

2024

# Annual Report



# Mission & Vision

Dedicated to the physical, social, and mental well-being of all who live, work, learn and play in Ashtabula County, we are committed to building a trusting relationship with our community, reducing health disparities, providing high-quality services, making those services accessible and imparting the value of public health on those we serve each day.



Dear Ashtabula County Partners in Health,

A disturbing trend taking place in most of the United States that can affect many individuals, is that the current vaccination rate for adults and children continues to decline. It seems this trend started right after the COVID Pandemic and is taking place in many US communities. The downward vaccination numbers appear to be linked to the misinformation about the COVID vaccine not being credible, to now the incorrect belief that all vaccines are not credible. Of the 7,087,718 deaths worldwide from the COVID Pandemic, 1,200,000 of those deaths were in the United States and we will never know how high that number would have been if we didn't have the COVID vaccine. Vaccines have been considered one of the greatest feats discovered by man and since its discovery, hundreds of millions of people have been saved over the years. WHO (World Health Organization) conducted a recent global study to look at the effectiveness of immunizations over the last 50 years (1974).

- Since 1974, vaccines have saved 154 million lives which is six lives every minute for 14 different diseases.
- 101 million of the lives saved were infants.
- 95% of the lives saved were children under the age of five.
- 40% of the global reduction in infant mortality since 1974 is due to vaccines.

How is the Ashtabula County Health Department managing vaccinations in 2024?

I am happy to report that the vaccination uptake rates for the Ashtabula County residents are higher post pandemic than pre-pandemic which means Ashtabula County is even more protected with their vaccines currently, and this is a trend we like to see. All the credit goes to the Ashtabula County Health Department Nursing staff led by Director of Nursing Dave Shumate who, with limited staff, has made it a priority to protect the Ashtabula County community and do whatever it takes to make that happen. What we need our community to continue to do is to protect your family, friends, classmates, workmates and community by staying current with your vaccinations. Please refer to our website [ashtabulacountyhealth.com](https://www.ashtabulacountyhealth.com) or Facebook page if you have questions about our vaccination services for future reference.

### **The Ashtabula County Health Department Pre and Post Pandemic Comparison**

#### **2018 ACHD Vaccine numbers**

Adults - 576 Flu, Hep B, shingles,  
Tetanus, Pneumonia  
Children – 874 TDAP, Polio, Hep B, Meningitis,  
MMR, Varicella

#### **2024 ACHD Vaccine numbers**

Adults – 1,833 Flu, Hep B, shingles,  
Tetanus, Pneumonia  
Children – 1,597 TDAP, Polio, Hep B,  
Meningitis, MMR, Varicella

Best of Health for 2025!

Jay Becker



Health Commissioner  
Ashtabula County Health Department

# **Ashtabula County Combined Health District Board of Health Members**

Dr. Harlan Waid Jr.  
**Board President**

Rebecca Robinson, MSN, RN  
**Board Vice-President**

Duane Marcy  
**Board Member**

Robert Russell  
**Board Member**

Barbara Klingensmith  
**Board Member**

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# Administration

In 2024, the Administrative Division of the Ashtabula County Health Department underwent a significant rebuilding period, marked by substantial changes in leadership, processes, procedures, and grants. This restructuring encompassed various aspects, including updates to accounts payable and receivable processes, modifications to filing placements and methods, and the implementation of various software updates.

Despite the transformative period, the division faced and evaluated opportunities for collaboration. The Administrative Division actively contributed to the Access to Care Workgroup, one pillar of the Community Health Improvement Plan, as well as the Ashtabula County Public Health Advisory Team (ACPHAT).

During the year, the Ashtabula County Health Department successfully administered several key programs, including Public Health Emergency Preparedness, Get Vaccinated Ohio, the Harm Reduction Grant, the COVID-19 Enhanced Operations Grant, the Public Workforce Grant, and Medicaid Administration Claiming. The Ashtabula County Health Department was also awarded the Ohio EPA Environmental Education Grant for a new, Clean Water Ashtabula program to take place in 2025.

Notably, the Administrative team prioritized the well-being of all staff members. Leveraging grants and collaborating with other division directors, the team continued staff retention bonuses, a Sunshine Committee, and updated numerous personnel policies. The Sunshine Committee plays a significant role in fostering a positive workplace environment by keeping track of employees' birthdays and other life events. This initiative allows the entire organization to express gratitude and support for one another, with each employee receiving a card signed by all colleagues and a small gift for life events.

The Ashtabula County Health Department Administrative Division is also involved in participating in several health-related committees and meetings. These include: the quarterly Vital Statistics Regional committee meeting; the monthly Ashtabula County Local Emergency Planning Committee meetings, the Ashtabula County Family and Children First Council meetings, the Healthy Ashtabula County meetings, the Ashtabula County Public Health Advisory Team meetings, the Ashtabula County Health Department Accreditation Team meetings, and Ashtabula County Health Department Board of Health meetings; and the weekly Association of Ohio Health Commissioners meeting, the Ohio Department of Health call, and the Ashtabula County Health Department Directors meeting. The administrative staff of the Ashtabula County Health Department look forward to serving the residents of Ashtabula County in 2025.



2024  
Valuation of Health Districts      Full Year Fees

Andover Twp	\$ 62,744,180.00	\$ 23,246.11
Ashtabula Twp	\$ 188,957,740.00	\$ 70,007.00
Austinburg Twp	\$ 96,286,710.00	\$ 35,673.29
Cherry Valley Twp	\$ 26,314,930.00	\$ 9,749.42
Colebrook Twp	\$ 30,815,610.00	\$ 11,416.88
Denmark Twp	\$ 24,392,800.00	\$ 9,037.29
Dorset Twp	\$ 22,505,920.00	\$ 8,338.22
Geneva Twp	\$ 90,176,240.00	\$ 33,409.42
Harpersfield Twp	\$ 105,249,530.00	\$ 38,993.92
Hartsgrove Twp	\$ 49,559,600.00	\$ 18,361.35
Jefferson Twp	\$ 67,957,970.00	\$ 25,177.76
Kingsville Twp	\$ 46,260,860.00	\$ 17,139.20
Lenox Twp	\$ 44,050,070.00	\$ 16,320.12
Monroe Twp	\$ 57,727,860.00	\$ 21,387.61
Morgan Twp	\$ 28,348,040.00	\$ 10,502.67
New Lyme Twp	\$ 31,274,740.00	\$ 11,586.99
Orwell Twp	\$ 43,398,320.00	\$ 16,078.65
Pierpont Twp	\$ 30,151,910.00	\$ 11,170.99
Plymouth Twp	\$ 62,223,640.00	\$ 23,053.25
Richmond Twp	\$ 24,752,850.00	\$ 9,170.69
Rome Twp	\$ 36,435,060.00	\$ 13,498.83
Saybrook Twp	\$ 232,628,110.00	\$ 86,186.44
Sheffield Twp	\$ 47,112,160.00	\$ 17,454.60
Trumbull Twp	\$ 51,805,940.00	\$ 19,193.59
Wayne Twp	\$ 21,578,650.00	\$ 7,994.68
Williamsfield Twp	\$ 38,372,010.00	\$ 14,216.45
Windsor Twp	\$ 66,255,350.00	\$ 24,546.96
Ashtabula City	\$ -	\$ -
Conneaut City	\$ -	\$ -
Geneva City	\$ 125,910,060.00	\$ 46,648.45
Andover Village	\$ 24,335,450.00	\$ 9,016.05
GOTL Village	\$ 55,228,800.00	\$ 20,461.73
Jefferson Village	\$ 78,513,580.00	\$ 29,088.51
N Kingsville Village	\$ 87,355,560.00	\$ 32,364.38
Orwell Village	\$ 28,745,820.00	\$ 10,650.05
Roaming Shores Village	\$ 107,171,960.00	\$ 39,706.16
Rock Creek Village	\$ 11,207,530.00	\$ 4,152.28
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 2,145,805,560.00</b>	<b>\$ 795,000.00</b>

# FINANCIAL REPORT

Year Ending December 31, 2024

## Receipts:

Licenses, Permits, Donations, Fees, Projects, etc.	\$1,760,517.32
Federal/State Fund	
BCMh - Public Health Nurse Consultation =	\$600.00
State Subsidy =	\$37,844.17
Medicaid Administrative Claiming (MAC) =	\$53,002.76
Solid Waste =	\$18,996.00
Public Health Emergency Preparedness Fund (PHEP) =	\$87,285.00
Naloxone Grant =	\$57,500.00
Get Vaccinated Ohio (GVO)=	\$32,850.00
Total Federal/State Fund	\$288,077.93
Private Insurance Billing	\$235,760.47
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>\$2,284,355.72</b>

## Expenditures:

District Board of Health	\$402,523.56
Federal/State Fund:	
BCMh - Public Health Nurse Consultation =	\$0.00
State Subsidy =	\$1,998.47
Medicaid Administrative Claiming (MAC) =	\$0.00
Solid Waste =	\$70,679.31
Public Health Emergency Preparedness Fund (PHEP) =	\$10,075.45
Naloxone Grant =	\$6,006.41
Get Vaccinated Ohio (GVO) =	\$1,534.50
Total Federal/State Fund	\$80,218.69
Private Insurance Billing	\$177,189.79
Wages and Fringe	\$1,630,683.30
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$2,290,615.34</b>

Tax Duplicate for Health District  
(Real Estate, Personal Property & Public Utility)

**\$2,145,805,560.00**



# Vital Statistics

The Vital Statistics unit of the Ashtabula County Health Department collects important information and data concerning births, deaths and diseases in Ashtabula County. This unit works closely with the public, funeral homes, Ashtabula County Coroner's Office as well as other Government offices in the collection and provision of vital statistics data.

The Vital Statistics unit at the Ashtabula County Health Department continues to electronically create a birth record for 2017 and forward births that take place outside a birth facility (e.g. home births). The birth record is then electronically approved and/or disapproved by the Ohio Department of Health Vital Statistics Registration unit. Once approved then the birth record is available for certified copies.

The Vital Statistics unit at the Ashtabula County Health Department also continues to accept electronic filing for death records in our general health district. This means signed death certificates for filing can be emailed with a request for approval to local registrars who will review the certificate and accept or reject the filing within one business day. This speeds up the filing and registration process of death certificates and makes the death certificates available sooner to the families or to the public for certified copies.

As the E-Filing project continues to expand with local vital statistics offices in Ohio, the Ohio Department of Health, Bureau of Vital Statistics continues to also add physicians and coroners to expand the electronic certification of death records. Paper records received for filing will continue to be certified using the current process.

In 2025, the Ohio Department of Health, Bureau of Vital Statistics is changing from the EDRS/IPHIS system to OVRS (Ohio Vital Records System). This new system will change the way birth and death records are created and issued, making the process more efficient. Nonelectronic death records will be phased out, eliminating the need for manual filing. Funeral homes and the public will have better way to order death records online if they choose. We will still do orders in person as well. These changes will begin in 2025, with birth records going live in April and death records in July. Eventually death certificates will be able to be issued anywhere in the state, as birth certificates are now. We have been preparing for these changes by training webinars and communications from the state.

Home births will continue to be registered by our staff. This will continue with the new system in place as well.

We are excited to implement new improvements for better service to our customers and partners.

# Vital Statistics

Live Births Recorded in County Health District (Home Births) – 21  
 Male – 8  
 Female – 13

Deaths Recorded in County Health District – 646  
 Male – 334  
 Female – 312

<b>CAUSE OF DEATH – 2024</b>	
<b>Heart and Arteries</b>	206
<b>Cancer</b>	101
<b>Disease of Brain</b>	83
<b>Disease of Respiratory System</b>	52
<b>Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)</b>	36
<b>Accidents</b>	33
<b>Cerebral Hemorrhage</b>	3
<b>Cerebral Hemorrhage &amp; Thrombosis</b>	22
<b>Pneumonia</b>	17
<b>Overdose-Accident</b>	14
<b>Disease of Kidney/Urinary System</b>	14
<b>Suicide</b>	13
<b>Natural Causes</b>	12
<b>Infectious Disease</b>	10
<b>Disease of Liver</b>	6
<b>COVID-19</b>	6
<b>Homicide</b>	6
<b>Disease of Digestive System</b>	2
<b>Disease of Blood</b>	2
<b>Diabetes</b>	2
<b>Alcoholism</b>	1
<b>Diseases of Central Nervous System</b>	1
<b>Genetic Disease</b>	1
<b>Nutritional &amp; Metabolic Disease</b>	1
<b>Cause Pending</b>	2
<b>Total</b>	646

## **CERTIFIED COPIES OF BIRTH & DEATH CERTIFICATES – Issued by the Ashtabula County Health Department in 2024**

839 Birth Certificates

2,610 Death Certificates

43 Burial/Cremation Permits

# RABIES SURVEILLANCE PROGRAM

The following listing is a tally of all specimens tested in 2024 for rabies through the Ohio Department of Health Rabies Surveillance Program. The surveillance program consisted primarily of testing sick raccoons, foxes, and bats. The tallies also include the number of rabies tests that were completed following an exposure. The specimens tested were from Ashtabula County, Ashtabula City and Conneaut City Health Districts from January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024.

<b>Specimen</b>	<b>Amount Tested</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Unable to Determine</b>
Raccoons	9	9	0	0
Foxes	1	1	0	0
Squirrels	0	0	0	0
Skunks	0	0	0	0
Bats	12	11	1	0

## GROUND BAITING 2022

As in the past, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's Wildlife Services Program in cooperation with the Ohio Department of Health distributed oral rabies vaccination in 14 eastern Ohio counties (Ashtabula, Carroll, Columbiana, Jefferson, Mahoning, Portage Stark, Trumbull, Tuscarawas and parts of Belmont, Geauga, Harrison Lake and Monroe). Distribution of the rabies vaccine-laden baits by air and ground took place between July 31, 2024, and August 25, 2024. This area baiting included Ashtabula County Health District, Ashtabula City Health District and Conneaut City Health District.

The oral rabies vaccine is used to vaccinate wild raccoons against rabies. The vaccine provides protection against rabies infection to raccoons for at least one year.

# ANIMAL BITES

The following listing is a tally of all animal bites reported to the Ashtabula County Health Department for 2024. Reported animal bites are investigated, quarantines established, and rabies tests conducted, as required. Reports received on animal bites occurring outside the Ashtabula County General Health District are referred to the appropriate health department.

\*Of the 155 reported animal bite cases investigated, 49 biting animals were rabies vaccinated prior to the bite incident. 96 biting animals were NOT rabies vaccinated (or vaccination status was unknown) prior to the bite incident. The remaining 10 reported incidents involved wild animals.

<b>Animal Bite Cases Investigated by the Ashtabula Co. Health Dept.</b>	
Domestic Dogs	122
Domestic Cats	19
Other/Wild Animals: Raccoons—0 Bats—3 Horse—1 Unknown/animal type not reported—1	5
<b>Total Reported Animal Bite Cases Investigated</b>	<b>146</b>
Non-Bite Cases Investigated (Animal Exp or Other Exposure): Cat—2 Raccoon—1 Fox—1 Bat—5	9
<b>Total HDIS Animal Bites &amp; Non-Bite Cases Investigated</b>	<b>155</b>
Out-of-Area Bite <b>Cases Reported</b> to the Ashtabula County Health Department then referred to other health departments	75
<b>Total Animal Bite Investigations, Non-Bite Investigations, and Cases Reported to the Ashtabula County Health Department</b>	<b>230</b>
<b>The following cases are included in the 2024 animal bites investigated/reported to the Ashtabula County Health Department:</b>	
Referred to the Ashtabula City Health Department	59
Referred to the Conneaut City Health Department	6
Referred to other health departments	10
<b>Total Referred to other health departments</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Bite case animals tested at the lab for rabies</b>	
Dogs	4
Cats	2
Raccoon	0
Bat	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>
*One bat tested positive for rabies* *Remaining six samples came back with negative results for rabies*	
<b>Non-Bite (pet/humans exposure)case animals tested at the lab for rabies</b>	

Bats	5
Raccoon	1
Fox	1
Cat	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>
*All 8 samples came back with negative results for rabies*	

# Environmental Health

2024 was another year of many positive changes and updates for the environmental division and the ACHD. The leadership staff worked on updating more dated policies to help promote worker satisfaction, longevity, and productivity. License and permit fees were raised in many program areas to properly reflect the cost of these programs.

The ACHD applied for and was chosen to receive a \$50,000 grant from the Ohio EPA, Ohio Environmental Education Fund. 300 homeowners will receive one free bacterial water sample and a home sewage system inspection. Workshops will provide education to homeowners to help them maintain and replace their sewage systems and learn about the water they drink. We are hopeful this education will help protect the health of the residents and environment by replacing failed sewage systems and taking steps to protect their water supplies.

We also began the process of updating our Guidelines for Sanitation. These local rules have been around for decades but need to be updated due to dated language and changing rules. We hope to have these new regulations in place by early 2025.

The tally on the following page provides an overview of the number and type of inspections our staff performed in 2024. Environmental Health Specialists normally spend a large amount of time inspecting food service operations, sewage systems, and dealing with solid waste nuisances. Other duties include water sampling and inspection of bathing beaches, campgrounds, swimming pools, landfills, schools, manufactured home parks, tattoo and body piercing establishments, dog bites, and various other environmental inspections.

In 2024, the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency performed a solid waste survey of the ACHD. This survey evaluated the administrative and field inspection components of our solid waste program. The OEPA found that the ACHD is in substantial compliance and is approved to administer and enforce the solid and infectious waste and construction and demolition debris laws and rules in the county.

2024 brought in a new Ohio Plumbing Code that is now being used throughout the county. Rules have also been strengthened so that plumbing and septic permits are required before any building permits are issued. Our plumbing department is responsible for protecting the health and safety of all occupants in residential homes and commercial buildings throughout Ashtabula County except for residential homes in Conneaut City. Inspectors are state certified and review all commercial building blueprint plans as well as residential plumbing schematics to ensure compliance with Ohio State Plumbing Code 4101:3. After approval of the permits, the plumbing inspectors conduct consultations and inspections and approve each dwelling and building throughout the construction stages to ensure code compliance.

In 2025, the environmental division will be updating some of our outdated environmental software with new free software provided by the Ohio Department of Health. This will be a lengthy and major undertaking for us but in the end will also allow us to quickly access all our records electronically. In sum, the environmental health unit anticipates a very productive and busy year in 2025 serving and protecting the health of the citizens of Ashtabula County.

# Environmental Health Statistics 2024

Home Sewage Treatment System Installers Registrations	45
Home Sewage Treatment System Site Evaluation Applications	219
Home Sewage Treatment System Site Inspection for Real Estate Transactions	34
Home Sewage Treatment System Permits Issued	148
Home Sewage Treatment System Inspections	665
Home Sewage Treatment System Site Inspections	421
Home Sewage Treatment System Consultations	183
Home Sewage Treatment System Service Provider Registrations	20
O&M Existing Sewage Treatment System	24
Home Sewage Treatment System Abandonment Permit	55
Private Water System Permits Issued	65
Private Water System Inspections	133
Water Hauler Registrations	3
Water Samples Taken (Bacteriological)	272
Water Samples Taken (Chemical)	7
Complaint Inspections	1086
Septage Hauler Registrations	18
Septage Inspections-Pumpers	13
Septage Land Application - Site Reviews	
Camp Operation Permits Issued	24
Resident Camp Permits Issued	5
Camp Inspections	33
Public Bathing Beach Licenses Issued	6
Swimming Pool, Spa, Special Use Pool Licenses Issued	52
Swimming Pool, Spa, Special Use Pool and Bathing Beach Inspections	82
Construction Demolition and Debris Inspections	491
C&DD Applications	67
School Inspections	33
Manufactured Home Park Inspections	30
Solid Waste Disposal Facility Licenses Issued	665
Solid Waste Disposal Facility & Compost Facility Site Inspections	3
Food Service & Food Establishment Licenses Issued	517
Food Service & Food Establishment Inspections	838
Food Service Operation Consultations	252



Food Service Plan Reviews	26
Vending Machines FSO Licenses Issued	42
Vending Machines FSO Inspections	36
Tattoo & Body Piercing Licenses	6
Tattoo & Body Piercing Inspections	4
Inspections with Health Commissioner or State & County Agency Personnel	12
Public Meetings, Lectures, Landfill Conferences & Trainings Attended	52
Meetings with Federal, State and Local Agencies	15
Meetings with County Agencies and Organizations	15
Educational Programs Presented to the Public	52
Animal Bite Field Investigations	5
Other Environmental Health Consultations-Water, Schools, Institutions, Rabies, Mold, etc.	40
<b>PLUMBING</b>	
Plumbing Permits Issued	264
Plumbing Plan Reviews Issued	59
Plumber's Registrations Issued	90
Plumbing Permit Checks	538
Plumbing Schematics and Blueprints Checked	223
Plumbing Inspections	1,103
Plumbing Complaints	34
Plumbing Consultations	274
Plumbing Investigations	113
Meetings Attended	243

# Public Health Nursing

The primary focus of public health nursing is to promote health and prevent disease for entire population groups. During 2024, the nurses were challenged with preventing disease in the community as well as maintaining basic public health measures and education. Our nursing staff took to the townships, villages, and community at large to reach as many people as possible. Utilizing our mobile clinic approach, we attended multiple health fairs, the RAM clinic, the Ashtabula County Fair, The PRIDE festival, and many schools, libraries, churches, and halls. Our goal was to get and keep the residents of the county, mostly children, on track with their required immunizations and prevent disease. It was also to educate the public on many diseases, illnesses, and public health challenges going on currently, and into the future.

The nurses expanded our Amish and south county clinic offerings, operated several clinics in north county, and provided a record number of standard vaccines to the community in 2024. We expanded the quantity of wellness clinics we held and offered physical exam services that were open to all members of the community.

During 2024, the nurses provided many influenza vaccination clinics, including several drive-thru clinics. We continued our focus on family health in times of gathering, mental wellness, and developing plans for a healthy Ashtabula County in 2025. The nursing clerks, the nurses, and the rest of the team that supports all that nursing does in the community, continue to be resilient and work tirelessly behind the scenes to deliver for the county, the community, and its residents.

## Immunizations

In 2024, Ashtabula County Public Health Nurses administered 1,833 adult immunizations and doubled our childhood vaccinations compared to last year with 1,597 immunizations to children/adolescents. Our Nursing Division Clerical and Public Health Nursing staff members held 104 flu clinics during the fall and winter of 2024 at various settings in the community, private businesses/organizations and at our main office location. ACHD offers CDC recommended vaccines and those required for Ohio school entry. We are a Vaccines for Children provider which is a federally funded program that provides vaccines at no cost to children who are Medicaid-eligible, uninsured, underinsured, American Indian or Alaska Native. We also operate the Get Vaccinated Ohio grant which seeks to improve and sustain vaccination coverage among children and adolescents, and to reduce vaccination coverage disparities in Ohio. ACHD is also a provider for several private health insurances. Please contact our Nursing Division for more vaccine information, schedule an appointment or to inquire about having an immunization clinic at your business or organization at 440-576-6010, option 2.

## Tuberculosis

Tuberculosis (TB) is one of the world's leading infectious diseases and can be deadly. Up to 13 million people in the United States are living with inactive or latent TB infection. Without treatment, 1 in 10 people with latent TB infection will develop active TB disease. The only way to know for sure if you have inactive TB is to get tested. The Ashtabula County Health Department's Tuberculosis Program provided 185 tuberculin skin tests in 2024 and evaluated 16 patients for latent and active tuberculosis. Of the 16 patients evaluated, 5 required and completed treatment. The priority of the TB program in Ashtabula County is aimed at eliminating TB within the county, and ultimately within the state of Ohio. The goals of the program include identifying and treating those persons with active Tuberculosis, finding and screening those persons who have been in contact with active TB patients and providing them with appropriated treatment, and screening high-risk populations to detect persons who are infected with latent TB, who may benefit from therapy to prevent progression to active TB disease. If you have questions regarding TB or to schedule a TB skin test, contact our TB Program at 440-576-6010, option 2.

### Lead Monitoring

The Ashtabula County Health Department, in conjunction with the Ohio Department of Health, monitors elevated lead levels in children in our district. There is no safe level of lead in the blood. Any confirmed level of lead in the blood is a reliable indicator that a child has been exposed to lead. Under Ohio law, all blood lead test results are required to be reported to the Ohio Department of Health. The ODH Ohio Healthy Homes and Lead Poisoning Prevention Program follows cases regarding all blood lead levels of 5.0 or greater. ODH and ACHD provide lead education regarding potential environmental sources of lead exposure, potential health effects, and hazards associated with renovating pre-1978 homes. Medical management is provided until a child's blood lead level is below 5.0. In Ashtabula County for 2024, we had 28 cases of elevated lead levels that met criteria to follow and 8 of those cases were able to be closed during the year. There are programs for qualified individuals that can assist with lead abatement in the home. For more information on lead or testing, contact our lead program at 440-576-6010, option 2.

### Project DAWN/Harm Reduction

Ashtabula County has a rate of 43.0 deaths per 100,000 population for the amount of unintentional drug overdoses. In 2024, our county had 19 overdose deaths, a 49% decrease over 2023, with 63% of those deaths associated with fentanyl. Males, specifically white males, have consistently been impacted more with overdose deaths each year. The Ashtabula County Health Department has implemented the Project DAWN program since 2017. Project DAWN is a network of Ohio-based drug overdose education and Naloxone distribution programs. Naloxone, also known as Narcan, is a medication that can block the effect of opioids, like fentanyl, and reverse an overdose. Ashtabula County Health Department's Project DAWN Program provides take-home Naloxone kits, fentanyl test strips, syringe drop box, and Syringe Service Program (SSP) to

community members, free of charge. Our program has progressively increased community Naloxone distribution every year since its inception from 46 in 2017 to 1,807 in 2024. Another tool we gained to help fight fentanyl overdose in late 2023 was fentanyl test strips meant to test for the presence of fentanyl in substances to help warn people who are unaware that they may be exposed to it. We distributed 2,495 test strips throughout 2024. For 2025, we have expanded syringe exchange services at any community clinic, partnered with additional community partners to increase harm reductions services in communities in need, and continue to provide rapid testing with counseling for HIV and Hepatitis C. For more information or to obtain a Narcan kit, or on any other harm reduction services, call 440-576-6010, option 2.

### Children with Medical Handicaps (CMH)

The Children with Medical Handicaps (CMH) Program is a health care program in the Ohio Department of Health. CMH links families with special health care needs to a network of quality providers and helps families obtain payment for the services their children need. CMH views the local public health nurse as an essential member of the health care team. At the Ashtabula County Health Department, we are the link between the resources provided through ODH and the families that need them. We perform home visits, phone calls, consultations, and guidance throughout the process to assist in the care children. During 2024, we provided case management to 33 children in the county. For more information regarding the CMH program, call 440-576-6010, option 2.

### Prevent Blindness Ohio (PBO)

Prevent Blindness Ohio (PBO) is dedicated to addressing the challenge to prevent blindness and preserve sight through wise investment of community support. The goal of the Vision Care Outreach Program (VCO) is to reduce the incidence of unnecessary vision loss and impairment by providing access to a donated system of comprehensive vision care services for uninsured or underinsured adults and children in Ohio. When Ohioans apply for or renew their license plates, they will be asked if they want to contribute \$1 to the fund and it will be added to their fee. These dollars go directly to helping pay for eye exams, eyeglasses, and visits for residents in our county to receive sight saving care. During 2024, we helped 83 people see the world around them. For more information on Prevent Blindness, call 440-576-6010, option 2.

### Communicable Disease Investigation

The Ashtabula County Health Department's Communicable Disease Investigation team, a part of Nursing Services, oversees surveillance and reporting of communicable diseases in compliance with the Ohio Department of Health and CDC guidelines. Throughout 2024, the staff faced challenges related to respiratory illnesses including COVID-19, Influenza, and RSV, engaging with schools, providing information, and aiding in decision-making. Beyond COVID-19, the communicable disease team worked with hospitals and long-term care facilities to control the spread of multi-drug-resistant

organisms such as Carbapenem Producing Organisms and Candida Auris. The team also worked on suspected food-borne and vector-borne illnesses, including West Nile Virus, Lyme Disease, Hepatitis A, and Salmonella. Rabies investigations involved coordination between communicable disease and environmental health staff, with one positive case reported in 2024. Emphasizing the importance of vaccination, the department encourages residents to stay up to date. Looking ahead to 2025, the Communicable Disease Prevention Staff aims to continue serving the community.

## Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP)

In 2024, the Ashtabula County Health Department continued addressing the COVID-19 pandemic. The department's Preparedness efforts, supported by the PHEP grant, included updates to the Emergency Response Plan Annex D: Pandemic Influenza, First Responder Health and Safety Plan, Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP), and the Integrated Preparedness Plan (IPP). Additionally, the Medical Countermeasures (MCM) Community Profile Program Evaluation Annex was created. Maintaining, updating, and at times, complete revisions of these plans are an ongoing duty requiring many hours of effort and collaboration with partners on all levels. To facilitate this, the Ashtabula County Public Health Advisory Team (ACPHAT) meets monthly to share information and ensure the alignment of goals and efforts wherever reasonable.

Additional efforts will continue through 2025 with the development of the Administrative Preparedness Plan and Volunteer Management Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), continued work for revitalization of the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), an overhaul of the Risk Communications Plan, staff and site preparedness activities at ACHD, and the establishment of a regular schedule of exercises for the testing and validation of community response capabilities.

# Public Health Nursing Statistics

## Non-Immunization Clinics

Number of Wellness Clinics	47
Number of Wellness Patients	182
Number of Tuberculosis Clinics	60
Number of Naloxone Distribution Clinics	80
Number of Lead Home Visits	2
Number of Children with Medical Handicaps Home Visits	96

## Immunization Clinics

Number of Standard Immunization Clinics	142
Number of Standard Vaccines Given	3,430
Number of Home/Residential Facility Visits for Vaccinations	334
Number of Amish Clinics	95
Number of Flu Clinics	104
Number of Patients Who Received Vaccines	2,257

## Additional Nursing Services and Statistics

- 195 total vision and hearing screening tests were completed
- 1,335 people were educated on substance use/abuse
- Over 7,000 Covid-19 test kits were distributed
- 64 Specialty events and health education events in schools and health fairs were completed covering education on the harmful effect of smoking and vaping, hand washing, germs and disease spread, and dental and body hygiene

Reportable Condition	Count
Babesiosis	2
Campylobacteriosis	13
Chlamydia infection	102
COVID-19	1,440
CPO	5
Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease	1
Cryptosporidiosis	6
Giardiasis	3
Gonococcal infection	28
Haemophilus influenzae (invasive disease)	2
Hepatitis A	3
Hepatitis B (including delta) - chronic	26
Hepatitis B - Perinatal Infection	1
Hepatitis C - chronic	211
Hepatitis C - Perinatal Infection	1
Hepatitis E	1
Immigrant Investigation	1
Influenza- ODH Lab Results	2
Influenza-associated hospitalization	65
Legionellosis	4
Lyme Disease	78
*Measles - indigenous/imported Status Not Determined (call health department immediately)	1
Meningitis - aseptic/viral	1
Pertussis	1
Salmonellosis	6
Spotted Fever Rickettsiosis, including Rocky Mountain spotted fever (RMSF)	1
Streptococcal - Group A -invasive	8
Streptococcus pneumoniae - invasive antibiotic resistance unknown or non-resistant	8
Streptococcus pneumoniae - invasive antibiotic resistant/intermediate	1
Syphilis - unknown duration or late	5
Varicella	2
West Nile virus disease (also current infection)	1
Yersiniosis	2
Total	2,032

\*Measles – Medical Director at Summit County Health Department asked SCHED to enter this case into ODRS with negative results. The patient was admitted with fever, cough and rash, and subsequently tested negative for measles, but positive for Flu B.



# Quality and Performance

## Accreditation

2024 was Ashtabula County Health Department's (ACHD) second year as an accredited health department. In order to maintain accreditation status, a PHAB (Public Health Accreditation Board) annual report must be completed, as well as the work required to meet the five-year Reaccreditation mark. The PHAB Annual Report was submitted in December, and the health department remains in good standing with PHAB.

## Community Health Improvement

2024 was also the second year of the Community Health Improvement Plan cycle, where ACHD and 32 community stakeholders participated in a collaborative, Healthy Ashtabula County (HAC). HAC split into three teams based on the Community Health Needs Assessment priorities (Obesity Prevention, Mental Wellbeing, and Access to Care). The teams met regularly to implement solutions to combat the needs within each priority. The 2024 CHIP Annual Report outlines the impactful work done by the team. Due in large part to the strides made by the teams, a fourth "Health Equity lens" called *Strengthen and Sustain Healthy Ashtabula County* was initiated, and stakeholders met to determine the feasibility of becoming a separate, non-profit organization.

## Strategic Planning

The Community Health Improvement Plan and accreditation standards, as well as public health mandates and grant requirements, are some of the stipulations used to govern the ACHD Strategic Plan. The strategic plan guides the directors by outlining the long-term goals and strategies for the department. It communicates the Ashtabula County Health Department's vision, mission, and values, and specifies how ACHD will measure its progress and achieve its intended objectives.

ACHD directors held regular work sessions to evaluate progress and formulate the best course of action in each of the three areas of Quality & Performance. Completed and approved plans and documents are made available to the public via the ACHD and Healthy Ashtabula County websites.