

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

DAKOTA COUNTY
PUBLIC HEALTH



MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

OUR MISSION

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



In 2020, Dakota County and the world lived through an unprecedented time in history as we faced the COVID-19 global pandemic. The quickly spreading virus impacted all parts of our lives. It changed how and where our communities worked, learned, and lived. Families were stretched thin as many experienced joblessness and the unimaginable loss of loved ones. The changing virus also brought new safety guidelines, including social distancing, masking, quarantine, and isolation.

Despite all of this, Dakota County employees and community members responded to this crisis with vigor and resilience. Dakota County staff found new ways to serve clients from afar, while still providing the high-quality services residents needed. Many volunteers helped with emergency efforts, including working at COVID-19 testing sites and vaccine clinics.

I'm especially proud of our Public Health staff who took part in the COVID-19 response. While still performing core responsibilities, team members worked hotlines to answer questions from concerned residents, they investigated and traced COVID-19 cases to decrease spread, and they took requests and made deliveries of essential goods, like masks and groceries to those in isolation or quarantine.

In December, the first COVID-19 vaccines were approved for emergency use authorization. I'm proud that our Public Health team played an important role in getting vaccine to our community. These vaccines were an enormous tool in slowing this pandemic.

On behalf of Bonnie Brueshoff, retired Public Health Director, and Gina Adasiewicz, Public Health Director, thank you to everyone who has worked so hard the past year to keep our communities healthy and safe!



GINA ADASIEWICZ
PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTOR



BONNIE BRUESHOFF
PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTOR (RETIRED)

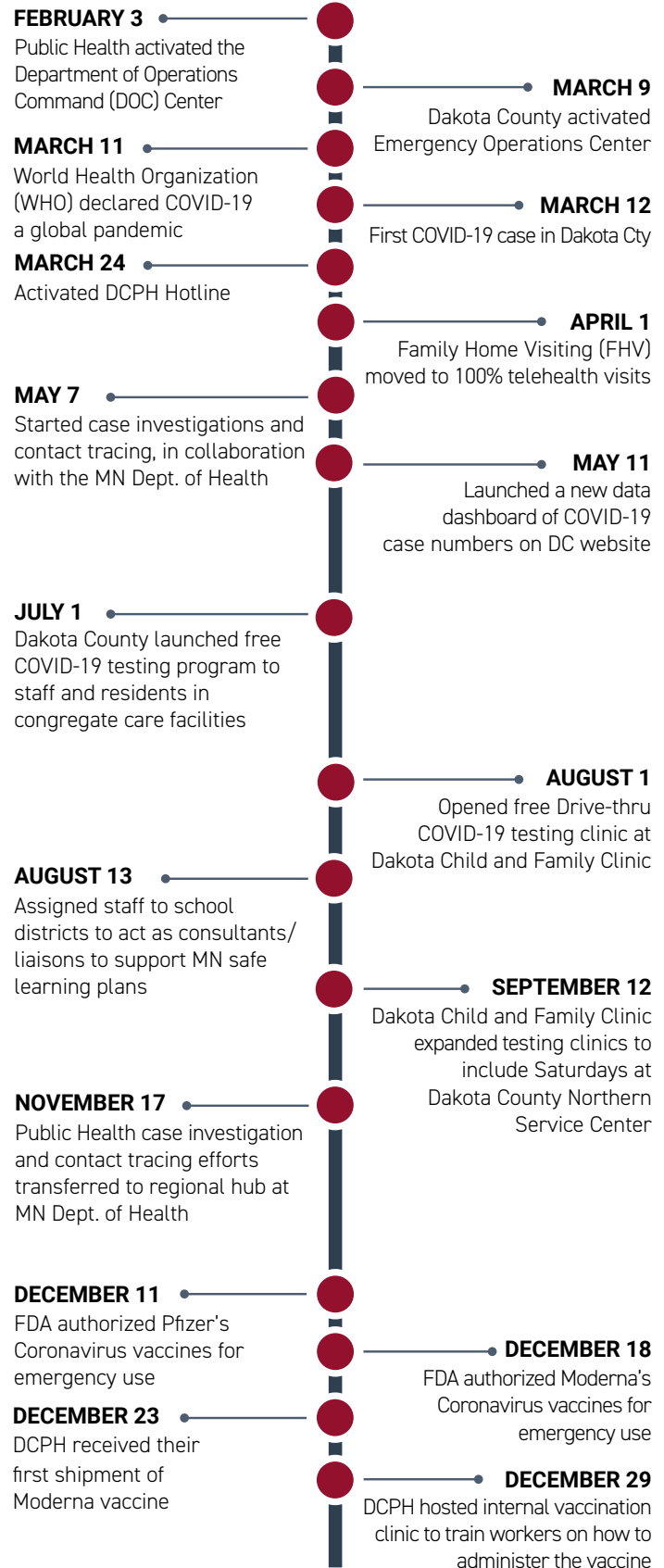
COVID-19 RESPONSE

“Health departments were the first line of response when the outbreak began, working to control the spread.”



SITUATION

The COVID-19 outbreak quickly became a public health threat globally. The situation posed a serious public health risk due to its quick spread and high hospitalization/death rates. Early reported symptoms included trouble breathing, cough, and fever. People were encouraged to wash their hands frequently, avoid touching their face, and practice social distancing whenever possible to prevent the spread of the virus.



COVID-19

ACTIVITIES

Dakota County Public Health (DCPH) began monitoring COVID-19 in January 2020, as it began to spread around the globe. By March, almost all Public Health team members were involved in the response. Over the course of the year, 104 team members logged more than 40,000 hours supporting the COVID-19 efforts.

Testing

Testing was one of the primary tools in understanding and controlling the COVID-19 spread. Dakota County launched one of the most comprehensive, free COVID-19 testing programs among Minnesota counties. The program targeted the vulnerable population of residents and staff in congregate care facilities, assisted-living centers, and group homes. Public Health formed a partnership with Dakota Child and Family clinic in Burnsville to offer free drive-thru testing. This partnership focused on communities who had barriers to testing and for residents without a clinic or who were uninsured or underinsured.

Case Investigation & Contact Tracing

In conjunction with testing, DCPH staff were trained by the Minnesota Department of Health to do case investigations and contact tracing. Four Dakota County teams rotated week and weekend shifts to call residents who had a positive COVID-19 result and their close contacts. During interviews, staff provided guidance and answered questions about isolation and quarantine, test results, and connections to services and essential services. This intensive process helped to slow the spread of the virus.

Hotline

The emergence of COVID-19 left a lot of community members with questions. What is COVID? How does it spread? What do I do if I get sick? How can I get help? To answer these questions, Public Health set up a free hotline; the hotline team was comprised of 27 members that responded to over 1,800 calls.

“As the Dakota County Public Health Medical Consultant, I am proud to work with such a fantastic team of motivated and talented individuals. The Public Health Department has been incredibly successful in meeting the ongoing needs of our community.”

- Daniel E. Stein, MD

Essential Services

The pandemic impacted more than resident's personal health, but also their access to supplies. Public Health staff assisted families who were in isolation or quarantine and had barriers to getting essential goods such as masks and groceries. 55 Public Health staff responded to over 1,100 requests and deliveries to ensure that all community members had access to necessary provisions.

Supporting K-12 School Districts

DCPH worked closely with school nurses, teachers, superintendents, and others who had questions about how to safely navigate plans for returning to school. Four public health nurses were assigned to school districts (public and private) in Dakota County to act as liaisons for consultation. Weekly Zoom meetings with school nurse coordinators and state regional school coordinators offered a chance to highlight changes, provide information on resources, and deliver a space for nurses to share concerns and successes.

COVID-19 Dashboard

In May 2020, Dakota County launched a way for the public to monitor COVID-19 cases in the county. The new online dashboard featured charts that showed the number of COVID-19 cases among county residents, hospitalization rates, and the number of COVID-19 deaths in the county. Dashboard case data could be viewed by age, gender, race, community, ethnicity, and by the likely exposure source.

Community Outreach

Dakota County developed posters, web pages, community resources, and social media posts to inform residents about COVID-19. Public Health worked with Social Services to launch a Community Connections group that included partners with strong connections in African, immigrant, and Latinx communities. Health messages were also spread by Public Health community liaisons who worked with private, public, and faith-based organizations to answer questions and provide resources.

BY THE NUMBERS

STAFF HOURS

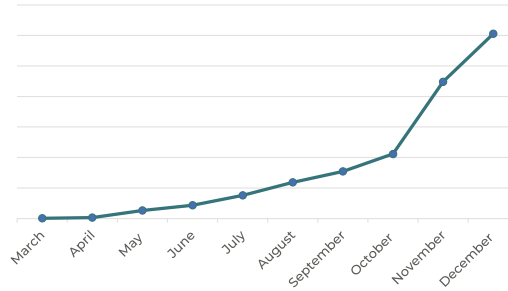
Supporting overall COVID-19 response from 2/20/20 to 12/31/20

104 STAFF LOGGED
40,061 TOTAL HOURS

COVID-19 CASES IN DAKOTA COUNTY

March 12, 2020 – December 31, 2020

of confirmed case



TOTAL CASES
30,280
DEATHS
277

1,824 HOTLINE CALLS



27 STAFF LOGGED
2,045 HOURS

62

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

ESSENTIAL SERVICES

1,157 REQUESTS and **1,154 DELIVERIES**
55 STAFF LOGGED 5,898 HOURS

WEBSITE PAGE VIEWS

170,073

150+posts on Social Media (3x/week).



CASE INVESTIGATION AND CONTACT TRACING

47 STAFF LOGGED **5,344** HOURS
and COMPLETED **1,506** INTERVIEWS



TESTING EFFORTS



BLUESTONE PHYSICIANS GROUP operated 183 testing sites at congregate care facilities & assisted living centers and tested 5,084 residents and 3,340 staff (July – Dec.)
DAKOTA CHILD AND FAMILY CLINIC operated 69 testing clinics and tested 7,708 total people (Aug. – Dec.)

PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAMS:

10,737 families were contacted by Child and Teen Checkups staff to discuss the importance of well child visits

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

8,603 women and children received nutrition & breastfeeding education through the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program

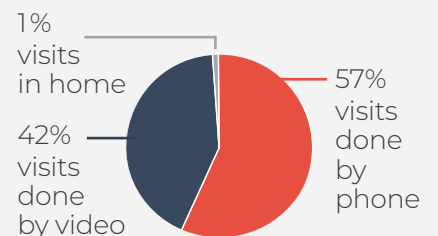
671 radon test kits distributed to keep homes safe

872 Immunizations Administered

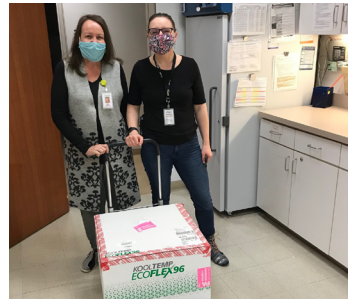
282 children participated in the Follow Along Program

6,485 phone calls from the public were handled by front desk staff to help address their needs

4,954 visits made by a Family Health nurse, community health worker, or family support specialist



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



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