

▶ 2015 Annual Report of the Nebraska Health Care Funding Act (LB 692)

Health Department: ▶ Southeast District Health Department

All local public health departments receiving funds under the Act are required to report on the activities related to the core public health functions carried out during the fiscal year July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015.

Please respond to the questions and provide specific examples and outcomes wherever possible. You may not be able to respond to every question but be as complete as possible.

This report is due to the Office of Community Health & Performance Management by **October 1, 2015**. Please e-mail to Pat DeLancey (patti.delancey@nebraska.gov) and Colleen Svoboda (colleen.svoboda@nebraska.gov)

2015 Annual Report of the Nebraska Health Care Funding Act (LB 692)

1. Monitor health status and understand health issues facing the community.

- a. How do you collect and maintain data that provide information on conditions of public health importance and on the health status of the population?

All data for Southeast District Health Department is saved on the department's server. This ensures that all collected data is backed up and has a harder opportunity to be lost. Currently SEDHD is collecting data from the community for the community health assessment. The data is being collected by surveys and through focus groups. Many of the grants ask that data be collected for grant activities. This data is collected by SEDHD then handed in to the respective agency overseeing the grant. The data is also stored by SEDHD on the servers and organized by folders.

- b. What major problems or trends have you identified in the past year?

Over the past fiscal year 2015 Southeast District Health Department (SEDHD) has started the process for an updated community health assessment. A survey was distributed to the community to gage the perception of health issues with Southeast Nebraska. The top five results are listed below for each category.

Top Qualities that Contribute to a High Quality of Life

1. Good Schools
2. Jobs with Adequate Wages
3. Availability of Healthcare
4. Affordable Housing
5. Low Crime/Safe Neighborhoods

Most Important Issue Facing Our Community

1. Cancer
2. Aging Problems
3. Substance Abuse
4. Joblessness
5. Mental Health Issues

Most Risky Behaviors in Our Community

1. Drug Use
 2. Alcohol Dependency
 3. Being Overweight
-

4. Lack of Exercise
5. Poor Eating Habits

- c. If you updated your community health assessment during the past year, describe the process and the major outcomes.

Southeast District Health Department (SEDHD) has started the process to readdress the community health assessment. The community health assessment (CHA) and improvement planning process (CHIP) processes have been changed from the 2012 process. In 2012 SEDHD used the MAPP process to collect information used for the CHA. In this process individual counties were assessed separately, the information collected separately, and improvement plans created separately. Each meeting site conducted three different meetings to collect the needed information.

This year SEDHD decided to change the process and how improvements would be made through planning. In March 2015 SEDHD released a survey to the community. This survey was located at local libraries, the grocery stores, community service organizations, on SEDHD's website, and hospital websites. The purpose of distributing the survey to the community was to get a better representation of the community that SEDHD serves, and to better direct the discussion occurring in the community meetings. By distributing a survey to the whole community the purpose of the community meetings changed as well. No longer was the community represented entirely by a few community leaders attending a meeting, the community was given a voice through the survey, and discussion was based on survey results. The discussion from these meetings will help SEDHD understand issues within the community, while giving members of the community an opportunity to participate.

Funding Source: LB 692

2. Protect people from health problems and health hazards.

- a. What key activities did you complete in the past year to prevent, minimize, and contain adverse health events and conditions resulting from communicable diseases; food-, water-, and vector-borne outbreaks; chronic diseases; environmental hazards; injuries; and health disparities?

Southeast District Health Department responded to an outbreak of pertussis in the Southeast Nebraska community from December 2014 to March 2015. Over this period SEDHD encountered 185 confirmed cases of pertussis. Each of these cases were contacted and investigated by SEDHD staff. During this outbreak SEDHD strengthened relationships with area school districts, health clinics, hospitals, and media outlets. Working with these groups SEDHD was able to standardize a consistent message throughout the community, case testing was also standardized throughout the various practices in Southeast Nebraska.

- b. What activities did you complete for emergency preparedness (e.g., planning, exercises, response activities) in the past year?

SEDHD focused on assisting community partners in developing plans to address the proposed CMS requirements. This has included hazard and vulnerability assessments in the facilities, hosting training on plan development, teaching ICS courses to facility staff, and assisting in the planning and coordination of a district wide exercise. This exercise, which was hosted through the Southeast Nebraska Healthcare Coalition, had 32 agencies and a total of 115 individuals participating.

SEDHD hosted trainings for licensed medical providers on hepatitis and tuberculosis. The trainings were presented by DHHS. This was an opportunity for the health department bring together health partners from the community.

SEDHD participated in a series of federally evaluated nuclear regulatory exercises which addressed terrorist events occurring at Cooper Nuclear Station south of Brownville, NE. The role of SEDHD was to assist with the identification of vulnerable population and addressing their needs. These events were coordinated through the local emergency managers.

Funding Source: Both LB 692 & LB 1060

3. Give people information they need to make healthy choices.

- a. Provide two to three examples of key information that was provided to the public related to physical, behavioral, environmental, social, economic, and other issues affecting health.

SEDHD utilizes many means to communicate with community members concerning health issues. One of the more important messages that SEDHD release last year was the importance of being up to date on immunizations. In

the midst of our largest pertussis outbreak, it was important to continue stressing the important of immunization as the best defense against treatable viruses. It was also an important message to release, because as the pertussis outbreak was ramping up, flu season was beginning. Whenever there is an opportunity, SEDHD stresses the importance of being up to date on immunizations.

SEDHD took the time to distribute towelettes during late summer and early fall to assist with mosquito prevention. As Richardson County is a testing site for West Nile Virus activity, it is important that SEDHD inform the community on the importance of proper mosquito protection. The towelettes that are distributed carry the SEDHD logo. It is important that community members are aware of the sources they receive services and information from.

SEDHD has a staff member who attended a QPR Suicide Prevention workshop, and became certified to teach suicide prevention in the community. The staff member has chosen school administrators and teachers as the appropriate audience to educate on suicide prevention. It is the hope of SEDHD that school administrators and teachers will be able to identify warning signs in students and take the proper measures to address these situations.

- b. Provide two to three examples of health promotion programs that were implemented to address identified health problems.

SEDHD has identified a deficiency within the community in the area of breastfeeding. Based on this finding SEDHD applied for a DHHS Preventative Health Services block grant to help address this issue. The goal of the program was to increase the number of mothers who receive breastfeeding education and increase the duration of breastfeeding in Southeast Nebraska. One important outcome from this project was the establishment of the Community Breastfeeding Coalition. This coalition was a group of service and care providers from around the Southeast Health District interested in information sharing and developing a strong message to promote the positive health outcomes related to breastfeeding.

The immunization program at SEDHD has exceeded the expectations of its original intent. The impacts of having a strong immunization program may never be able to be quantified, but SEDHD feels strongly that because of its strong immunization rates the community is better protected against outbreaks of treatable disease. The immunization program travels throughout the community offering nine clinics a month. This gives eligible community members an opportunity to receive immunization without requiring a lot of travel. During the pertussis outbreak the immunization

conducted extra clinics in areas requested by the community. Along with the service of providing immunization, education is a large component to the program. SEDHD tries to assure that people come away from the clinics not only better protected, but also better informed.

Funding Source: Both LB 692 & LB 1060

4. Engage the community to identify and solve health problems.

- a. Describe the process for developing your community health improvement plan (CHIP) and/or implementing your work plan.

SEDHD is currently in the process of readdressing its community health assessment (CHA), community health improvement plan (CHIP), and its strategic plan. The new director of SEDHD has changed the process on how SEDHD approaches the CHA, CHIP, and strategic planning process. The new process has taken a regional approach to the collection of health information within the district. SEDHD is partnering with local hospitals, local leaders, Peru State College, and Southeast Nebraska Community Action agency. This group will prioritize health issues indicated by a community health survey that has been distributed throughout Southeast Nebraska. Based on the prioritization, the group will work together to decide on proper interventions to make a measureable difference regarding health issues in the community. Currently SEDHD is still collecting data and meeting with community leaders to better understand the information being turned in by the community.

- b. Describe other efforts where your department engaged with the public health system and community in identifying and addressing health problems through collaborative processes.

- What were the evidence-based strategies that were implemented?

The process for collecting qualitative information is based off of the MAPP process. It has been decided that the process is too difficult to be properly accomplished by only one organization, and it would not benefit the community if it was done by only one organization. To successfully accomplish the intended goal of the community health assessment leaders for various community groups have been asked to participate in this data collection and analysis.

Funding Source: LB 692

5. Develop public health policies and plans.

- a. What policies have you proposed, supported, and implemented that improve population health and/or reduce disparities?

Currently SEDHD is conducting a community health assessment. This process is important for the current director to understand the health disparities within the community. The new director started his job December 1, 2014. Some of the issues that have been identified in the community are substance abuse issues, the prevalence of radon in Southeast Nebraska, and low duration of breastfeeding in the community.

- b. Describe your efforts to develop and implement a quality improvement plan for your department.

The new director of SEDHD has started the efforts to revise the quality improvement plan by integrating a plan that he had developed for his previous health department.

- c. What are your health department's top 3-5 community health priorities?

These items are currently being identified through the community health assessment.

- d. What are the top 3-5 community health challenges?

These items are currently being identified through the community health assessment.

Funding Source: LB 692

6. Enforce public health laws and regulations.

- a. Describe your efforts to educate members of your community on public health laws, policies, regulations, and ordinances and how to comply with them.

Education is an important part of services provided by Southeast District Health Department. The major public health laws and regulations that we educate the community on are school immunizations, tuberculosis, individual rights and responsibilities regarding their environment, and reportable

disease. It is important that we not only work with community members, but also our partnership organizations such as hospitals, clinics, law enforcement, city and county officials, and school districts in order that assure that a consistent and accurate message be distributed to the public.

One of the most recent occurrences of working with an organization to distribute important information to the public was during the pertussis outbreak from December 2014 to March 2015. Working with the school districts to get a message to the parents on assuring immunizations records are up to date, and that a symptomatic child or staff member be removed from school activities were the focus of protecting the public from further outbreak. It was also important that HIPAA was followed and that no identifiable information was released to the public or media outlets when addressing this outbreak. In more rural communities it becomes difficult to assure that one's individual identifiable health information not be release.

- b. What laws and regulations have you helped enforce to protect the public's health?

Southeast District Health Department enforce health ordinances when called upon to do so. One area that SEDHD enforces ordinances is how tuberculosis is treated. Depending on the diagnosis, TB patients may need to be followed up with to make sure that medications are properly taken. SEDHD assures that TB is not spread throughout the area so proper precautions are taken. The roll taken by SEDHD is to ensure that patients follow orders prescribed by doctors to limit the spread of TB.

Funding Source: Both LB 692 & LB 1060

7. Help people receive health services.

- a. Describe the gaps that your department has identified in personal health services for your jurisdiction.

These items are currently being identified through the community health assessment.

- b. Describe the strategies and services that you have supported and implemented to increase access to health care and establish systems of personal health services, including preventive and health promotion services, in partnership with the community.

These items are currently being identified through the community health assessment.

Funding Source: LB 692

8. Maintain a competent public health workforce.

- a. Describe your efforts to encourage the development of a sufficient number of qualified public health workers (e.g., provide internship opportunities or presentations to promote public health as a career).

To maintain workforce competencies, Southeast District Health Department encourages its staff to take advantage of all opportunities to further their knowledge in the realm of public health. We promote the professional staff to obtain need continuing education credits needed to maintain their respective licenses. We also expect individuals receiving certificates to continue with understanding their areas of concentration. We encourage all employees to continue to collect information on their areas of interest. These opportunities come through webinars, conference calls, meetings, and conferences. Employees are required to report out on the trainings and meetings they attend, in an effort to inform the entire SEDHD staff. This year one employee has decided to continue her education by pursuing a Masters of Public Health. SEDHD has also partnered with Peru State College to provide internship opportunities. Currently we have an intern who is assisting with data collection for the community health assessment. This student has recently been accepted into the PHEAST program, and is has been an honor for SEDHD to host a promising future public health practitioner.

- b. Describe the activities that you have completed to establish and implement a workforce development plan.

Current plans have yet to be developed. It is the intention of SEDHD to develop plans to assure the community of a competent public health workforce.

Funding Source: Both LB 692 & LB 1060

9. Evaluate and improve programs and interventions.

- a. Provide at least two examples of your evaluation activities related to evidence-based public health programs.
-

Since coming into the position of public health director in December of 2014, a main effort has been to instill a culture of quality and continuous improvement. However, as of yet SEDHD has not instituted a full quality program. Currently SEDHD reviews data from monthly to better understand each program offered by the public health department. It is the intent of SEDHD that these data reviews will eventually be a tool to develop quality projects.

- b. Provide two examples of quality improvement initiatives that have been completed or are in process.

Please see above

- c. Describe your efforts to measure the performance of the health department (i.e., implement a performance management system).

Please see above

Funding Source: LB 692

10. Contribute to and apply the evidence base of public health.

- a. Provide at least two examples of evidence-based programs your department is implementing.

Currently we are in the process of updating our community health assessment. We utilize MAPP to guide our process. Another program we are considering is partnering with the University of Nebraska Medical Center and area hospitals for a cardiovascular risk reduction program. The intent is to apply for grants in March of 2016. The plan is to have community health workers and nurse practitioners work with patients at risk for cardiovascular disease to develop a self-management plan and assist with medications. The program addresses needs in rural areas due to overburdened doctors and medical staffs.

- b. Describe how you have collaborated with researchers to conduct any research studies (e.g., completed surveys, interviews, or focus groups).

The community health assessment work has been a continuation of work conducted from three years ago. There have been some adjustments made to

the process in order to make it a smoother process. We have utilized a community survey and shortened the focus groups. It was felt that by doing this interest would be kept more, and groups would be focused on more pre-identified issues through the surveys.

Funding Source: LB 692

11. Indicate your status related to accreditation.

- Accredited
- Applied – in process
- Will apply within next two years
- Will apply within next five years
- Do not currently intend to apply

It is the intent of Southeast District Health Department to apply for PHAB accreditation within the next two years. We are currently in process of developing an updated community health assessment and improvement plan. SEDHD is also updating its strategic plan to align with the goals of the organization, and with reference to results from the CHA and CHIP. SEDHD desires to complete a quality assurance and improvement plan in order to show the communities SEDHD serves that the services we offer meet particular standards, and that we are always striving to improve on what we do.

STORYTELLING

Highlight at least one significant accomplishment or success story for your department during July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015. What was the impact of public health on individuals and families in your community? What did you accomplish? What outcomes or impact did you achieve? Did the success promote efficiency or effectiveness? Does the success link to or support a broader strategic plan, health improvement plan, or specific essential service? What new partnerships were established? (Please limit to 250 words)

The director of Southeast District Health Department started December 1, 2014. One of the major focus during this year was reestablishing relationships within the community and from those relationship, solidifying partnerships. It has been with those partnerships that Southeast District has been able to find success with the endeavors it has taken on. Nothing that SEDHD does can it do successfully on its own. The main goal of the director of SEDHD was to make the transition

between directors seamless, and make improvements where opportunities presented. One of the best opportunities to learn more about an environment was to conduct a community health assessment. This process has allowed SEDHD to better understand health issues occurring in the communities, along with strategizing with partners on how to address these disparities, while working to continually grow on our successes.

One of the projects started during the 2014-2015 year was our breastfeeding project. The goal of the breastfeeding project was to develop a breastfeeding coalition in Southeast Nebraska who would devise strategies on how to promote breastfeeding within the community. SEDHD was the coordinating agency of the grant. Various organization came together to join the coalition. The grant ended in August of 2015 and the coalition has seen no decline in participation since the end of the grant.