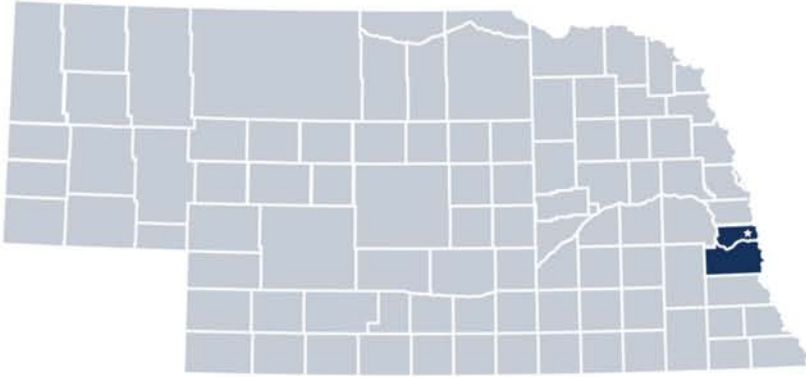


# Sarpy/Cass Health Department

Serving Sarpy and Cass counties



# 2022

# ANNUAL REPORT





## IMPROVING VACCINE ACCESS THROUGH SCHOOL CLINICS

As the residents of Sarpy and Cass counties continue to navigate through the pandemic, the Sarpy/Cass Health Department (SCHD) committed to ensuring access to COVID-19 vaccine through numerous strategies. Vaccination is a key public health strategy to combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

Schools are a large part of the daily lives of students and their families, and schools are an essential part of a robust community. Convenience is one main indicator that contributes to individuals deciding to get vaccinated. School based vaccination clinics is one strategy that SCHD utilized to amplify residents', particularly families, access to COVID-19 vaccines across Sarpy and Cass counties.

The SCHD took the lead on planning and coordinating school-based clinics throughout the jurisdiction. To ensure clinics were successful the SCHD vaccination team relied on a number of community partners. Key partners included the Medical Reserve Corp (MRC), Team Rubican, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), local law enforcement, emergency medical services (EMS) staff and school district leaders and staff.

The SCHD worked closely with the schools in the district to encourage families and surrounding community members to participate vaccination clinics. Outreach materials were created that provided essential details (ex. date, time and how to make an appointment), general vaccine information (ex. COVID-19 vaccine schedule), links to vaccine fact sheets and consent forms. These outreach materials were shared with all school districts, public and private, in the health jurisdiction.

In fiscal year 2022, school-based clinics were held in eight different schools across six of the nine public school districts in the health jurisdiction. The school-based clinics were well attended, and the size of each clinic was reflective of the community it was held in. Clinic sizes ranged from 200 to nearly 2,000 doses administered at each event. Through this collaboration, the department was able to provide COVID-19 vaccine to school staff, students, families and the community at large.

# ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report includes examples of efforts by this local health department to make the “Good Life” a healthy one in their jurisdiction. The following examples reflect work supported through multiple sources of funding, including monies from the Nebraska Health Care Funding Act (HCFA).

Local health departments act as communities’ Chief Health Strategists by assuring that the health and wellbeing of Nebraskans are protected and improved. Local health departments do this by working in each of the Three Core Function Areas of Public Health:



**Assessment:** Collect and analyze information about health problems in Nebraska communities.



**Assurance:** Promote effective coordination and use of community resources to protect the health and wellbeing of Nebraskans.



**Policy Development:** Work with partners to apply data, educate the public, and develop programs and policies—all to address and prevent illness, disease and disability.

## Community Health Assessment (CHA) / Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)

The SCHED uses the CHA process to ensure that the physical and behavioral health needs in the district are met. Since 2008, the SCHED has participated in a collaborative, regional CHA that includes Douglas, Sarpy, and Cass counties in Nebraska and Pottawattamie County, Iowa. This regional assessment looks at the health status, behaviors, and needs in the four-county Omaha Metropolitan area. The regional CHA identified mental health as the overarching priority.

Additionally, the SCHED conducted a minority health needs assessment last year. We utilized a combination of in-person and phone surveys, listening sessions, and key informant interviews to best understand the needs and assets of the diverse communities within the SCHED service area.

In March 2022, SCHED developed a [CHIP update](https://thewellbeingpartners.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/TWP_CHIP_MARCH2022_UPDATE_FINAL.pdf) working with The Wellbeing Partner (TWP).

[https://thewellbeingpartners.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/TWP\\_CHIP\\_MARCH2022\\_UPDATE\\_FINAL.pdf](https://thewellbeingpartners.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/TWP_CHIP_MARCH2022_UPDATE_FINAL.pdf)

### CHIP PRIORITIES:

- Reduce stigma of mental health and substance use disorder
- Increase connections to mental health and preventive resources
- Connect people to increase social supports
- Reduce trauma

# AREAS OF WORK

## Communicable Disease Control and Prevention

*Includes communicable disease epidemiology (disease outbreak management/response), tuberculosis (TB), immunizations, sexually transmitted infections, and surveillance (tracking and following up on reports and provider/school reports).*

Preventing the spread of contagious and infectious diseases is a vital function of public health. The SCHED conducts surveillance and investigation of reportable communicable diseases as part of meeting our responsibilities as a local health department. Nebraska utilizes an electronic reporting system which provides health departments with communicable disease reports from a variety of healthcare entities. In addition to COVID-19, the diseases the SCHED investigated this year included animal bites, childhood lead exposures, foodborne illnesses, hepatitis C, pertussis, and West Nile virus (WNV).

## Chronic Disease Control and Prevention

*Includes asthma, cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity, tobacco control, and worksite wellness.*

The Active Aging program at SCHED helps keep aging residents in their homes through one-on-one support and education. Public Health Nurses provided basic foot care, blood pressure screening, individualized health information, and referrals for additional services.

Data from the SCHED minority health needs assessment confirmed the role that physical environment, social factors, and cultural norms play in health and wellbeing. In response, the SCHED is engaging community members in developing diabetes prevention and self-management programs that are culturally and linguistically responsive.

## Access to and Linkage to Clinical Care

*Includes coordination of services between medical providers and providers of health-related social needs, oral health/dental services, and behavioral/mental health.*

This year, the SCHED's community partners continued to provide COVID-19 vaccines to Sarpy and Cass counties' residents. Partnerships were created and expanded to provide vaccination opportunities to as many residents as possible. The COVID-19 vaccine was provided via public vaccination clinics, pharmacies, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, schools, private worksites, and through in-home visitation.

# AREAS OF WORK

## Environmental Health

*Includes radon, lead, emergency response, hazardous substances and sites, and Walkable Communities initiatives.*

When a **lead exposure** is identified, SCHED provides guidance on **follow-up and testing**



The SCHED collaborates with local, state, and national partners to prevent, respond to, and rapidly recover from ever-changing environmental public health threats. The SCHED continues to participate in the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program. When a lead exposure is identified, staff provide guidance to local families regarding follow-up and testing.

The SCHED inspects swimming pools for compliance with Nebraska Regulation Title 178 Chapter 2.

Additionally, through the SCHED arbovirus surveillance program, staff collected mosquitos in traps throughout the jurisdiction for West Nile virus (WNV) and other testing.

## Injury Prevention

*Includes motor vehicle injuries, occupational injuries, senior fall prevention, substance abuse, car seat safety, binge drinking, and distracted driving.*

The SCHED's Safe Kids Sarpy/Cass is a childhood injury prevention that includes child passenger safety. Typically, the SCHED receives 12 requests for car seat installation support per month from the residents of Sarpy and Cass counties. Additionally, staff educate the community on home safety, the dangers of texting and driving, and sports injury prevention.

## Maternal and Child Health

*Includes Women, Infant, and Children (WIC), family planning, newborn screening, evidence-based home visitation, Early Preventative Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT).*

The SCHED continues to partner with the Douglas/Sarpy County Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program to support women and children enrolled in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program. Due to the pandemic, the SCHED WIC Clinic appointments were conducted virtually. In-person appointments are anticipated to resume in the summer of 2022. Additionally, the WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor program provides basic breastfeeding information, advice, and encouragement to pregnant and postpartum women.



WIC Clinic appointments were **conducted virtually** in 2021

# ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Examples of additional public health activities that Sarpy/Cass Health Department performs to assure that the health and wellbeing of Nebraskans are protected and improved.

The SCHED is implementing a community-based prevention program aimed at addressing underage drinking and marijuana usage among persons ages 9 to 20, in Cass County. In December 2021, all five Cass County public school districts participated in the Communities that Care Youth Risk and Protective Factor Survey. This survey was designed to assess students' involvement in a specific set of problem behaviors, as well as their exposure to a set of scientifically-validated risk and protective factors. The risk and protective factors have been shown to influence the likelihood of academic success, school dropout, substance abuse, violence, and delinquency among youth.

Additionally, the SCHED Community Health Planner engaged the help of influential community members from law enforcement, school, government, business, religious and youth organizations. The leaders recruited additional residents from across the county to join the Community Board, which is directly involved with the assessment, prioritization, selection, implementation, and evaluation of substance abuse prevention programs, policies, and practices. This community action model utilizes a systematic, public health approach to community building which ultimately leads to positive health outcomes.

The SCHED's Minority Health Initiative (MHI) program, through a comprehensive survey process, identified community health priorities such as access to health care and mental health services, safe and affordable housing, transportation, educational opportunities, accessibility to healthy food, and availability of local community resources. The SCHED's MHI program is launching a Sarpy County Health Equity Advisory Board to better-engage community partners in planning, advising, and decision making. This group evaluates factors contributing to sub-optimal health outcomes to improve community health for everyone.





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