laws. Six (6) facilities were permitted in 2021.

# Children & Youth with Special Health Care Needs

## Early Intervention Program

The Early Intervention (EI) program serves children from birth up to the age of three years who have been diagnosed with, or are at high risk for, a developmental delay. Services are provided to eligible children by HHS staff, as well as NYSDOH approved EI providers, and include service coordination, assistive technology service, audiology, family training, counseling, parent support groups, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, vision services, special education, nursing, medical services for diagnostic or evaluation purposes, nutrition, psychological services, health services and transportation and related costs. Services are provided in a variety of settings which include the home, baby sitter, day care and center-based programs.

	10/19 to 9/20	10/20 to 9/21
New Referrals	344	372
Referrals Qualifying for EI Services	173	199
Referrals for At Risk Children	136	128
EI Program Children Participants	742	740

## Preschool Special Education Program

The Preschool Special Education program provides services for the three to five year-old population. Each school district in the County is responsible for authorization of services. Services are provided by certified professionals in three Chautauqua County center-based special education programs and in less restrictive settings including Head Start, regular nursery schools, and the home. New restrictions on the services that can be billed for Medicaid reimbursement present challenges to the Preschool program. The average cost per child is \$11,961.00.

	2019-2020 School Year	2020-2021 School Year
Children Enrolled in Program	441	412
Children Received Center-Based Services	114	108
Children Received Related Services	327	304

## Children & Youth with Special Health Care Needs

The Children with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) program is for families of children ages birth to 21 who have, or may have, a serious health condition. The program gives information and referral services for families of children who need a health or related service beyond those normally needed by children. Conditions may be physical, behavioral, or emotional. From October 1, 2020 to October 30, 2021 there were 104 children and their families assisted through this program. New to 2021, CYSHCN is long term case managing children with high lead levels and those born with Prenatal Substance Abuse for Developmental Delays. We are currently following 24 children with lead exposure and 30 children with Prenatal Substance Exposure.



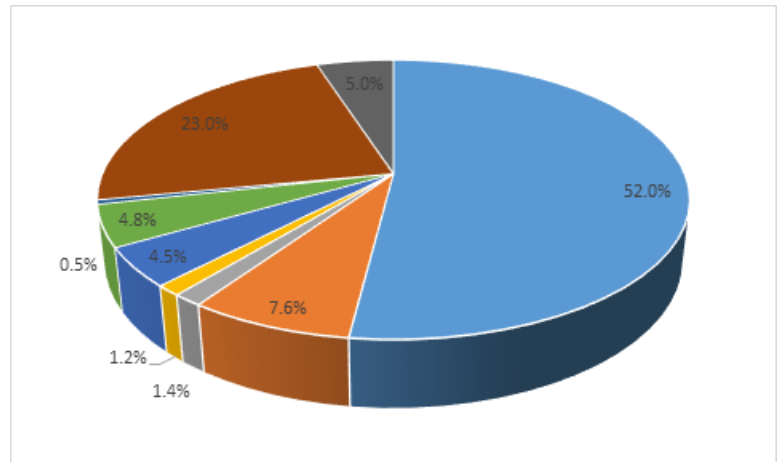


# Nursing Division/Community Health

The Nursing Division is a unique component of the Chautauqua County Government in that it operates within a NYSDOH licensed Title X, Article 28 Diagnostic and Treatment Center facility. Clinic operations and community health nursing protect and promote the well-being of County residents through several programs which are featured below.

The following chart reflects the distribution of nursing time and effort attributed to the various disease control and family health programs implemented by the Division of Nursing Services.

COVID		52.0%
Communicable Disease		7.6%
Family Planning		1.4%
General/Admin		1.2%
HIV/STD		4.5%
Immunization/IAP		4.8%
Lead Poisoning Program		0.5%
Maternal & Child Health		23.0%
Nurse Family Partnership		5.0%



## Communicable Disease Control

Communicable diseases are illnesses caused by viruses or bacteria that people spread to one another through contact with contaminated surfaces, bodily fluids, blood products, insect bites, or through the air. Control of these diseases is one of the main functions of a public health department. New York State requires over 70 diseases be reported to the local health department, requiring staff to investigate and provide education to prevent further spread of illness and to contact exposed individuals if treatment or monitoring for symptoms is needed.

Public health surveillance helps to detect outbreaks and enable prompt public health intervention. Many hours are dedicated to this program to maintain the community's health.

Communicable Disease Nurse Contact and Follow-Up	2020	2021
Gonorrhea Cases	140	193
Chlamydia Cases	250	252
Syphilis Cases	11	12

## STI/HIV Program

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are among the most commonly reported communicable diseases in the county, state, and nation. The STI/HIV program aims to stop the spread and reduce the incidence of these infections, HHS works in collaboration with The Chautauqua Center clinics to offer screening and treatment for STIs, disease investigations and safer sexual health counseling. Nurses provide counseling for HIV-positive clients and make referrals to specialty providers for treatment. STI/HIV educational information is available to schools, human service providers, community organizations and numerous outreach events. HHS home visiting teams also provide education and referrals for STI's and HIV.



Public Health Nursing Staff

### Hepatitis C Testing

A New York State Law requires health care facilities to offer Hepatitis C screening to every individual born between 1945 and 1964. In 2021 our department followed 142 cases of Hepatitis C as part of the communicable disease program compared to 136 cases followed in 2020.

### Hepatitis A Increase

Hepatitis A is a vaccine-preventable liver infection caused by the Hepatitis A virus (HAV). This virus is very contagious and is found in the stool and blood of people who are infected. HAV is spread when someone unknowingly ingests the virus, even in microscopic amounts, through close personal contact with an infected person or through eating contaminated food or drink.

Symptoms of hepatitis A can be mild and last a few weeks to severe and last several months. They include fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, dark urine, clay-colored bowel movements, joint pain, and yellowing of the skin and eyes (jaundice).

Chautauqua County typically observes 1-2 cases of Hepatitis A over the course of a year. In 2018 and 2019, there was just one case per year. In 2020, case numbers rose to 26 cases of Hepatitis A; a dramatic and significant increase. Cases continue to rise in 2021 reaching a total of 28. The Chautauqua County Health Department is working closely with the New York State Department of Health to monitor this situation and is regularly holding vaccination clinics in high-risk settings.

### Immunization Program

A core public health role is the prevention of vaccine-preventable diseases, especially in children and vulnerable populations. The Immunization Program provides free required vaccinations for children through the state’s Vaccine for Children (VFC) program and in accordance with CDC-recommended immunization schedules. Some adult immunizations such as influenza are also available. HHS aims to prevent illness and to reduce the spread of communicable diseases.

	2020	2021
COVID-19 Vaccines		39,648
Other Vaccines	277	285
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>39,933</b>

### Tuberculosis Program

As the Public Health Law specifies the necessity of local health department control activities, Chautauqua County Department of Health and Human Services conducts nurse/physician operated tuberculosis control clinics.

### Family Planning Services and Teen Pregnancy Prevention

The Chautauqua County Department of Health and Human Services in collaboration with The Chautauqua Center, continue to provide high quality reproductive health services to the community through clinical services and sexual health education.

Public health nurses and staff also provide extensive community outreach, health education and public health detailing to a wide array of audiences including but not limited to schools, community agencies, health care providers and inmates.

### Correctional Health

Public health took over managing the jail health system in April 2017. This program, although not surveyed as part of the Article 28 Diagnostic and Treatment license, is monitored by the State Department of Corrections. As a County Health Department we recognize those that we serve in the jail are from our community and most will be returning to our community. We have moved from not only responding to illness but towards health promotion and disease prevention.

	2020	2021
Nursing Visits	1,954	2,135
Acute Nursing Visits	430	259
Scheduled Provider Visits	455	640
Withdrawal Visits	-	1,123

To meet this goal staff has been trained to recognize prevention and health promotion as well as chronic disease management. We offer a public health approach to care that includes reproductive health, immunization, maternal child and preconception education, medication assisted therapy (MAT) program, increasing referrals and linkage to mental health; dental; primary care and Hepatitis C treatment when released. Nursing coverage is provided 7 days a week including holidays.

### Opioid Overdose Prevention Program

The HHS Public Health Division is registered with NYSDOH as an Opioid Overdose Prevention Program. We work with participating law enforcement and community members to train and supply them with intranasal Narcan kits. Narcan, also known as naloxone, is a lifesaving opioid antagonist which reverses opiate effects of sedation and respiratory depression thereby preventing a fatal overdose.

Opioid Training	2020	2021
Number of People Trained	446	725



Correctional Health Staff

# Maternal and Infant Health Programs

The **Community Health Worker Program** provides one-on-one outreach, education and home visiting services to pregnant and parenting women and families at highest risk for poor birth outcomes, particularly low birthweight infants. Community Health Workers are trained to provide referrals for a wide range of services and to provide support and assistance for families trying to obtain needed services.

**Nurse Family Partnership (NFP)** is an evidence-based, community health program that serves low-income women pregnant with their first child. Each vulnerable new mom is partnered with a registered nurse early in her pregnancy and receives ongoing nurse home visits. It is a life-transforming partnership for the mom and her child. Nurse Family Partnership is designed to improve pregnancy outcomes, children’s subsequent health and development and parents’ economic self-sufficiency.

### Breastfeeding Support

All NFP nurses are certified lactation counselors and assist new mothers with reaching their breastfeeding goals. Nurses collaborate with the HealthEducation Division to increase and improve community supports for breastfeeding. Nurses/CLC’s provide education and support through the County BF Hotline, home visits and the “Chautauqua County Breastfeeding Moms (and Moms to be)” Facebook Page. Nurses/CLC’s also meet with all new moms after delivery to provide education, support and the hotline number prior to discharge.

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the community in many ways. Home Visiting programs like Nurse Family Partnership were put on hold as Public Health Nurses were pulled to work many different aspects of the pandemic. Nurses were needed to complete case investigations, conduct contact tracing, perform Covid testing, administer vaccine, facilitate pool testing in the schools and many other duties. As a result, many clients were lost to follow up and any incoming referrals were shared with other agencies. These changes limited family engagement with the county’s maternal and infant support programs. Public health nurses and other home visiting staff need to get back out into the community and educate agencies and providers about our maternal and infant support programs. Partnering agencies need to know we are accepting new referrals and ready to serve families in need.



Maternal and Infant Health Program Staff

Home Visits/Telehealth	2020	2021
Maternal & Infant Health Program	837	796
Nurse Family Partnership	408	26
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1,245</b>	<b>822</b>

Referrals Made	2020	2021
Mental Health Services	134	76
Primary Care Providers	130	43
Smoking Cessation Programs	14	2
Dental	44	42
Housing	51	42
Transportation	31	11
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>216</b>

Health Event for Expecting Mothers



Nurse Family Partnership Staff





# Community Health Education and Planning

The purpose of the Health Education and Planning Unit is to identify health issues of local importance, develop and implement strategies to address these issues, and strengthen the community's long-term ability to manage and improve the health and well-being of residents.

HHS provides health education and guidance, including the use of information and education to modify or strengthen practices that promote public health and prevent illness. These activities are designed to encourage people to assume personal responsibility for maintaining and improving their own health; increase their capacity to utilize appropriate health services; help them better control an illness they may have; and, provide information to stimulate community action on social and physical environmental factors that impact health.



Community Health Education Planning Team

Current public health research indicates that individuals are more likely to make healthy choices when those choices are also easy and affordable. HHS leads or partners with initiatives that support improved infrastructure for physical activity, access to nutritious foods, and reduced exposure to tobacco in addition to other prevention initiatives.

Protecting and improving the public's health and promoting wellness cannot be managed by an organization, health care provider, government or community agency alone. Partnerships, coalitions and collaborations are essential to the public health effort.

## Chautauqua County 2019-2021 Community Health Assessment

Local health departments (LHD) across New York State are responsible for completing a community health assessment (CHA) to ensure that the needs of the community are being met. A full health assessment of the community and community health improvement plan were completed in December 2019.

The Prevention Agenda 2019-2024 is New York State's health improvement plan that was designed to demonstrate how communities across the state can work together to improve overall health and quality of life for all New Yorkers. The Prevention Agenda envisions New York becoming the Healthiest State in the Nation, and designates five priority areas:

- Prevent chronic diseases
- Promote a healthy and safe environment
- Promote healthy women, infants, and children
- Promote well-being and prevent mental and substance use disorders
- Prevent communicable diseases

The Prevention Agenda outlines goals and objectives, as well as appropriate and evidence-based interventions for each priority area. Indicators for tracking progress of interventions are provided at the county-level, including racial, ethnic and socioeconomic breakdowns to track changes in health disparities.

LHDs across the state were expected to work collaboratively with county hospitals- Allegheny Health Network Westfield Memorial Hospital Brooks-TLC Hospital Systems, Inc., and UPMC Chautauqua- which were responsible for completing their respective community health needs assessments. Key stakeholders for public health and health care were also invited to assist in the community health assessment process. Collectively, the local health department, hospitals, and community organizations make up the Chautauqua County Community Health Planning Team (CCCHPT). These additional partners included the Chautauqua Health Network, the Chautauqua County Department of Mental Hygiene, The Chautauqua Center, The Resource Center, Prevention Works, and the Chautauqua County Office for Aging Services. Population Health Collaborative of Western New York provided technical support as the Western New York technical assistance lead.

The CCCHPT worked together to gauge the community's perceived health priorities, assets, and needs through a web-based and paper survey, and community conversations with eight varied work groups. The team examined secondary health data provided by the NYSDOH and selected collaborative and individual priorities, disparities, and interventions. Collaborative priorities, along with background data and potential interventions were reviewed individually with local content area experts. The following collaborative Prevention Agenda priority areas were selected:

- Prevent chronic diseases (HHS and all hospitals)
  - Disparity: Low-income residents
- Promote healthy women, infants, and children (HHS, BMH, UPMC)
- Promote well-being and prevent mental and substance use disorders (HHS and all hospitals)

Many of the interventions selected for inclusion in the community health improvement plan are on-going, cross-sectoral initiatives. The goal of our plan is to build upon and expand actions that are working to create a healthier Chautauqua County.

Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2021, HHS worked with all partners to update NYSDOH on the progress of identified community health improvement plan measures.

## Public Relations and Outreach

To connect with the public and share messages about programs, health promotion, and community collaborations, the HHS Division of Public Health works with media networks that include local newspapers, Penny Savers, local television news stations, outdoor advertising, and local radio stations. CCDH- HS also uses social media tools such as Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. We receive and respond to personal health related questions from the public via the private message feature on our various program-specific Facebook pages and Chautauqua County Health email. Many community members accessed the Chautauqua County Health Department Facebook to monitor updates related to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as other current public health issues. Facebook insights show that our page reach (the number of people who saw any content from our page) in 2021 was 182,938. Our Facebook page was visited 42,999 times; our top performing post reached 33.2K people. We had 807 new page “Likes”, bringing the number of followers to 8,945.

In 2020, 72 press releases were issued by the division directly, and an additional 16 were issued in conjunction with the County Executive’s Office. This division worked to engage community leaders and the media in educating the community about COVID-19 and guiding them on COVID-19 vaccination, COVID-19 testing, social distancing, sanitizing, and mask wearing at the beginning of the pandemic.

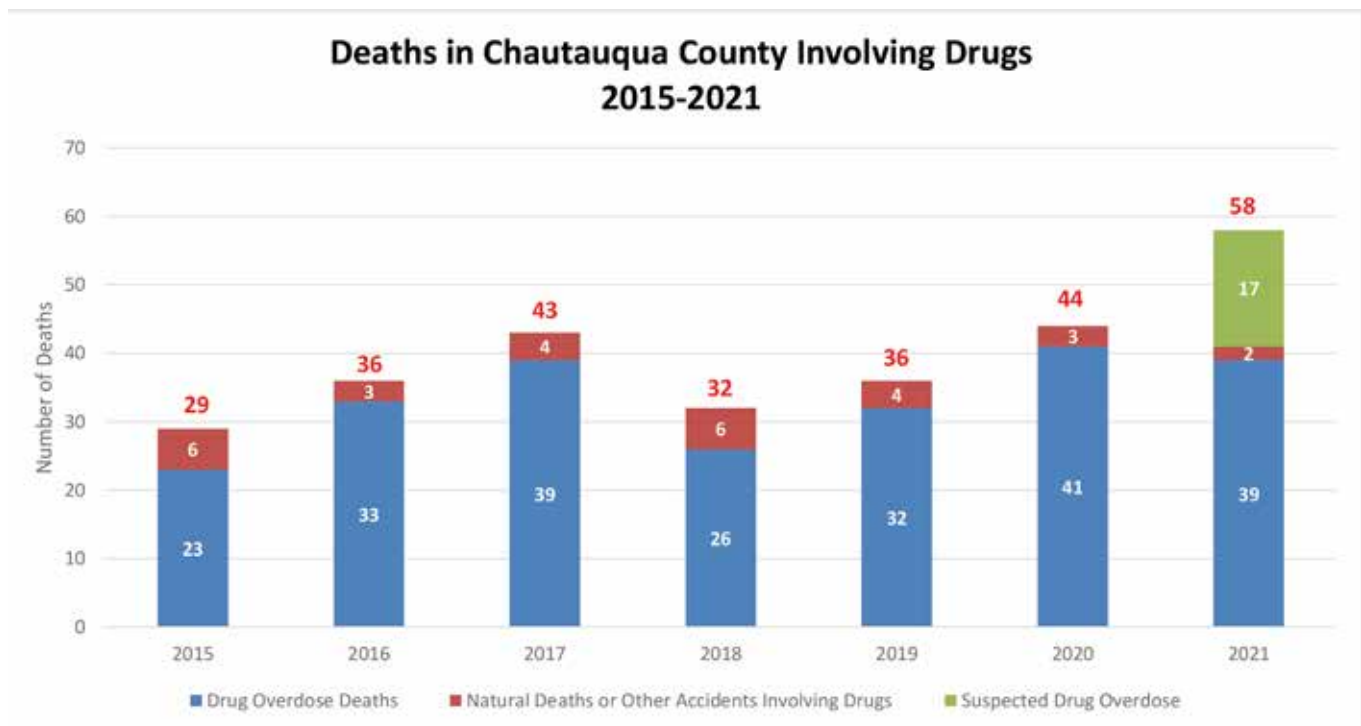
Departmental program experts participate in educational events across the County as appropriate, with a goal of reaching a diverse population of County residents. Use of virtual technologies (Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Skype) and social media tools continued to be crucial for reaching community members, in addition to traditional media sources.

## Overdose Data 2 Action (OD2A)

In 2019, NYSDOH awarded funds to HHS for the Overdose Data to Action (OD2A) program. This is a four-year grant which aims to support counties in enhancing current and proposed activities to respond to the opioid crisis by improving the quality and timeliness of overdose and drug-related data, rolling out evidence-based strategies at the local level, improving support to medical providers and health systems, and improving linkages to care for people who use drugs. Grant activities and evidence-based interventions take a harm reduction and trauma-informed care approach, encouraging the use of people-first language.

In Chautauqua County these funds are used to help support naloxone trainings in a variety of settings including community, public safety, and jail; expand access to Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) into new and various medical settings; sustain a real-time overdose mapping program (ODMAP), connect people who use drugs with peer services in the jail and community; and facilitate better data sharing with hospitals and the Coroner Program.

In 2021, Chautauqua County experienced a dramatic increase in the number of fatal overdoses. This trend is Preliminary figures for the year indicate that there were 39 confirmed fatal overdoses, and additional 17 suspected overdoses, as well as 2 natural deaths or other accidents involving drugs. In total, there were 56 confirmed or suspected fatal overdoses, which was a 27% increase over 2020, and a 75% increase over 2019 overdose figures. Data are preliminary and subject to change.



## Mobile Dental Van (S-Miles To Go)

For more than 15 years, children in rural areas have received care through The University at Buffalo School of Dental Medicine state-of-the-art mobile dental unit. The S-Miles To Go program services more than 3,500 patients each year throughout Chautauqua County. The HHS Public Health Division continues to partner with the S-miles To Go program, assisting with referrals to the dental van, which operates with Article 28 status, and accepts Medicaid, Child Health Plus, or collects fees on a sliding scale.

The van is typically staffed by pediatric and general dentists from the School of Dental Medicine, as well as a dental hygienist and a dental assistant. Students at the School of Dental Medicine gain firsthand experience working with patients in rural Chautauqua County.

Inside the van, children can get a variety of dental care including: exams, cleanings, fillings, extractions, crowns, oral health screenings, sealants, and fluoride treatments. Approximately the size of a school bus, the van contains a state-of-the-art dental clinic including three dental chairs, a panoramic X-ray machine, a sanitization center and a patient waiting area. There is also a powered chair lift for disabled patients.

## Linkages and Coalition Building

In an effort to work collaboratively with the community, the HHS participated in nearly 40 coalitions and task forces in 2021. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, most meetings of these community partnerships were held virtually. The strong relationships with community partners and Erie 2-Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES / Chautauqua County schools were crucial in securing assistance to carry out various pandemic needs, such as identification of testing and vaccination sites, educating and encouraging the community to get tested and/or vaccinated for COVID-19, distributing health messages to the community, and gathering household supplies needed for families in isolation and quarantine.

## Tobacco Use Prevention

Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable disease and death in the United States; nearly all tobacco product use begins during youth and young adulthood.

HHS collaborates with the Tobacco-Free Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, Allegany (Tobacco-Free CCA) Program administered by the Roswell Park Cancer Institute to carry out tobacco prevention efforts. Tobacco-Free CCA receives funds from NYSDOH to complete their work plan, which aims to:

- Reduce the impact of retail tobacco marketing on youth by educating communities about the manipulative marketing tactics of the tobacco industry.
- Establish tobacco-free-community norms through clean outdoor air policies by working with communities to create more smoke-free parks, playgrounds, and beaches.
- Lessen secondhand smoke exposure by working with landlords and tenants to implement smoke-free housing policies in multiunit dwellings.
- Diminish tobacco imagery in youth-rated movies by working for change in the rating system to require an R rating for movies that contain smoking imagery.
- Decrease tobacco-industry presence on social media by working with stakeholders and internet sites to enact and adhere to policies that protect youth-from tobacco imagery.

In addition to providing support to Tobacco-Free CCA, the HHS explores policy-level actions that can be taken at the county level to prevent tobacco use. The Division of Environmental Health Services continues to enforce the Tobacco 21 law, which took effect in September 2016.

In 2021, HHS worked with Tobacco-Free CCA to educate the Chautauqua County Board of Health about tobacco retail licensing policies, and their ability to influence behavior change through community-level zoning and retail regulations. The Board of Health continues to explore the possibility of establishing a county-level tobacco license in partnership with the department, Tobacco-Free CCA, and the County Legal Department.

Through the Nicotine Annihilation Team, HHS partners with Prevention Works, Erie 2 Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES, Health Systems Change for a Tobacco-Free WNY, Tobacco-Free CCA, HOPE Chautauqua, and The Resource Center to address the issue of teen use of electronic cigarettes and other vaping devices. The team develops and distributes educational materials to school leaders and parents, educates the public through social media, and is reviewing and providing recommendations for school policies regarding e-cigarette use and disciplinary measures.

Additionally in 2021, HHS partnered with Health Systems Change for a Tobacco-Free WNY to distribute nicotine replacement therapy (gum, lozenges, patches, etc.) to community members interested in quitting smoking. HHS has staff trained in Tobacco Treatment Practice and partnered with St. Peter's Health Partners to facilitate tobacco cessation sessions in Chautauqua County.





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**Paul M. Wendel, Jr.**  
County Executive

**Christine Schuyler, BSN, RN, MHA**  
Commissioner of Social Services  
Public Health Director



Become a Chautauqua County  
Foster/Adoptive Parent  
Call: 716-661-8212

## OFFICE LOCATIONS

**South County Office Building**  
Main Assistance Office and  
Children & Family Services  
110 East Fourth Street  
Jamestown, New York 14701

**Hall R. Clothier Building**  
Health Clinic, Environmental Health,  
Child Support, and Administration  
7 North Erie Street  
Mayville, New York 14757

**North County Office Building**  
Emergency Assistance and  
Children & Family Services  
319 Central Avenue  
Dunkirk, New York 14048

## CONNECT

**Chautauqua County**  
Online: [chqgov.com](http://chqgov.com)

**Apply for and track  
SNAP/HEAP benefits:**  
Online: [mybenefits.ny.gov](http://mybenefits.ny.gov)

**Apply for Medicaid**  
Online: [nystateofhealth.ny.gov](http://nystateofhealth.ny.gov)  
(855) 355-5777

## HOTLINE NUMBERS

**Report alleged  
Elder Abuse or Neglect**  
716-753-4447

**Report alleged Child  
Abuse or Neglect**  
General Public Hotline: 800-342-3720  
Mandated Reporter Hotline: 800-635-1522

**Report Welfare Fraud:**  
800-388-5365