

Mission Moments

Exceptional Delivery of Services

1. Introducing Kit's Closet

The Harm Reduction Program (HRP) team noticed a significant need amongst our program participants for clothing, especially seasonal gear (i.e., winter jackets, warm weather items, etc.). Many of our participants experiencing homelessness regularly wear torn, dirty, and inadequate clothing for the season, so to try to meet this need, the team began regularly donating clothing from their own closets. While this was a good, temporary workaround, many participants were limited on sizes and styles, which left them, especially men, with no other access to clothes. Luckily the team was able to secure some space in a storage room – now referred to as **Kit's Closet** - to start accepting donations from Public Health staff, friends, and family. With these donations and support, the HRP team can now regularly stock their clothing rack for program participants to access much needed items.

Kit's Closet is named in honor of one of our Harm Reduction Health Educators, Kit Matzke, who will soon be leaving us to begin an exciting new chapter in medical school. Kit has been a compassionate advocate for harm reduction clients and a strong example of service and care. Along with her fellow teammates in the Harm Reduction program, Kit worked hard to make this donation closet a reality. Naming the donation closet in Kit's honor is a small way we can celebrate her impact to Arapahoe County Public Health and continue her legacy of kindness and generosity.

2. Shout out to Altura WIC from Laura Backhaus, WIC Supervisor

"I want to give a big shout out to Altura. I have received several compliments over the last few months from out of state transfers! Client's often say they didn't feel supported by their previous program, and are relieved to be on WIC in CO because our staff are so kind, and they feel genuinely seen as a whole person here in Aurora. ACPH WIC is one of the biggest programs in CO, and we still deliver small town quality customer service, education and counseling. Thank you for your continued compassion to our community, it makes all the difference."

Innovation and Process Improvement

Consumer Protection Mapping Tool: Consumer Protection field staff are collectively responsible for inspecting the approximately 2,400 restaurants in Arapahoe County. Beginning June 2, Consumer Protection field staff were individually assigned their own inspection areas. To help ensure fair distribution, inspection areas were created taking into consideration not only the number of facilities in each area but also the type. Future growth was also considered when mapping inspection areas.

Assigning staff to designated areas hinges directly on having access to the proper mapping tools. Without interactive maps to track and assign facilities, assign complaints and view inspection areas, this type of improvement would not be possible. To design and build the necessary mapping tools, Consumer

Protection relied directly on the knowledge and expertise of Data Scientist, James Swank in the Partnerships, Planning and Community Health Promotion Division (PPCHP). Starting from scratch, James successfully developed three separate mapping applications, one that allows leadership to track and assign new facilities, another that allows field staff to view all areas and the facilities in those areas and finally, a third map that allow Business Support to assign complaints to designated staff.

This success of this project can be attributed to both effective collaboration across divisions as well as innovate thinking and design know-how. The mapping tools were a necessary first step allowing for the realization of inspections areas. Inspection areas, in turn, will enhance staff efficiency while promoting greater organization, familiarity and accountability. Importantly, assigned inspection areas will also facilitate rapport and build trust with operators, which goes hand in hand with gaining compliance.

A. Program Updates

Partnerships, Planning and Community Health Promotion

1) Community Engagement

- a. Recently completed events included:
 - i. Village Institute Cultural Festival
 - ii. Safe Zone events with Compound for Compassion (part of a series)
 - iii. Colorado Access Maternal Health Resource Fair
 - iv. Town of Bennett Summer Event
 - v. Juneteenth in Five Points
 - vi. City of Littleton Meet, Greet, and Eat with City Council event (part of a series)
- b. Upcoming community events include but are not limited to:
 - i. El Grupo Vida Youth Conference and Resource Fair
 - ii. Safe Zone events with Compound for Compassion (part of a series)
 - iii. AC Thriving Community Fair
 - iv. City of Littleton Meet, Greet, and Eat with City Council event (part of a series)
 - v. Doctor's Care Back-to-School Fair
 - vi. We Are Aurora National Night Out at Fletcher Plaza
 - vii. Iron Sharp Back-to School event

Please reach out to [Grace Soulen](#) or visit the [Community Engagement Event Request Form](#) to join or suggest upcoming community event opportunities. **These efforts align with the ACPH Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) objective to advance community engagement across CHIP priority areas.**

2) Community Pulse Survey – *Customer Experience & Engagement Program*

- a. This month, ACPH launched a new Qualtrics-based communication tool designed to increase our ability to connect directly with community members. On a consistent basis, participants will receive an email with brief, accessible public health messaging that has been informed through media monitoring. This approach will help enable the crafting of timely messages that reflect the interests and language most currently being used across social media channels. In addition to providing information, each email will include a brief question. Responses will be provided to ACPH program staff to help inform our efforts. The inaugural

distribution list included 398 individuals who indicated interest in hearing from us via prior outreach mechanisms like the Community Health Assessment Survey and the Customer Experience Survey. To sign up, [click here](#). **This effort aligns with the ACPH Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) objective to advance community engagement across CHIP priority areas.**

3) Social Connection

- a. ACPH co-hosted a meeting with AdventHealth on May 29, where approximately 30 participants from state and local agencies and community-based organizations came together to learn about the hospital system's prior year community benefits activities. As part of the agenda, ACPH organized a presentation from Summit Cove Consulting to help stimulate understanding and discussion on improving social connections by highlighting findings from a literature review and series of key informant interviews of Colorado stakeholders recently completed in partnership with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. **This effort aligns with the ACPH Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) objective to advance community safety.**

4) Healthy Aging

- a. Over 30 ACPH staff participated in the May 22 in-person training, Reframing Aging, provided at no cost by Board of Health member Kristine Burrows in coordination with Healthy Aging Coordinator, Melissa Smith. In follow up, participating staff will carry forward lessons learned on recognizing and challenging stereotypes, reinforcing the importance of diversity, and practicing age-inclusive strategies to improve outcomes across the agency. **This effort aligns with the ACPH Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) objective to advance healthy aging.**

5) Mentoring Upcoming Public Health Leaders

- a. This summer, the Community Health Promotion team will host a practicum student from the Colorado School of Public Health (CSPH) Master of Public Health program. CHP invests time hosting students knowing that our agency and community benefit from the energy and strengths of the next generation of public health leaders. It also is an opportunity for ACPH staff to show future leaders what it is to protect and improve public health in local communities through authentic engagement, collaboration, and equity advancement. ACPH appreciates the opportunity to partner with CSPH staff and help ensure students experience critical roles and functions reflecting 21st century public health core competencies.

Nutrition Division

1) Division Impact and Reach

- a. In April 2025, WIC had 12,285 clients enrolled in the WIC Program and completed 5,182 client appointments.
- b. In April 2025, the Breastfeeding Peer Counselors had a caseload of 1,444 WIC Clients and made contact with 958 pregnant and breastfeeding mothers.
- c. The Food Resource Navigators have assisted 159 WIC clients with SNAP Application assistance January – April 2025.
- d. Through April 2025, the Regional Breastfeeding Class (serving Adams, Arapahoe, Douglas, Boulder and Broomfield) had 122 attendees.
- e. The Baby Cafe has had 42 attendees through January – April 2025.

2) WIC Partnership with Children's Health Clinic

- a. The WIC Program has partnered with Children's Health Clinic (CHC) since its opening to receive referrals and serve their patients either remotely or at our Altura Plaza WIC clinic. This spring, a formal MOU was finalized with CHC to provide funding for a 0.5 FTE WIC

Coordinator to be embedded on-site within their Resource Connect Clinic. This collaboration aims to better integrate WIC services into CHC's operations, making it easier for providers to refer patients directly for WIC support. A new staff member has been hired for this role and will begin training at the end of June, with full implementation expected in August.

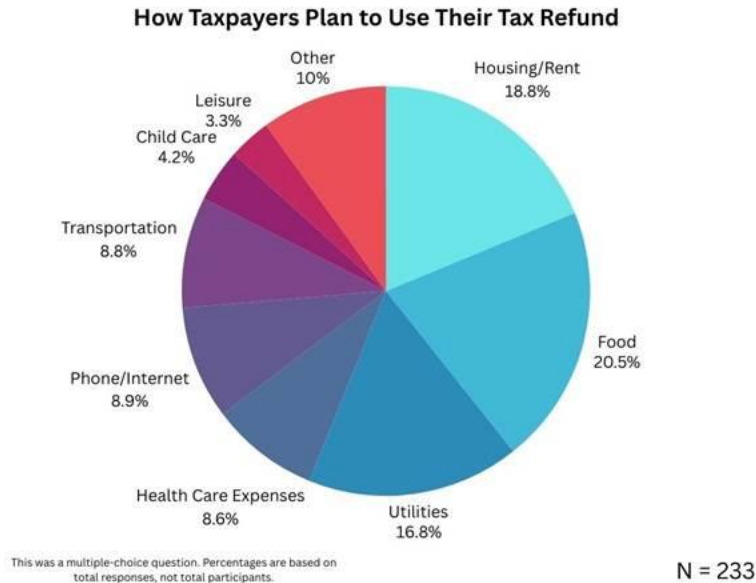
Community Health Nursing Division

1) Maternal and Child Health Program

- a. The MCH program started the Installation phase of Family Connects after completing orientation. This means we are training home visiting nurses, developing our electronic health record, and building a tailored community resource directory in preparation for the Implementation phase. Later this summer, we will start home visits for any family with a new baby living in Arapahoe County and born at Denver Health. The MCH team continues to seek sustainable funding for Family Connects to expand the program to more hospitals. **This initiative aligns with the ACPH Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) goal to Improve Access to Affordable Physical and Behavioral Healthcare.**
- b. ACPH was awarded a \$2,500 grant from the E-470 Transportation Safety Foundation to extend our pilot project with the Children's Hospital Colorado Safety Store. This funding allows direct service programs, including WIC and nurse home visitation, to order safe, appropriate car seats delivered to clients at no charge. **This initiative aligns with the ACPH Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) goal to advance Economic Security and Mobility and improve Community Safety.**
- c. ACPH was approved for A Precious Child's Fill a Backpack program and Builders for Babies Diaper Drive. We're awaiting the final numbers for both of them, but they represent exciting joint-program efforts to support our families getting concrete resources. **This initiative aligns with the ACPH Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) goal to advance Economic Security and Mobility.**
- d. The MCH team hosted a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site at the Centerpointe building, offering free tax preparation services to community members. This initiative was conducted in partnership with the Adams County Health Department's MCH team, who provided IRS-certified tax preparers. Tax services were offered at no cost on the following dates: February 14, February 28, March 14, March 28, and April 11.

The team helped file 57 tax returns for community members, resulting in a total refund amount of \$133,972 returned to Arapahoe County residents. A total of 79 individuals and couples signed in during our service days, meaning we provided guidance and resources to many, whether or not they ultimately filed with us.

The pie chart below illustrates responses to a survey question asking taxpayers how they plan to use their refunds. Housing, food, and utilities were among the most common uses. The results shown reflect responses from all of our VITA sites—Adams, Commerce City, Jefferson and Arapahoe.



Across all four tax locations in Arapahoe, Jefferson, and Adams counties, we helped return \$1,292,689 in tax refunds to 561 families and individuals. **This initiative aligns with the ACPH Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) goal to advance Economic Security and Mobility.**

2) Child Fatality Prevention Systems

- a. MCH staff member Rebecca Rapport presented about the Arapahoe County Child Fatality Prevention System (CFPS) reviews at the County's Not One More Child meeting on April 30. The presentation included an overview of the review process, data and findings from the last 10 years, current prevention efforts led by ACPH, and a panel of Arapahoe County representatives who participate in the review team. **CFPS aligns with the ACPH Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) goal to Increase Community Safety.**
- b. ACPH was awarded \$10,000 from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment to prevent firearm and unintentional injuries. Funding is from the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention and must be spent and distributed by the end of July. ACPH used data from our fatality review process, staff feedback, and the CHIP Safety priority to purchase firearm security devices, safety supplies, and educational materials. Items will be distributed to internal programs for ACPH clients, community partner organizations serving youth and families, and at outreach events throughout the summer. The purchase included cable gun locks, gun lock boxes, outlet covers, cabinet locks, reflective vests, infant sleep sacks, safe sleep education board books in English and Spanish, and educational magnets about Graduated Drivers Licensing laws and consequences in English and Spanish developed by a youth advisory group. See below for examples of the magnets. **CFPS aligns with the ACPH Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) goal to Increase Community Safety.**

Leyes de Colorado sobre licencias de conducir para graduados (GDL por sus siglas en inglés) para conductores menores de 18 años

Restricciones

Multa

No utilizar el teléfono celular mientras conduzca

1 punto: \$50 por la primera infracción, \$100 por la segunda infracción, más un recargo de \$7

Los conductores con permisos de aprendizaje deben estar bajo la supervisión de un adulto mayor de 21 años de edad

3 puntos: \$70, más un recargo de \$11








Durante los primeros 6 meses de licencia de conducir: No se permiten pasajeros menores de 21 años

2 puntos: de 8 a 24 horas de servicio comunitario, \$50 por la primera infracción, \$100 por la segunda infracción, \$150 por la tercera infracción, más un recargo de \$17

De 6 meses a 1 año de licencia de conducir: Se permite un pasajero menor de 21 años

Durante el primer año de licencia de conducir: No se permite conducir entre las 12:00 AM y las 5:00 AM

ARAPAHOE COUNTY
PUBLIC HEALTH

 Colorado Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) Laws for Drivers Under 18	
Restriction	Penalty
 No cell phone use while driving	1 pt: \$50 for 1st offense, \$100 for 2nd offense, + \$7 surcharge
 Drivers with instruction permits must have a 21+ year old supervisor	3 pts: \$70 + \$11 surcharge
 <u>First 6 months of driver's license:</u> No passengers under 21 years old	2 pts: 8-24 hrs of community service, \$50 for 1st offense, \$100 for 2nd offense, \$150 for 3rd offense, + \$17 surcharge
 <u>6 months-1 year of driver's license:</u> 1 passenger under 21 years old	
 <u>First year of driver's license:</u> No driving between 12 am and 5 am	
 ARAPAHOE COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH	

3) Regional Health Connector

- a. Arapahoe County Public Health is coordinating the RTD Transportation Assistance Grant across Public Health, Human Services and Community Resources. Arapahoe County Government has received 1,382 standard 10-ride ticket books to distribute between now and the end of 2025. **This initiative aligns with the ACPH Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) goal to advance Economic Security and Mobility.**
- b. Arapahoe County Public Health is serving as a liaison for the Metro Denver Partnership for Health (MDPH) Behavioral Health Community Ambassador Program. We are supporting two community-based organizations with getting Let's Talk and other mental health stigma reduction messaging out to the communities they serve. ACPH staff created and provided a Behavioral Health Systems and Resources 101 training for the Village Exchange Center cultural navigators. **This initiative aligns with the ACPH Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) goal to Improve Access to Affordable Physical and Behavioral Healthcare.**

- c. Arapahoe County Public Health has launched the Collaborative Resource Hub, a space in which staff can share information about Social Determinant of Health Resources across our teams. The Hub initially launched to a group of 20 staff for testing and is now active across all staff. The goal of the Hub is to improve access to resources for community members. **This initiative aligns with all of the ACPH Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) goal areas.**

4) Immunizations

- a. The IZ program is scheduled to hold 7 mobile clinics in May/June. One recent success with mobile vaccination was holding a 3-clinic series (3 mobile clinics within one week) with a middle school in Aurora:
 - i. Nurses obtained parental consent over the phone and vaccinated students during the school day.
 - ii. Over three days, IZ staff vaccinated 62 students with 264 vaccines. Breakdown of languages served: 50 Spanish, 4 Burmese, 3 Nepali, 3 English, 1 Karen, 1 Rohingya.
- b. Currently providing Measles outbreak support while activated with the public health response team. IZ staff held a PEP clinic on 5/28, conducted contact tracing on 81 contacts to date, and are currently conducting home visits to collect nose swabs and urine specimens for suspect cases.

5) Sexual Health

- a. On May 20, Sexual Health had a very successful clinical site visit with CDPHE Title X staff, who reviewed our clinical protocols and charting practices and observed several patients visits. We passed in all areas, with a recommendation to chart our adolescent education and confidentiality practices in more detail.
- b. Sexual Health had 321 clinical encounters in Altura and Englewood in May for birth control, emergency contraception, pregnancy testing and counseling, cervical cancer screening, and STI testing and treatment.
- c. Sexual Health continues to expand Syphilis STI testing and treatment outreach to the Arapahoe Detention Center, It Takes a Village and Prevention Point. In May, three people were treated for syphilis at the Detention Center, two people were treated on Prevention Point, and five were treated through syphilis FDT, including two pregnant patients.
- d. Christine Doidge, Sexual Health Nurse Supervisor, and Elicia Chacon, Harm Reduction Supervisor, were invited to share their expertise and best practices at a NACCHO convening in Atlanta, Georgia on Syndemic approaches to STIs, Viral Hepatitis, HIV and opioid overdose. **These initiatives align with the ACPH Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) goal to Improve Access to Affordable Physical and Behavioral Healthcare**

6) Harm Reduction

- a. HRP had a record number of syringe access encounters in May, with approximately 508 encounters. These encounters included syringe access and disposal, naloxone (Narcan®) distribution, and referrals.
- b. In collaboration with the ACPH Sexual Health program, the HRP launched rapid gonorrhea and chlamydia testing and treatment on the Prevention Point mobile unit. In the first 2 weeks, the nurses treated five people for syphilis and gonorrhea. The teams are working closely to improve the workflow and efficiency of the program.
- c. HRP staff attended the Perinatal Substance Use Disorder Conference in Avon, CO. They learned about the different work occurring to support pregnant people who use drugs, and those in recovery. Additionally, the team connected with different providers to share

resources about Recovery Coach Doula's, on-demand resources and peer support with PROSPER, and more.

- d. HRP collaborated with the Young People in Recovery group for a presentation and discussion on CO's Good Samaritan Law that protects people who respond to an overdose event.
- e. HRP kicked off Pride month with partners from local HIV Prevention and treatment providers at the PARTY (PrEP, Access, Referrals, and Treatment for Youth). **These initiatives align with the ACPH Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) goal to Improve Access to Affordable Physical and Behavioral Healthcare and Increase Community Safety.**

Health Protection and Response (HPR) Division (*Environmental Health, Communicable Disease Epidemiology and Emergency Preparedness and Response Programs*)

1) Environmental Health (EH) Programs

- a. Staff from the EH Water Quality Program and Early Childhood and Schools Program developed a water safety lesson plan and delivered it at Orchard Valley Learning Center on May 21, 2025, one of six childcare centers in Arapahoe County with a seasonal swimming pool. Over the course of three months, the program staff collaborated to develop an original and engaging story about a young girl named *Swimming Sue*, who models safe swimming behavior. To support diverse early childhood learning styles, the teams created props and incorporated interactive hand motions to bring the story to life and reinforce key safety concepts.

Children were engaged and entertained along with the public health and safety information delivered, and staff expressed positive sentiments, including this survey response reflecting on the interaction: "This lesson not only held the children's attention, but it really explained all of the important health and safety tips they need right before they get ready to use the pool. It was fun and informative for the children and the teachers"

- b. Mosquito Surveillance season officially kicked off on 6/9/25. On a weekly basis and typically through early September, mosquito traps will be set at four established sites throughout Arapahoe County: two in Centennial, one in Littleton, and one in Aurora. All four of these trap sites are located near high residential areas. Two new trap locations were identified this season with the help of the Highline Canal Conservancy group and selected both because of their close proximity to residential areas and because staff believe they will produce higher yields of mosquitos for testing. Mosquito surveillance in Arapahoe County helps mitigate mosquito-borne diseases by monitoring mosquito populations, identifying species, and detecting diseases, enabling targeted control measures, outreach, and education. This proactive approach helps limit the spread of diseases like West Nile virus and reduces the impact of mosquito-borne illness.
- c. With the summer season comes a significant increase in the amount of "Special Events". Growing in popularity, Special Events include a wide range of short-term celebrations and festivals as well as farmers markets, most all of which include "Temporary Food Vendors". Temporary Food Vendors offer a wide variety of prepared foods, and all are required to obtain a license specific to the county in which they operate. In addition, event coordinators are required to submit an application specific to their event. To give pace with the high demand of the season, the EH Consumer Protection staff are very busy processing both

coordinator and vendor applications, as well as conducting periodic field inspections to ensure operators adhere to food safety standards.

- d. The EH Consumer Protection program welcomed our two newest Environmental Health Specialists, Alex Holmes and Bailey Reeves on 6/9/25. Both Alex and Bailey are recent graduates from Colorado State University with degrees in Environmental Health. With the addition of Alex and Bailey, Consumer Protection is now staffed with 16 full-time Environmental Health Specialists and one full-time Plan Review Specialist.

2) Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) Program

- a. **Community Engagement:** The EPR program has connected with the City of Englewood to participate in their Neighborhood Nights community event series. This series supports the community by providing an opportunity to engage with their public services and getting to know their neighbors. Household preparedness is amplified when we connect with our neighborhoods and communities. This is especially important to support our neighbors with access and functional needs.
- b. **Extreme Heat Exercise:** The EPR Program participated in an Extreme Heat Tabletop Exercise (TTX) hosted by CDPHE. The exercise provided an opportunity to learn from other jurisdictions, explore cross-jurisdictional coordination strategies for preparing and responding to consequences, and clarify public health's role in responding to extreme heat events.
- c. **PHIRST Activation:** ACPH activated the Public Health Incident Response and Support Team (PHIRST) to facilitate and support the ongoing measles response. This activation has highlighted the strength of cross-program coordination and continues to provide a valuable opportunity to test and reinforce the PHIRST's training and capabilities in a real-world response.
- d. **NCR/UASI TEPW:** The EPR program attended the North Central Region (NCR) and Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) Training and Exercise Planning Workshop (TEPW). During this workshop stakeholders from around the region gathered to plan and coordinate training and exercise initiatives to enhance emergency preparedness at a regional level. Each organization assesses its capabilities, threats, and hazards to contribute to the regional TEPW.
- e. **Partnership Development:** The EPR program met with the newly hired Director of Safety at Swedish Medical Center to begin establishing a collaborative relationship. During the meeting EPR introduced the EPR program highlighting opportunities for mutual support both during day-to-day operations and emergency response situations. The discussion focused on identifying areas for coordination and future collaboration to enhance overall safety and preparedness for Arapahoe County Residents.

B. Social Media and Communications

Denver Post article highlighting our mobile immunization work (and efforts of other LPHAs) posted 5/27/2025, with an interview by **Kaitlin Wolff, Nurse Manager of the Immunizations Program in Community Health Nursing.**

<https://www.denverpost.com/2025/05/25/measles-outbreak-cases-colorado-texas-vaccine/?share=m2pevkoarvvnvsepK5umI>

Renee Lenthe, Nurse Supervisor of the Sexual Health Program in Community Health Nursing, was selected as a Denver Regional Nightengale Award nominee. She did not win but was the finalist for the Excellence in Nursing Award for Community Health Nursing.

