

APRIL 2018

CATAWBA
COUNTY **Public
Health**

PUBLIC *Health*

MONTHLY UPDATE

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what we're doing
online



HEPATITIS B TESTING OFFERED

Catawba County Public Health is now offering Hepatitis B testing at no cost to eligible clients through the North Carolina State Laboratory of Public Health.

Hepatitis B is a serious viral infection that can lead to death. It is treatable, but not curable. It is also one of the most common chronic blood borne illness in the United States. Hepatitis B attacks the liver and is found in the blood and body fluids of infected people. It most often spreads from mother to infant during birth or

“We felt that offering this testing to our clients would be valuable in our work to reduce the spread of Hepatitis in our community.”

Sarah Rhodes

Clinical Nursing Supervisor

through sexual contact. It can also be spread through sharing needles, razors, or tattoo and body piercing tools. Hepatitis B damages the liver, which is a vital organ that aids in digestion of food, processes and stores nutrients and vitamins for energy, filters the blood by removing toxins, and fights infections. If the liver is inflamed or damaged, it may not be able to do its job.

Catawba County Public Health is responsible for investigating cases of Hepatitis B in pregnant women and following their babies for a year after birth. Our Communicable Disease staff are also responsible for tracking reported Hepatitis B cases and working to control the disease's transmission. We also offer Hepatitis B vaccinations that prevent people who are exposed from contracting the disease.

Public Health is offering the Hepatitis B testing as an expansion of the Hepatitis C coalition work that Public Health and its partners have been doing over the past year.

“We felt that offering this testing to our clients would

Burden of Disease in North Carolina

» The highest rates of newly diagnosed acute Hepatitis B occurred among the 35- to 44-year-old age group. This age group comprised one third of the total acute Hepatitis B cases.

» In 2016, caucasian men and women comprised early two thirds of the total acute Hepatitis B cases.

» In 2016, the exposure most frequently reported by people with acute Hepatitis B was heterosexual contact, followed by injection drug use.

Prevention

Vaccination is the best way to prevent Hepatitis B.

People living in the same home or participating in risk behaviors with someone who already has Hepatitis B should get vaccinated.

be valuable in our work to reduce the spread of Hepatitis in our community,” said Clinical Nursing Supervisor Sarah Rhodes. “By performing testing, we can help patients seek care and receive treatment to reduce liver damage, and work to control the spread of the disease to others.”

To receive testing, patients are scheduled for an evaluation in the Adult Health Clinic, where it will be determined if the patient is a candidate for testing through the North Carolina State Laboratory of Public Health at no cost to the patient. To qualify for testing through the state lab, a patient must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- » Symptomatic patients
- » Refugees
- » Sexual or needle sharing contacts of infected persons
- » People who are known HBsAg positives (people who have the Hepatitis B antibody and are infectious)
- » Been involved in a percutaneous exposure (needle-stick, cut, scrape, etc.)

STAFF NEWS & NOTES

Catawba County Public Health has welcomed a number of new team members, including:

Jordan Johnson joined Public Health in late January as a Community Health Coordinator supporting the work of LiveWell Catawba through the Duke Endowment Healthy People, Healthy Carolinas grant. She received her bachelor's degree in intercultural studies and her master of public health degree in health promotion from Liberty University.

Maria Moreno joined the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program in mid-February as a program assistant.

Leslie Bromberg joined Catawba County Environmental Health staff in early March as an Environmental Health Specialist in the Food, Lodging and Institution section. She was most recently in Mecklenburg County, and has previously worked in Burke County. She has 13 years of experience in the environmental health field.

Dori Maltba, RN, joined Public Health in early February. She earned her bachelor of science degree in nursing from Lenoir-Rhyne University and has 24 years of nursing experience, primarily at Catawba Pediatric Associates. She is serving in a floating capacity and works in our Communicable Disease, Immunizations, and Adult Health clinical program areas.

Jami Bentley joined Public Health in early February as the new Clinical Systems Supervisor. She is the



Johnson



Moreno



Bromberg



Maltba



Bentley



Yang

project lead for our new electronic medical records system, and supervises our billing and eligibility staff. Jami earned her bachelor of science degree in healthcare management from Appalachian State University and has more than 13 years of clinical systems and billing experience, most recently at the Caldwell County Health Department.

Julie Yang joined Catawba County Public Health as an Environmental Health Specialist in the food and lodging section in late March. She has close to three years of experience in environmental health and has worked in Madison County and most recently Iredell County.

School health team completes training

Catawba County Public Health's school health nurses completed the Youth Mental Health First Aid training provided by Partners Behavioral Health Management in late January. There are now 22 school nurses that are certified by Youth Mental Health First Aid USA.

Youth Mental Health First Aid teaches people how to help an ad-

olescent (age 12-18) who is experiencing a mental health or addictions challenge or is in crisis. It is designed for adults who regularly interact with young people, and introduces common mental health challenges for youth, reviews typical adolescent development, and teaches a 5-step action plan for how to help young people in both crisis

and non-crisis situations. Topics covered include anxiety, depression, substance use, disorders causing psychosis, disruptive behavior disorders, and eating disorders.

For more information on Youth Mental Health First Aid, go to <https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/take-a-course/course-types/youth/>.

Immunization Compliance

PUBLIC HEALTH TOPS STATE AVERAGE

Catawba County Public Health recently received notification that the county is performing above the state average for immunization rate compliance in children.

State Department of Health and Human Services staff reviewed Catawba County's immunization information through October 2017 from the North Carolina Immunization Registry (NCIR) for all children 24-35 months of age who are either active in the local health department or residing in Catawba County. It included clients born between October 2, 2015 and October 1, 2015. The purpose is to determine the immunization compliance rate, which refers to the percentage of children who have documentation of being up-to-date by 24 months of age with the state's recommended vaccinations.

Compliance rates are based on the percentage of clients with documentation of receiving four Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Pertussis/Whooping Cough (DTaP), three Polio, one Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR), three Haemophilus Influenzae Type B (Hib), three Hepatitis B, one Varicella and four Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine (PCV) by 24 months.

IMMUNIZATION COMPLIANCE AT A GLANCE

	CCPH (agency)	Catawba Co. (overall)
Meeting Benchmark	91%	89%
Statewide Average	85%	72%
Healthy People 2020 Goal	80%	80%
2018-19 Goal	90%	90%

Childhood vaccinations are important because they protect children from diseases that could cause permanent damage or even death. By vaccinating all children against illnesses, we are able to protect younger children who are too young for vaccines, and children with weakened immune systems. This helps us protect all families in our community.

Catawba County has exceeded the state average for immunization rates every year since 2007. Catawba County Public Health has outperformed the statewide local health department average each year since 2007, with the exception of 2015, when we met the statewide average.

The next assessment will be conducted on Oct. 1, 2018.

Collection aids Public Health food pantry

The Guardian ad Litem program completed its annual peanut butter and jelly collection in mid-February. The campaign collected plastic jars of peanut butter and jelly in Catawba, Burke and Caldwell counties in an effort to combat food insecurity. The program was able to collect more than 1,600 jars of peanut butter and jelly, which will be delivered to local food banks including Eastern Catawba Cooperative Christian Ministries, South Caldwell Cooperative Christian Ministries, and Catawba County Public Health.

In November, Catawba Coun-

ty Public Health received 801 pounds of donations from the Food for Fines program at area libraries. Eastern Catawba Cooperative Christian Ministries has also provided 330 Food Lion Holidays Without Hunger food boxes, 350 cases of Gerber baby food, and 50 boxes of diapers over the past several months for Public Health clients.

WANT TO DONATE?

Peanut butter and jelly are two of the top items requested for the pantry at Public Health. Donations of these items, and any other canned goods, can go to Karina Zamora.



Catawba Valley Medical Center — Maternity Services

MEDICATION ASSISTED THERAPY NOW AVAILABLE

Catawba County Public Health has been working with Gaston Family Health Services (GFHS) and Catawba Valley Maternity Services staff to bring Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) to Catawba Valley Medical Center — Maternity Services clients. Public Health has contracted with Catawba Valley Medical Center since 2012 to provide maternal health services that we are required by state mandate to assure. The practice provides comprehensive prenatal care to women, including pregnant women with high risk medical conditions, including substance abuse.

“Since some Catawba Valley Medical Center — Maternity Services clients are considered high risk due to substance abuse, Catawba County Public Health felt this program would be beneficial to pregnant women in Catawba County, and made the connection between Gaston Family Health Services and CVMC — Maternity Services,” said Assistant Health Director Jennifer McCracken. “We are excited to see such a successful program come to Catawba County.”

Medication Assisted Treatment combines behavioral therapy and medications to treat substance use disorders. This is important for women who are substance users and who are pregnant because it helps the woman receive medications and therapy that can help her maintain a steady dose of medication instead of relatively inconsistent amounts of illicit opiates. Developing babies are at an increased risk of still-birth and meconium aspiration during gestation if the mother uses illicit drugs. After birth, babies who are born to mothers in treatment experience fewer problems with withdrawals (known as Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome).

Not only will this better serve pregnant patients and postpartum women more efficiently, it will also open up availability for other area providers to treat more members of the general population.

READ ONE PATIENT’S STORY, WRITTEN BY OUR PARTNERS AT CATAWBA VALLEY MEDICAL CENTER:

<https://www.catawbavalleyhealth.org/Medical-Center/About-Us/News/2018/March/Sylvia-On-Getting-Help-for-Opioid-Addiction-Duri.aspx>

Frequently Asked Questions

HOW DOES THE MAT PROGRAM WORK IN CATAWBA COUNTY?

The Gaston Family Health Services Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) program provides services for pregnant women age 18 or older who are dependent on opioids, are not currently in treatment, and who are receiving prenatal care at Catawba Valley Medical Center — Maternity Services. Patients identified through CVMC — Maternity Services will be referred to GFHS MAT program to determine eligibility. Patients who are eligible will be offered treatment through GFHS that is coordinated with their maternity care. Other patients will be assisted in finding an appropriate treatment resource.

HOW DID THE PROGRAM COME ABOUT?

The GFHS MAT program began in 2016 in Gaston County. A discussion of similar needs in Catawba County and the existing partnership between GFHS, Catawba County Public Health and Catawba Valley Medical Center allowed for growth of the GFHS MAT program. The Catawba MAT program began operation in January 2018.

WHO IS WORKING WITH THE PROGRAM IN CATAWBA COUNTY?

Dr. Llewellyn Mensah, a provider at Gaston Family Health Services’ Catawba Family Care in Hickory, has a federal waiver that allows prescribing of medicines such as buprenorphine, methadone and naltrexone for treatment, and provides the MAT services. Patients are also linked with counseling and assessments prior to treatment, and have follow-up appointments for 18 months postpartum. The team provides treatment updates to CVMC providers, and a MAT behavioral health provider is also onsite part-time within the CVMC clinic.

WIC, LIVEWELL CATAWBA FEATURED AT EVENT

LiveWell Catawba's Ashley Rink spoke during the Connect Catawba Resource Forum on Tuesday, March 13, 2018, at the Newton Recreation Center about the importance of LiveWell Early Childhood initiatives. Early childhood, the years from birth to age five, are a critical window for the development of healthy behaviors that can have a lifelong impact on a child's quality of life. As many children are in a child care setting for several hours each day, early child care providers play a vital role in promoting healthy habits. Good nutrition and physical activity are essential to a young child's growth and development. The LiveWell Early Childhood workgroup is connecting early child care providers with resources and technical assistance to enable policy, systems and environmental changes that support healthy eating and physical activity. Catawba County Public Health's Tracey Paul also spoke during the forum about the importance of nutrition for pregnant mothers, infants and children. Paul's focus was on nutrition as part of Catawba County Public Health's Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program. The quarterly Connect Catawba Resource Forum highlights a topic of community concern and has short presentations by agencies that address that topic. Information on the forum is available by contacting Kim Rhoads, System of Care Child Liaison, at krhoads@partnersbhm.org.



ABOVE, Ashley Rink spoke at the Community Resource Forum on March 13 about LiveWell Early Childhood. BELOW, Tracey Paul told the crowd of 60-plus people about Women, Infants and Children (WIC) services.



Quality Improvement Corner

By Tania Harper

“Once you realize it, we are ‘working’ QI every day in our jobs. When you try something different in order to make a task better, you are doing QI. Don’t be afraid to look at it as a way to be more efficient in your job and a way to better meet our clients’ needs. QI is not a scary beast!”

Rhonda Stikeleather
Children’s Services Supervisor