

YOUR CONNECTION TO PUBLIC HEALTH

2020-2021

QUINNIPIACK VALLEY HEALTH DISTRICT ANNUAL REPORT

COVID-19 HEROES WORK HERE!



THANK YOU

MRC VOLUNTEERS,
LOCAL PARTNERS,
& QVHD STAFF!

QUINNIPIACK VALLEY HEALTH DISTRICT (QVHD)

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ABOUT QVHD

Mission:

The Quinnipiack Valley Health District (QVHD) Mission is to protect the residents of Bethany, Hamden, North Haven, and Woodbridge, Connecticut, from disease, injury, and environmental hazards through prevention, education enforcement, and collaboration.



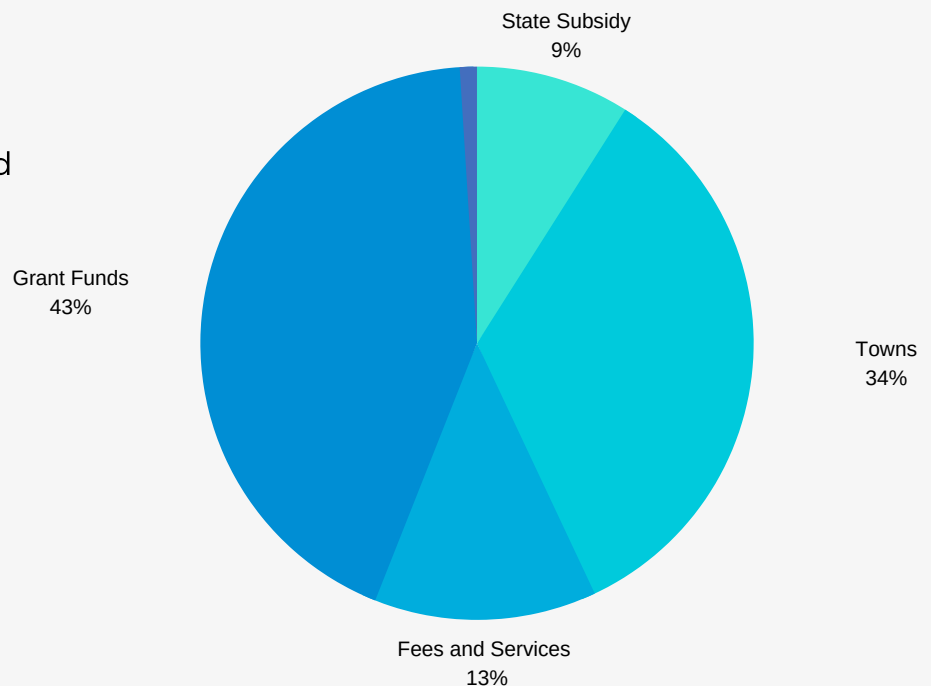
Accomplished Through:

- Collaboration with local and government leaders in setting health priorities
- Systemic identification of community health concerns and risks
- Preventive services for the early control and identification of disease
- Provision of current, credible information to promote health behavior choices
- Environmental health services that ensure compliance with the state and local laws, regulations, and ordinances.
- Local and regional emergency preparedness for response to an unexpected environmental or biological event.

2020-2021 Revenue

QVHD is funded by: Town and State contributions on a per capita basis, revenue from permit and services, grant awards, and miscellaneous income.

**The 2020-2021 Revenue is:
\$1,870,402**



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

Dear Residents and Community Partners,

This has been an unprecedented year for public health. Quinnipiack Valley Health District (QVHD) was at the forefront of the pandemic with its COVID-19 preparedness and response efforts. QVHD supported the communities that we serve by providing COVID-19 reopen sector rule guidance, performing contact tracing, establishing public health messaging on current guidance and recommendations, and hosting COVID-19 vaccine clinics.



The pandemic highlighted the tremendous support that local town partners and community members provided to enhance QVHD's COVID-19 response efforts. It was truly admirable and inspiring to see how many community members volunteered their time to support QVHD's vaccination effort. These community members joined the QVHD Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) to serve in multiple critical roles at the vaccine clinics including vaccine administration, temperature screening, registration, and monitoring for adverse reactions. These volunteers are a great public health preparedness and response asset in providing supplemental personnel to build on our local public health infrastructure. QVHD could not have accomplished the great feat of providing 5,167 doses of COVID-19 vaccine to the residents without the support of local town partners, QVHD staff, MRC members, and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members.

As we continue to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, I encourage other community members to join the Medical Reserve Corps and answer the call to promote and protect the health of your local community. I invite you to visit our webpage to find out how you can join the QVHD MRC at www.qvhd.org/qvhd-mrc.

Sincerely,

Karen Ann Wolujewicz, MPH

STAFF



STAFF

TITLE

Karen Ann Wolujewicz*, MPH	Director of Health
Alicia Mulvihill*, MPH	Director of Community Programs
Lynn Fox, BS, RS	Chief Environmental Services
Alexis Rinaldi, BS, RS	Registered Sanitarian
John Laudano, BS, RS	Registered Sanitarian
Kristen Amodio, BS, RS	Registered Sanitarian
Ryan Currier, BS, RS	Registered Sanitarian
Kara Sepulveda, BS	Public Health Program Assistant
Andressa Granado*, CHW, BS	Public Health Navigator
Avery Gartman, MPH*	Contact Tracer
Elisabeth Matuska, BS*	Contact Tracer
Jennifer Bobok, RN*	Public Health Nurse
Tara Harris, RN*	Practical Nurse Public Health
Victoria Fedak, MS*	Emergency Preparedness Coordinator
Alexandrea Reaves, MHA*	Vaccine Equity Coordinator
Miokka Cummings	Secretary
Barbara Bildstein, BS	Secretary

*Karen Ann Wolujewicz - hired - 8/2020

*Alicia Mulvihill - acting director - 4/2020-8/2020

*Andressa Granado - hired 11/2020, resigned 7/2021

*Avery Gartman - hired 11/2020

*Elisabeth Matuska - hired 11/2020

*Jennifer Bobok - hired 11/2020

*Tara Harris - hired 5/2021

*Victoria Fedak - hired 11/2020, resigned 1/2021

*Alexandrea Reaves - hired 6/2021

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2020-2021



The Board of Directors is the managing body of QVHD and is composed of Town representatives appointed for a three year term. Each member-town has one representative for each ten thousand population or part thereof, up to a maximum of 5 representatives per town.

MEMBER	TOWN	ROLE
Joy Donaldson	Hamden	President
Peter Marone	Hamden	Vice President
Carol Goldberg	Bethany	Director
Elizabeth Thornquist	Bethany	Alternate
Ann Levison	Hamden	Director
Kyle Blake*	Hamden	Director
Chante-Colleen Lewis	Hamden	Director
William Kohlhepp*	North Haven	Director
Jacquelyn O'Neill St. Peter	North Haven	Director
Joseph M. Solimene*	North Haven	Director
Peter S. Sandor	North Haven	Director
Julie Cruz Nuzzolillo*	North Haven	Alternate
Stacey Yarbrough*	North Haven	Director
Richard Martinello	Woodbridge	Director
Roy Ivins	Woodbridge	Alternate
Karen Ann Wolujewicz*		Ex Offico

*Karen Ann Wolujewicz - Ex Offico 8/10/2020

*Alicia Mulvihill - acting Ex Offico 7/1/2020-8/9/2020

*William Kohlhepp - resigned 7/20/2020

*Julie Cruz Nuzzolillo - appointed 11/5/2020

Joseph M. Solimene - resigned 1/5/2021

*Kyle Blake - reappointed 1/26/2021

*Stacey Yarbrough - appointed 5/6/2021

TEN ESSENTIAL SERVICES OF PUBLIC HEALTH

QVHD's services, responsibilities and programs are guided by the 10 Essential Public Health Services. In 1994, the 10 Essential Public Health Services were developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Core Public Health Functions Steering Committee and provided the framework for public health activities that all communities should undertake (CDC, 2018). Three core functions guide the 10 Essential Public Health Services: assessment, policy development, and assurance.



The revised version of the wheel, released in 2020, is intended to bring the framework in line with current and future public health practice.

TEN ESSENTIAL SERVICES OF PUBLIC HEALTH

1. **Assess & Monitor** health status to identify community health problems.
2. **Investigate, diagnose & address** health problems, health hazards, and root causes in the community.
3. **Communicate** effectively to **Inform, educate** and **empower** people about health issues.
4. **Strengthen, support & mobilize** communities and partnerships.
5. **Create, champion, and implement** policies, plans & laws that support individual and community health efforts.
6. **Utilize** legal and regulatory actions that protect health and ensure safety.
7. **Enable equitable access** to needed personal health services
8. **Build** a diverse and skilled workforce.
9. **Improve & innovate** population-based health services through evaluation, research & quality improvement.
10. **Build & maintain** a strong organizational infrastructure for innovative solutions to health problems.



The purpose for incorporating the 10 Essential Services in all of our work is to prevent epidemics and spread of disease, protect against environmental hazards, prevent injuries, promote and encourage healthy behaviors, respond to disasters, assist communities in recovery, and assure the quality and accessibility of services.

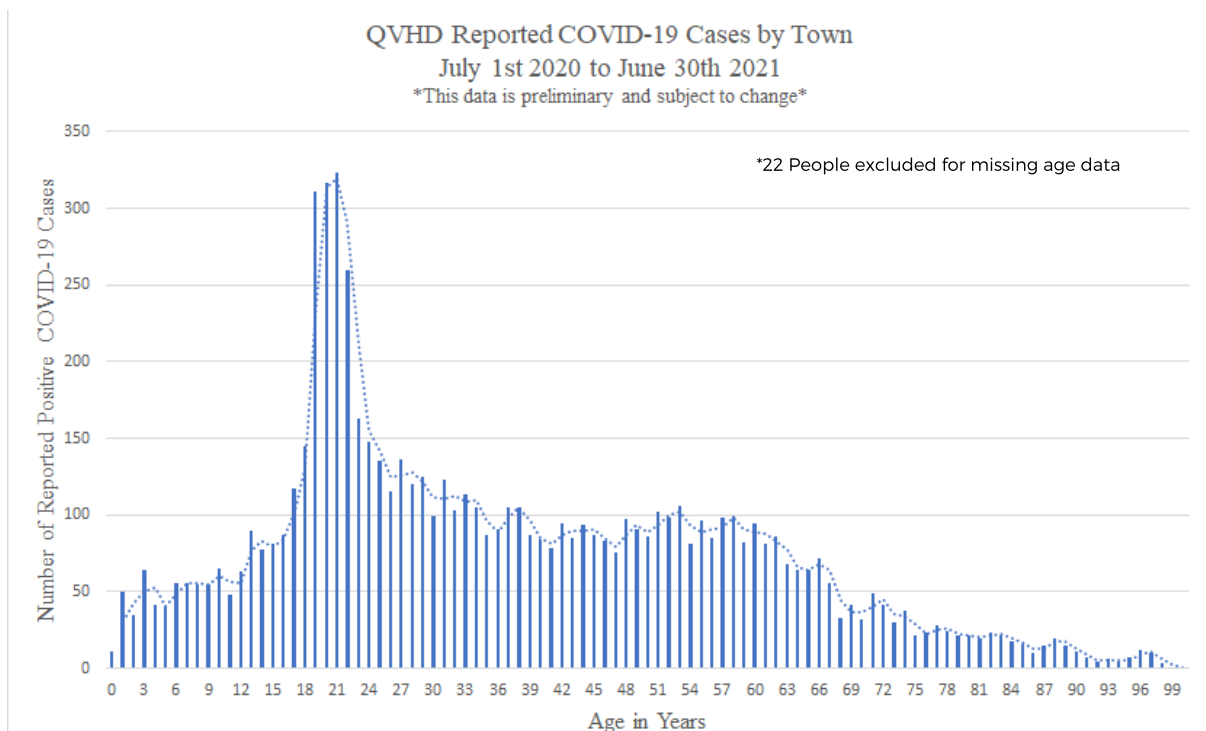
COVID-19 RESPONSE

CONTACT TRACING, VACCINATIONS

QVHD continued to serve as the lead advisor on the local COVID-19 response. Staff continued to communicate regularly with the towns' administration, emergency management, superintendents, various departments and organizations to provide guidance and updates. Staff developed and disseminated outreach materials to help convey accurate information on the virus and relay the necessary safety precautions to keep residents safe. Our COVID-19 response also included working closely with school administrators regarding contact tracing for positive cases and close contacts, as well as hosting weekly vaccine clinics within the district.

QVHD staff responded to an overwhelming amount of COVID-19 related questions, concerns, and complaints from the public, community partners and business owners and continued to stay current by monitoring and communicating guidelines from multiple State and Federal agencies. Current or updated information on the Re-Open Connecticut sector rules and guidelines were distributed to businesses, including long-term care facilities, restaurants, grocery and convenience stores, childcare centers, public pools, tattoo establishments, hair and nail salons. QVHD worked with these businesses to open and operate safely, following all the Governor's Executive Orders and Re-Open Connecticut sector rules and guidelines.

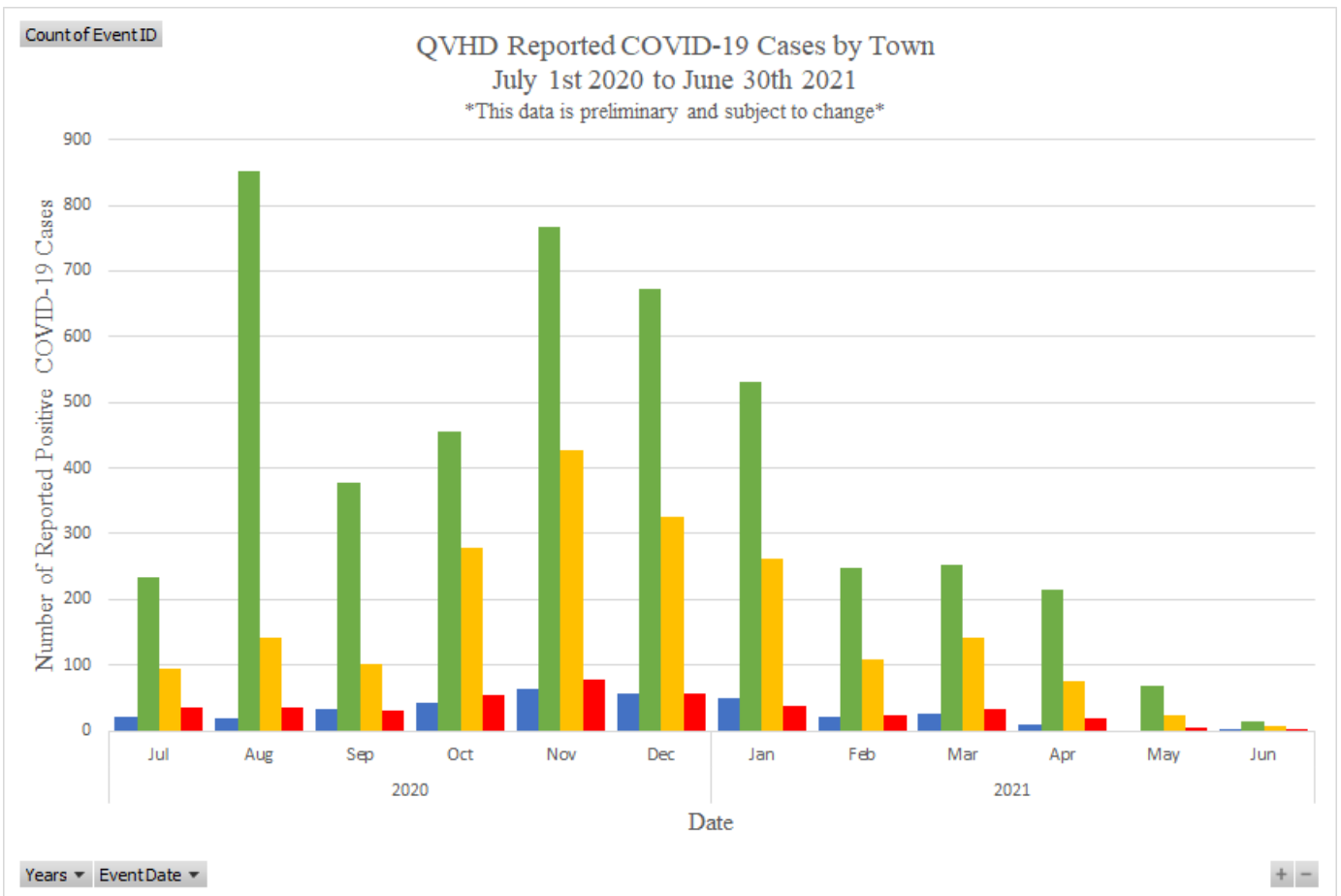
QVHD's contact tracing efforts and collaboration with local schools, businesses, and daycares have helped prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the district. See below for COVID-19 specific statistical data.



COVID-19 RESPONSE

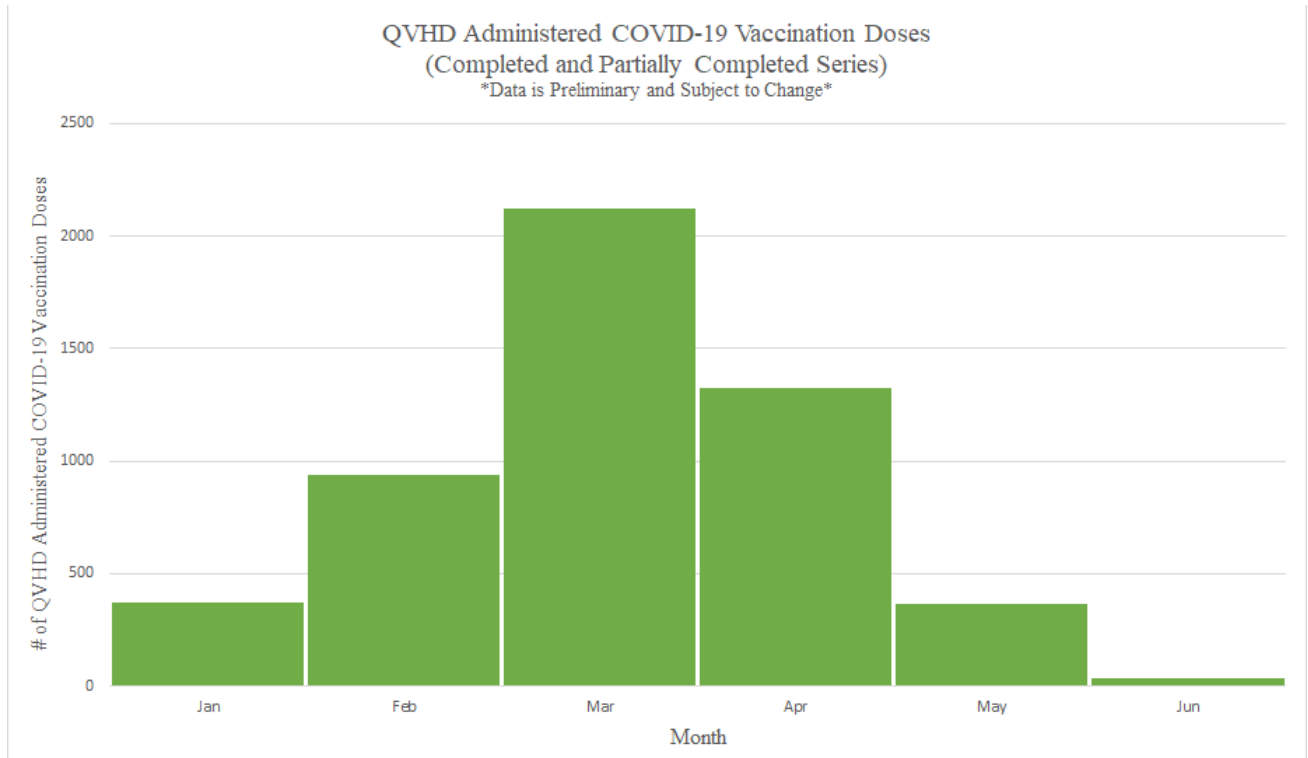
CASES - QVHD REPORTED COVID-19 CASES (7/1/20 - 6/30/21)

Count of Event ID	Column Labels				
Row Labels	Bethany	Hamden	North Haven	Woodbridge	Grand Total
<input type="checkbox"/> 2020					
Jul	21	233	95	36	385
Aug	20	853	142	35	1050
Sep	33	378	103	32	546
Oct	42	456	279	55	832
Nov	63	768	427	79	1337
Dec	58	673	326	57	1114
<input type="checkbox"/> 2021					
Jan	51	530	262	39	882
Feb	21	249	110	25	405
Mar	26	253	142	34	455
Apr	9	214	75	20	318
May		68	25	4	97
Jun	1	14	7	2	24
Grand Total	345	4689	1993	418	7445

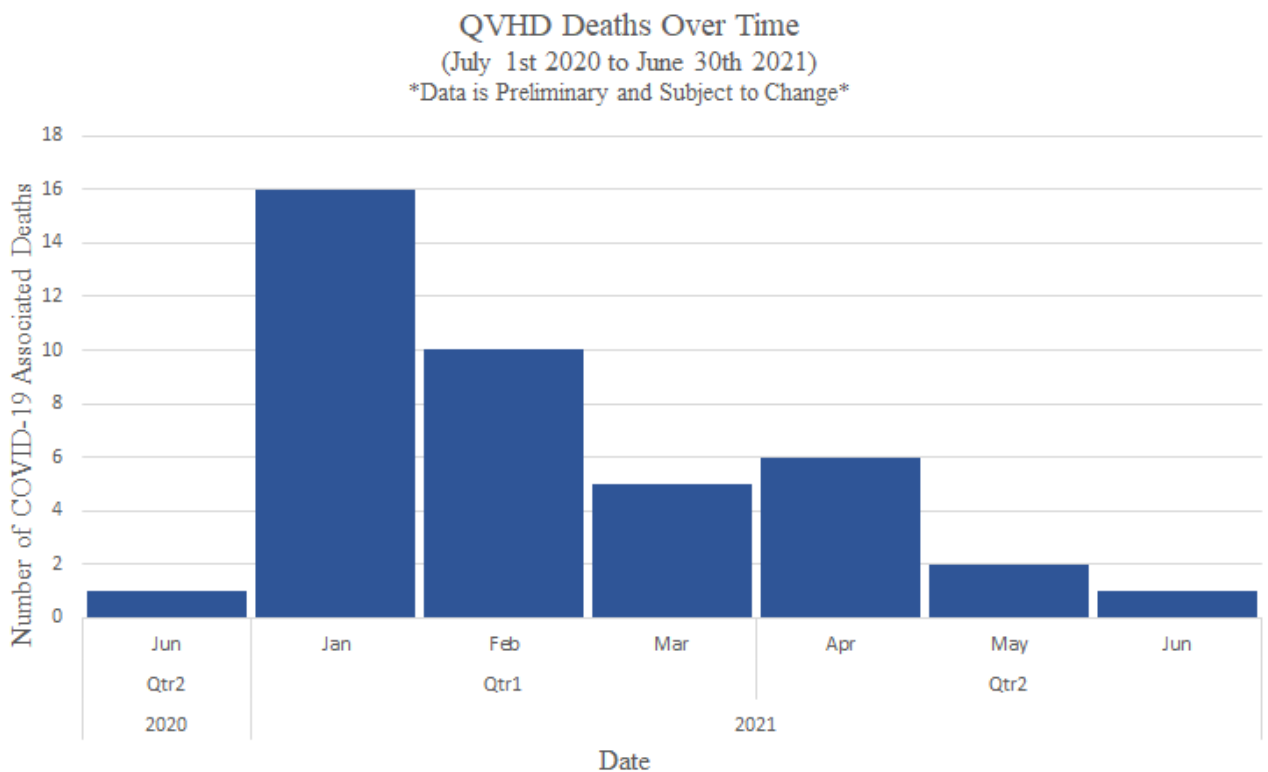


COVID-19 RESPONSE

QVHD ADMINISTERED VACCINATIONS (1/2021 - 6/30/2021)



QVHD MORTALITY (7/1/2020 - 6/30/2021)



COMMUNITY HEALTH DIVISION

The goal of QVHD's Community Health Division is to increase the quality, availability, and effectiveness of population-based health education, programs and services. The 10 Essential Services steer our promotion and outreach efforts and are the foundation for our work. Throughout the year, QVHD's Community Health Staff worked on a variety of health promotion initiatives. This included involvement in community events, and virtual presentations. Community Health Staff routinely provided timely information on health issues to our residents, town administration and partners. Staff also carried out communicable disease control, which included surveillance, investigation, referral, education and control measures when needed for mandated reportable diseases. Monitoring reportable diseases is done on a routine basis to prevent the spread of infectious diseases.

QVHD staff worked throughout the year to prepare, respond and recover from public health emergencies that can happen at any time and without any notice. QVHD has a variety of plans that are updated and revised as needed to ensure our staff is adequately prepared to respond. To support QVHD's emergency preparedness efforts, QVHD has a team of both medical and non-medical volunteers called the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). QVHD MRC volunteers strengthen public health, emergency response, and community resiliency. Volunteers are trained and credentialed to respond to emergencies in QVHD's jurisdiction and beyond. Active recruitment is always taking place for MRC volunteers, and anyone interested in joining can call QVHD for more information or register via ctresponds.ct.gov.

QVHD administers two School-Based Health Centers (SBHC) in the Town of Hamden, one at Church Street Elementary School and one at Hamden High School. The SBHCs are supported by a grant from the State of Connecticut and QVHD subcontracts with Cornell Scott Hill Health Center for clinical services. The SBHCs are state-licensed outpatient clinics housed right in the schools. The SBHC is open during school hours so that students and parents do not need to miss school or work to get care. All services are provided with no charge to students or families (no cost/fees to families), though billable services may be submitted to an insurance company.

COMMUNITY HEALTH DIVISION

Overdose deaths in the U.S. continue to rise after last year's record high of 93,000 lives lost nationwide. QVHD was awarded the Overdose Data to Action (OD2A) Grant by the Department of Public Health in April of 2020, in collaboration with the New Haven Health Department (NHHD). The grant aims to expand surveillance & response to local drug overdoses while implementing innovative interventions that will ultimately reduce drug morbidity and mortality in the Greater New Haven area. Recognizing the complex and changing nature of the opioid crisis, the OD2A team aims to adopt a comprehensive approach with emphasis on 5 core program components:

Workforce Development, Data Collection & Dissemination, Community Communication Campaigns, Prevention, and Response.

- **Workforce Development** aims to expand awareness, knowledge and skill sets to residents and stakeholders in various community settings. Topics include substance use awareness, reviewing local trends, resource sharing, and proper training on how to prevent, recognize, and respond to a drug overdose.
- **Data Collection & Dissemination** occurs by monitoring various data sources that allows local health to track overdose activity in real time. Weekly updates are sent out to specific town representatives and community outreach organizations with the intention of driving outreach efforts. Public health alerts are issued to the public when overdose activity exceeds internal thresholds.
- **Community Communications Campaigns** includes promoting QVHD's campaign ConneCT without Stigma and the state's LIVE LOUD & Change the Rx campaigns to increase awareness and reduce stigma. A website was developed to communicate local trends, connect residents to resources and to aid in the dissemination of our messaging materials - visit www.connectgnh.org to learn more & to get involved!
- **Prevention** efforts are ongoing as staff work to educate the public on the dangers of fentanyl, a powerful opioid, present in most street drugs. QVHD actively encourages



the safe storage and disposal of household medications and participates in bi-annual take back events. We work to eliminate the stigma that continues to surround mental health & substance use through education, story telling and learning from those with lived experience.

Response strategies include rapid response and communicating observed trends, educating, providing naloxone kits and fentanyl test strips, working to follow up with residents who have recently experienced an overdose and educating on suicide risks and interventions.

Pictured Above: Kara Sepulveda & Andressa Granado educating staff in an overdose hot spot how to properly administer naloxone, the opioid overdose reversal medication.

COMMUNITY HEALTH

REPORTABLE DISEASE SURVEILLANCE

DISEASE NAME	July 1, 2019- June 30, 2020 QVHD TOTAL	July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021 QVHD TOTAL
Campylobacteriosis	9	15
Coronavirus	1448	6325
Cyclosporiasis	1	2
Dengue Fever	0	0
Giardiasis	3	3
Haemophilus Influenzae	1	0
Hepatitis A	0	0
Hepatitis B	1	0
Hepatitis C ¹	26	9
Influenza ²	127	0
Group A Streptococcus	4	1
Group B Streptococcus	18	13
Legionellosis	6	5
Listeriosis	1	0
Yersinosis	1	1
Lyme Disease ³	9	4
Ehrlichiosis	1	1
Babesiosis	6	8
Malaria	0	0
Measles	0	0
Salmonellosis	10	9
Shiga-toxin producing organism	2	0
Shigellosis	4	1
Cryptosporidiosis	0	0
Staphylococcus aureus	1	7
Tuberculosis ⁴	1	2
Varicella	0	0
Pertussis	0	0
Meningococcal Disease	0	0
Mumps	0	0
Vibrio species	3	0
West Nile Virus	0	0

COMMENTS:

Source: Connecticut Electronic Disease Surveillance System unless otherwise noted in comments below. Data retrieved 9/14/2021 at 10:35 am.

(1) Source: CT DPH Viral Hepatitis Surveillance Program. Hepatitis C data is reported by calendar year (January-December) and not fiscal year. Hepatitis C data is chronic cases only that meet the case definition. Chronic case counts are based on town of residence at first report of hepatitis C (residence at diagnosis).

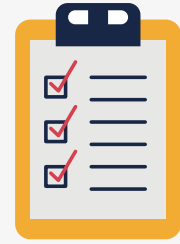
(2) Influenza (flu) includes only cases hospitalized and/or deaths along with reportable laboratory testing (PCR and labs with electronic reporting) and will underrepresent actual influenza in the community, especially since many cases are not tested for flu.

(3) Lyme Disease is reportable only by physician with PD-23 reporting form and by labs with automated electronic reporting to DPH surveillance, plus inter-state reports. Therefore, cases may be underreported. The numbers above are positive by lab or MD report.

(4) Source: QVHD

(5) Data for Chlamydia, Gonorrhea and Syphilis for January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020 was not available at time of QVHD's annual report release.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH



The Environmental Health Section conducts inspections of food establishments, hair and nail salons, subsurface sewage disposal systems, daycare centers, and public pools.

The Environmental Health Staff regulates and oversees the installation of subsurface sewage disposal systems. They offer homeowner guidance and recommendations on the care and maintenance of septic systems to aid in extending the life of the system and to avoid costly repairs. They are responsible for ensuring that water drinking wells are installed and maintained in a sanitary manner. They receive and interpret well water analysis reports and notify and provide owners information when parameters exceed recommended limits for contaminants such as bacteria, iron, manganese, and lead.

All 5 Environmental Health Staff are certified lead inspector/risk assessors. They conduct environmental investigations of dwellings where children with an elevated blood lead level reside and when lead hazards are identified, they oversee the required lead abatement work to ensure all work is done according to code. In addition, they identify lead hazards where children with non-elevated blood lead levels reside and ensure remediation is done using lead safe work practices.

The Environmental Health Staff responds to complaints including but not limited to garbage, sewage, odors, vacant / abandoned properties, stagnant water, mosquitoes, abandon vehicles, and rodents. They also respond to housing complaints. They identify and address indoor air quality issues including but not limited to mold, radon, asbestos, bedbugs, and general maintenance and safety issues in homes, schools, and businesses.

Additional activities include the inspection of school, childcare centers, public swimming pools and weekly sampling of a swimming lake in Bethany. A Swim advisory is posted when bacteria levels exceed acceptable limits.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSE

COVID-19 Pandemic – Environmental Response

- All Environmental Health Staff have been involved with issues and activities related to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Information was gathered from credible sources and distributed to businesses including long term care facilities, restaurants, grocery and convenience stores, childcare centers, public pools, hair and nail salons. QVHD worked with these businesses to open and operate safely following all the Governor's Executive Orders and Re-Open Connecticut sector rules and guidelines.
- They responded to an overwhelming amount of COVID-19 related questions, concerns, and complaints from both the public and business owners and continue to stay current by monitoring and interpreting guidelines from multiple State and Federal agencies so that the most up-to-date information is provided.



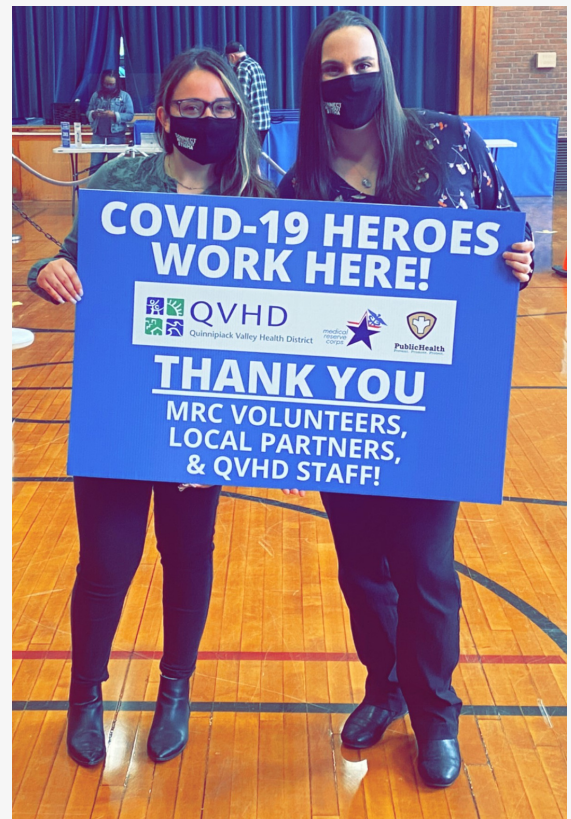
QVHD Sanitarians: Ryan Currier, John Laudano, & Alexis Rinaldi captured in action out in the field.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Environmental Activity	2019-2020	2020-2021
P&Z reports	6	18
Food Establishment Licenses	477	470
Food Establishments Inspections	499	377
New/opening Food Service	24	33
Itinerant licenses	49	66
Temporary licenses	171	56
Student Housing Inspections	31	14
Cosmetology Inspections	200	146
New/opening Cosmetology	14	19
Certificate of Compliance	229	227
Tattoo Inspections/Licenses	5	6
Public Pool Inspections	66	54
Licenses	60	54
Hotel/Motel Inspections/Licenses	5	5
Day Care Inspections	22	20
School Inspections	35	8
Elevated Blood Lead/Inspections	2	1
Lead Risk Assessments/Inspections	6	1
Lead-Case Management	21	18
Beach Water Sampling	14	14
Swim Advisory Issued	1	2
SEWAGE ACTIVITY		
NEW	13	34
REPAIR	66	88
B100a/ADDITION	82	123
TOTAL SOIL TESTS	156	245
TANK REPLACEMENT/dbox/pipe	64	94
B100a PLAN REVIEW	34	89
PERMIT TO DISCHARGE	137	187
Water Treatment Wastewater Disposal S	17	21
Wells		
Well Permits	41	31

Complaints Total	468	460
Abandoned Property	11	5
Animal/animal waste	15	19
Asbestos	2	1
Bed Bugs	9	8
Cosmetology	11	11
COVID related		101
Day Care	0	0
DEEP Related	1	6
Drainage/Flooding	4	3
Drinking Water	6	5
Food Service	79	37
Food Illness	13	7
Garbage/Refuse	32	25
Heat	22	15
Hoarding	4	4
Hotel/Motel	5	0
Housing	88	89
Indoor Air Quality	11	8
Junk Vehicles	26	8
Lead	3	1
Long Term Care Facility	6	0
Mold	39	36
Mosquito/stagnant water	23	8
Other	8	2
Outdoor air quality	4	2
Public Pools	4	5
Public Toilets	4	2
Rodents/Insects	28	29
Rodent survey	2	1
School	4	0
Sewage	6	21
Tattoo	0	0
Utility Shut Off	1	1
NOVs	87	63
Arrest Warrant Applications	3	0





QVHD Staff & MRC Volunteers at our various COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics throughout the year.



SERVING THE TOWNS OF BETHANY, HAMDEN, NORTH HAVEN & WOODBRIDGE



@QVHD



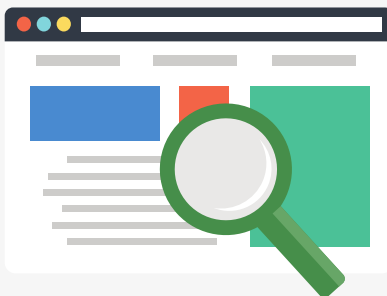
@Quinnipiack Valley Health District



@QVHDHEALTH



www.qvhd.org



WWW.CONNECTGNH.ORG
For information, resources & supports specific to the opioid crisis.