



# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

DAKOTA COUNTY  
PUBLIC HEALTH



# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



**GINA ADASIEWICZ**

PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTOR  
DAKOTA COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

## OUR MISSION

Building healthy  
individuals,  
families and  
communities  
in Dakota  
County through  
partnerships



In 2021, we launched our largest vaccine response in the history of the health department. The emergency authorization of COVID-19 vaccines filled our service centers and clinic sites with residents eager to receive their primary series and boosters. Our Public Health team worked diligently to ensure all eligible residents had access to vaccine. Over the course of the year, we provided over 60,000 vaccines – an incredible milestone.

Despite staff urgently delivering vaccine to our community and managing surges of COVID-19 variants, our department continued to provide high-quality comprehensive services to our residents. Our staff provided appointments virtually and in-person. Our teams continued to think innovatively and creatively. One example is we adopted a new evidence-based family home visiting to support pregnant and parenting families. Other great examples include the work in our community through our mobile clinics and homebound visits to reach our most vulnerable and hard-to-reach residents. Our staff had to re-think prior work and began new intentional work on mental health, wellbeing, and recovery efforts. Staff began transitioning back into pre-pandemic health department initiatives such as our Strategic Plan and began to work across the department on applying for re-accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB).

The COVID-19 pandemic brought the health department many new challenges, but it also brought us many new opportunities to reset, refocus and reimagine. I hope you take a few moments to review this report's highlights of our Department.

Stay healthy and stay safe,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gina Adasiewicz".

Gina Adasiewicz, RN, PHN, MS  
Public Health Director  
Dakota County Public Health Department

# COVID-19 RESPONSE

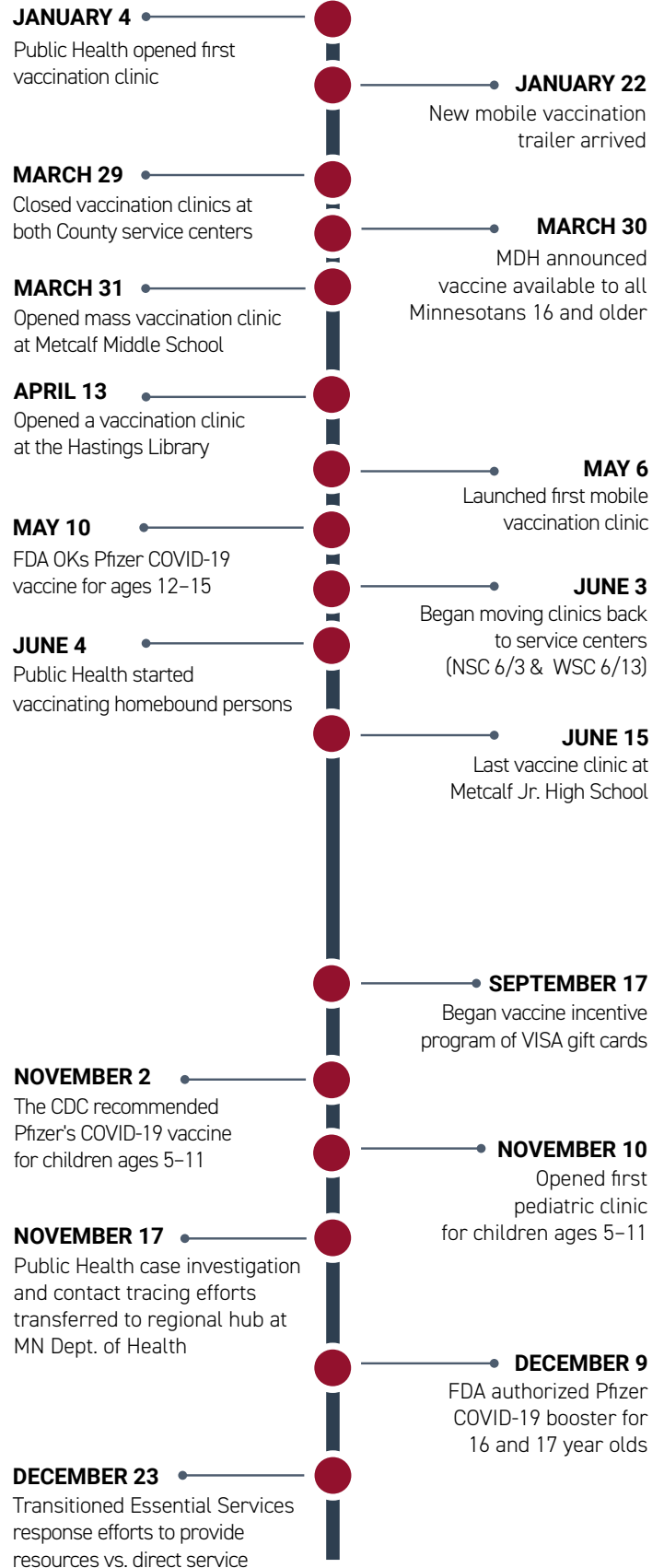
*“When the COVID-19 vaccine became available, it came with unique logistical challenges that took unprecedented teamwork to carry out and execute successfully.”*



## SITUATION

In 2021, the rapid mass roll-out of the COVID-19 vaccine began. The vaccine's main goal was to prevent hospitalizations and decrease spread. The vaccine assisted in many other ways, including alleviating the stresses on hospitals and organizations that had been overwhelmed the past year. By the end of the year, it was evident that the COVID-19 vaccine was incredibly successful at accomplishing its goal and brought many people back to their pre-pandemic lives.

## COVID-19 Timeline in Dakota County



# COVID-19 ACTIVITIES

## COVID-19 Vaccinations

In January 2021, COVID-19 vaccination clinics were held for public priority groups, including first responders, healthcare staff, people 65+ years old, and teachers. Clinics were held at both Northern and Western Service Centers. Early in the year, morning and afternoon clinics were 100% full and were running at least four days a week. As Minnesota approved vaccines for the general public, the service center vaccination clinics were closed, and operations moved to a mass clinic site at Burnsville's Metcalf Middle School. DCPH continued to provide vaccines and boosters at clinics in service centers and also across the county using a brand new mobile health trailer that the department designed and launched. In the fall, the Omicron variant increased the demand for vaccines, especially for boosters. Vaccine for children ages 5 to 11 was approved and efforts quickly pivoted to focus on first and second doses for children.

## COVID-19 Testing

COVID-19 testing was a priority due to the essential role it plays in controlling the spread of infections. The Dakota Child and Family Clinic (DCFC) continued their onsite testing clinics for residents. Bluestone Physicians Group continued testing residents and staff at congregate care facilities and assisted living centers. Public Health staff worked with DCFC to offer additional testing to school age kids before school resumed. The testing contract with Dakota Child and Family Clinic ended on October 31.

*"Volunteering with Dakota County Public Health in the Vaccine Clinics has been a rewarding experience. The staff have been gracious, grateful, and kind to the volunteers, and the clients have expressed appreciation for the effort put into this undertaking. I have been welcomed, appreciated, and feel part of the team".*

*- Judy B., Medical Response Corps Volunteer*

## Volunteers and Partners

DCPH benefited greatly from Medical Reserve Corps volunteers and other non-Public Health Dakota County staff who staffed vaccine clinics and assisted community members through the vaccination process. Partnerships were formed with health agencies, like Homeland Health and Bluestone, to launch county-wide vaccine campaigns targeting older individuals that had barriers to getting vaccinated. Dakota County libraries also played a role to offer space at the Pleasant Hill Library in Hastings to help vaccinate the southern part of the county. Utilizing COVID-19 grants, Social Services created a Community Connections group that connected with communities of color in Dakota County, sharing COVID-19 financial, health, and other resources.

## Communications and Outreach

Public Health worked closely with County Communications, Commissioners, and local partners to spread current and useful information. Messages focused primarily on vaccine distribution, clinics, and reducing hesitancy with efforts on reaching diverse communities. Dakota County COVID-19 vaccine web pages were created and updated with information on clinic openings, the registration process, and what to expect when getting tested/vaccinated. When the new vaccine eligibility of children ages 5 to 11 was announced, partners prioritized this message. As cases began to peak near the end of the year, communications re-focused on best practices to reduce the spread by masking and social distancing.



### National Association of Counties Award Recipient

Dakota County Public Health was recognized in the Health category of the National Association of Counties annual awards for the COVID-19 testing collaboration with the Dakota Child and Family Clinic.

This testing program was one of the state's first free, no-documentation-required COVID-19 testing sites. Over 10,511 people were tested through this collaboration – about one-third of the people tested would have had difficulty getting tested another way due to insurance and documentation requirements by other testing sites.



# BY THE NUMBERS

## STAFF HOURS

Supporting overall COVID-19 response from 1/1/21 to 12/31/21

132 STAFF LOGGED

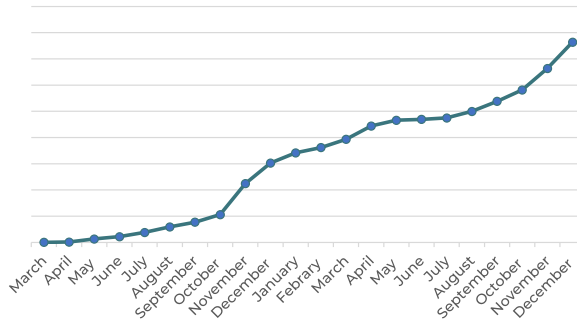
46,379 TOTAL HOURS

Cumulative from 2/20/20 to 12/31/21  
139 staff logged 86,441 hours

## COVID-19 CASES IN DAKOTA COUNTY

March 12, 2020 – December 31, 2021

# of positive cases



**TOTAL CASES**  
76,390

**DEATHS**  
655

## 3,474 HOTLINE CALLS



40 STAFF LOGGED

1,886 TOTAL HOURS

## WEBSITE PAGE VIEWS

611,437

150+ posts on Social Media (2x/week)



## 50

presentations provided to the County Board, state legislature, and other groups

## ESSENTIAL SERVICES

62 STAFF LOGGED 2,474 HOURS AND COMPLETED 540 REQUESTS

## VACCINATION CLINICS

JANUARY 2021 – DECEMBER 2021

425 CLINICS/SITES

60,971 VACCINES GIVEN



## TESTING EFFORTS

DAKOTA CHILD AND FAMILY CLINIC operated 121 testing clinics & tested 2,803 total people (JANUARY – DECEMBER)

BLUESTONE PHY. GROUP operated 130 testing sites at congregate care facilities & assisted living centers & tested 2,203 residents & 1,466 staff (JANUARY – JUNE)



## MOBILE CLINICS

MAY 2021 – SEPTEMBER 2021

45 CLINICS 1,282 VACCINES GIVEN

## PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAMS:

4,002 families were contacted by Child and Teen Checkups staff to discuss the importance of well child visits

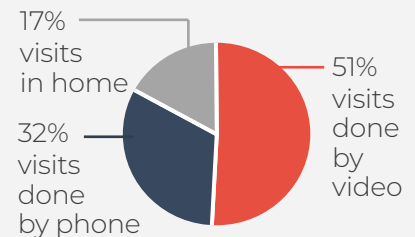
655 radon test kits distributed to keep homes safe

1,004 Immunizations Administered



9,259 phone calls from the public were handled by front desk staff to help address their needs

5,647 visits made by a Family Health nurse, community health worker, or family support specialist



9 School Districts we supported to promote equity-focused healthy eating, active living, mental health/well-being projects and to prevent commercial tobacco use

8,570 women and children received nutrition & breastfeeding education through the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program

379 children participated in the Follow Along Program



129 children were connected to their school district for early childhood and school readiness through the Birth to Age 8 Initiative



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