

CUYAHOGA COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH



Roderick L. Harris, Secretary



Dr. Gregory L. Hall, President

CUYAHOGA COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH
MINUTES OF THE MEETING – April 22, 2026

Meeting called to order by Dr. Gregory Hall, President of the Board at 9:02 a.m. in the office of the Board, 5550 Venture Drive, Parma, Ohio, on Wednesday, April 22, 2026.

The Secretary called the roll, and the following members were present: Dr. Gregory L. Hall, Mr. Douglas Wang, Dr. Sherrie Williams, and Mr. Daniel Richards, and Ms. Sonja Rajki

The reading of the minutes of the April 1, 2026 (rescheduled from March 25, 2026) regular Board meeting was dispensed with as copies had previously been received by each member. Inasmuch as there were no corrections, it was moved by Mr. Wang, seconded by Mr. Richards, that the minutes be approved. Ayes: All, Nays: None, motion carries.

Public Comments on Agenda Resolutions Only (three-minute maximum) – None.

Review of the Financial Statements. This item was postponed temporarily and taken up later in the meeting. Upon the arrival of Michael Pissini, Director of Finance, the financial statements were reviewed.

Legislative Updates – John Mills, Legal Counsel, stated that The Ohio Pharmacy Board has enacted a ban on the synthetic form of the substance known as Kratom. The status of the natural form remains under review. In parallel, competing bills in both the Ohio House and Senate propose establishing a licensing framework that would permit the sale of natural Kratom through regulated dispensaries.

Committee Reports – None

Approval of Resolutions/Motions:

REGULAR ACTIONS OF THE BOARD:

Melissa Kolenz, Program Supervisor, presented Resolution 2026-030. The proposed funding will primarily support salaries for eight Disease Intervention Specialists and two Program Managers responsible for addressing syphilis and HIV cases.

It was moved by Mr. Wang, seconded by Mr. Richards, that the following RESOLUTION 2026-030 be adopted:

BE IT RESOLVED to Authorize the Health Commissioner to accept the 2026/2027 STI Prevention grant funding from the Ohio Department of Health from March 1, 2026 through February 28, 2027 in the amount not to exceed \$605,278.00. Ayes: All, Nays: None, motion carries.

Martha Halko, Director of Population Health, presented Resolution 2026-031. This resolution represents the first partial funding award to University Hospitals under the Ryan White Part A grant, based on the initial partial allocation received by CCBH from HRSA. The funding will support core medical services and direct support services aimed at improving viral suppression and clinical outcomes, as they relate to social determinants of health.

It was moved by Dr. Williams, seconded by Ms. Rajki, that the following RESOLUTION 2026-031 be adopted:

BE IT RESOLVED to Authorize the Health Commissioner to enter into and execute a contract with the University Hospitals Cleveland Medical Center under the 2026/2027 Ryan White (HIV Emergency Relief) grant from March 1, 2026 through February 28, 2027 in an amount not to exceed \$233,943.00. Ayes: 4, Nays: None, Abstained: Mr. Richards, motion carries.

Martha Halko presented Resolution 2026-032. This resolution represents the first partial funding award to sub-recipients under the Ending the HIV Epidemic–Care grant, based on the initial partial allocation received by CCBH from HRSA. The funding will support linkage and retention to care, core medical services, and direct support services aimed at improving viral suppression.

It was moved by Dr. Williams, seconded by Ms. Rajki, that the following RESOLUTION 2026-032 be adopted:

BE IT RESOLVED to Authorize the Health Commissioner to enter into and execute contracts with the following agencies under the 2026/2027 Ending the HIV Epidemic-Care (EHE Care) grant from March 1, 2026 through February 28, 2027:

AIDS Taskforce of Greater Cleveland	\$ 93,000.00
MetroHealth System	\$ 81,892.00
Signature Health, Inc.	\$ 62,500.00

Ayes: 4, Nays: None, Abstained: Mr. Richards, motion carries.

Joseph McRae, Chief Administrative Officer, presented Resolution 2026-033. This agreement authorizes the replacement of all CCBH desk phones, as the current equipment is beyond its useful life and no longer supported. The agreement provides for the installation of new desk phones as well as the associated technical services and ongoing maintenance.

It was moved by Mr. Wang, seconded by Dr. Williams, that the following RESOLUTION 2026-033 be adopted:

BE IT RESOLVED to Authorize the Health Commissioner to enter into and execute a contract with Tele Solutions, Inc., for managed information technology, network support, and telecommunications services, including phone system upgrade, maintenance, and support in an amount not to exceed \$90,327.60. Ayes: All, Nays: None, motion carries.

Rebecca Burke, Director of Organizational Development, presented Resolution 2026-034. CCBH issued an RFQ for a Strategic Planning consultant, which was posted on the CCBH website for three weeks and distributed to eleven vendors. Five bid quotes were received, and PHSCO was selected as the best and lowest quote. The vendor is based in southwest Ohio, and the Strategic Planning process is scheduled to begin in May.

Ms. Rajki, Board Member and Chair of the Quality Committee, reported that she met with the executive team regarding the vendor selection. She noted that the selected vendor is familiar with the reporting dashboard used for strategic planning and that the proposal was well-tailored to CCBH's needs, reflecting thoughtful consideration in the selection process.

It was moved by Mr. Richards, seconded by Ms. Rajki, that the following RESOLUTION 2026-034 be adopted:

BE IT RESOLVED to Authorize the Health Commissioner to enter into and execute a contract with the Public Health Services Council of Ohio (PHSCO) for strategic planning consultant services and all associated deliverables from May 1, 2026 through October 31, 2026 in an amount not to exceed \$28,415.00. Ayes: All, Nays: None, motion carries.

BOARD ORDERS, RULES, FEES OR REGULATIONS

It was moved by Dr. Hall, seconded by Mr. Wang, that the following RESOLUTION 2026-027 be tabled:

BE IT RESOLVED Whether to suspend or revoke food operator's license for Ohio Teahouse, Inc. DBA Sacred Waters Kava Bar. Ayes: All, Nays: None, motion carries.

FIRST READING:

None

SECOND READING:

RESOLUTION (2026-028) To amend the CCBH Provider Fees for clinical services effective June 1, 2026 (ref. enclosed).

THIRD READING:

None

It was moved by Dr. Hall, seconded by Ms. Rajki, that the following RESOLUTION 2026-035 be adopted:

BE IT RESOLVED that approval be given of the Consent Agenda as set forth in the attached schedules:

- Schedule A Appropriation Measures.
- Schedule B Cash Transfers.
- Schedule C Routine Personnel Actions.
- Schedule D Employee Training and Travel Expenses.
- Schedule E CRC Report and Other Contracts.

Ayes: All, Nays: None, motion carries.

Reports and Presentations

Infectious Disease Update

Blaise Soberano, Communicable Disease Investigator, presented the Infectious Disease Update. Full Report attached.

Following Mr. Soberano's infectious disease update, the Board engaged in a discussion regarding the newly introduced school vaccine dashboard. In response to a question from Ms. Rajki, Mr. Soberano confirmed that this is the first time such dashboard information has been available. Dr. Williams asked whether gaps in reporting were due to schools not submitting data

or parents not obtaining vaccinations, and emphasized the importance of encouraging parents to understand their school's reporting practices.

Dr. Ganesh noted that CCBH typically does not encounter resistance to required vaccines, including MMR, but more often receives pushback on non-required vaccines. Ms. Rush added that efforts at the state level to broaden vaccine exemptions may lead to increased refusal and hesitancy.

Presentation for 2026: Complex Medical Help Program.

Katherine Birdsell, Program Supervisor, gave a presentation on the Complex Medical Help program.

Following the presentation by Kate Birdsell on the Complex Medical Help program (formerly the Children with Medical Handicaps program), the Board engaged in a discussion regarding program funding, eligibility, access, and opportunities for expansion. In response to questions from Mr. Wang, Ms. Birdsell explained that the program is funded by the Ohio Department of Health and that it currently serves approximately 1,300 clients, a number consistent with previous years. Ms. Geiss noted that the program operates as a reimbursement-based service funded through General Revenue, typically generating more than \$450,000 annually. Ms. Birdsell clarified that income eligibility requirements apply to treatment services but not to diagnosis, and she described the program's cost-share structure, which allows many families to participate even if they do not initially meet income criteria.

Board members discussed the program's role as a safety-net service and inquired about partnerships with other safety-net entities, such as MetroHealth. Mr. Wang asked whether the program is reaching all eligible families and whether most participants have insurance. Ms. Birdsell acknowledged that there is room for growth and that additional outreach could broaden awareness of the program. She emphasized the program's reliance on social workers at the point of initial diagnosis.

Ms. Rajki highlighted the importance of ensuring that finance teams at partner organizations understand the availability of reimbursement, noting that operational decisions often influence physician engagement. Dr. Williams emphasized the value of partnerships with community organizations, including women's programs, churches, and shelters. Mr. Richards asked whether the program tracks referral pathways; Ms. Birdsell stated that it does not currently do so but could explore this in the future, noting that all cases ultimately require physician involvement. Dr. Hall raised concerns about potential barriers created by required forms and asked whether processes could be streamlined, particularly when diagnoses already appear in electronic medical records. Ms. Geiss noted that the Cleveland Clinic has contracted with a company to help reduce such barriers. Ms. Rajki observed that this demonstrates the presence of revenue opportunities within the program.

Health Commissioner's Report

Dr. Harris gave the Health Commissioner Report. Full Report attached.

Public and Staff Comments (three-minute maximum) – None

It was moved by Mr. Richards, seconded by Dr. Williams, that pursuant to Resolution 1993-43 and O.R.C. Sec 121.22 the Board Adjourn to Executive Session to discuss appointment, employment, promotion, discipline or compensation of a public employee, and to consider matters of collective bargaining.

The Secretary called the roll. Ayes: Dr. Hall, Mr. Wang, Dr. Williams, Mr. Richards, Ms. Rajki.

Executive Session began at 10:12 a.m.

Executive Session ended at 10:41 a.m.

Miscellaneous Business

Thereupon, it was moved by Dr. Hall, seconded by Dr. Williams, that the following Resolution 2026-036 be adopted:

BE IT RESOLVED to accept the resignation of Communicable Disease Investigator Dedonte Cheatham as of April 22, 2026. Ayes: All, Nays: None, motion carries.

Thereupon, it was moved by Mr. Richards, seconded by Dr. Williams, that the following Motion be adopted:

BE IT RESOLVED that the meeting be adjourned at 10:43 a.m. Ayes: All, Nays: None, motion carries.

SCHEDULE A
APPROPRIATION MEASURES

1. Budget Establishment(s):

None

2. Budget Revision(s):

- A. Budget revision for the 2025/2026 HIV Prevention grant to increase the budget by \$62,194.00 (ref. enclosed).
- B. Budget revision for the 2025/2026 Ending the HIV Epidemic/CDC (EHE Prevention) grant to redistribute funds (ref. enclosed).
- C. Budget revision for the 2025/2026 Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) grant to redistribute funds (ref enclosed).

SCHEDULE B
CASH TRANSFERS

1. Operating Transfer(s):

None

2. Residual Equity Transfer(s):

None

SCHEDULE C
ROUTINE PERSONNEL ACTIONS

Unless otherwise specifically indicated, said appointments shall be effective as of the beginning of the next pay period following completion and satisfaction of any post offer requirements and signature as determined by the Director of Organizational Development.

1. Ratify Appointment(s):

- a. Laura Cerrito, Emergency Preparedness Planner, Pay Grade D, \$50,420.00 annually, effective April 20, 2026.
- b. Hunter Sopher, Environmental Health Specialist in Training (EHSIT), Pay Grade C, \$43,991.00 annually, effective May 4, 2026.

2. Ratify Seasonal Appointment(s):

- c. Maxwell Mason, Student Environmental Worker, \$15.00/hour, effective May 18, 2026 through August 7, 2026.

3. Appointment(s):

- d. Kevin Reiman, Environmental Health Specialist in Training (EHSIT), Pay Grade C, \$43,991.00 annually, effective May 4, 2026.
- e. TBD, Grant Coordinator, Pay Grade C, \$43,991.00 annually.
- f. TBD, Public Health Nurse Program Manager, Pay Grade E, \$57,811.00 annually.
- g. TBD, Registered Environmental Health Specialist (REHS) Program Manager, Pay Grade E, \$57,811.00 annually.

4. Temporary Appointment(s):

- h. Natasha Elliott, Substitute Public Health Nurse, \$35.00 per hour, effective May 4, 2026.

5. Promotion(s):

- i. Nicholas Ball, Registered Environmental Health Specialist, Pay Grade D, \$50,420.00 annually, effective May 4, 2026.

6. Credentialing Payment(s):

- j. Aiyana Bailey, Public Health Nurse (PHN) Supervisor, one-time lump sum payment of \$3,000.00, effective April 22, 2026.
- k. Deedra Hein, Public Health Nurse (PHN), one-time lump sum payment of \$3,000.00, effective April 22, 2026.

- l. Jaqueline Lewis, Public Health Nurse (PHN), one-time lump sum payment of \$3,000.00, effective April 22, 2026.
- m. Jacqueline Malik, Public Health Nurse (PHN), one-time lump sum payment of \$3,000.00, effective April 22, 2026.
- n. Justine Taylor, Public Health Nurse (PHN), one-time lump sum payment of \$3,000.00, effective April 22, 2026.
- o. Rebekah White, Public Health Nurse (PHN), one-time lump sum payment of \$3,000.00, effective April 22, 2026.

7. Resignation(s):

- p. Sarah Kevany, Registered Environmental Health Specialist (REHS), effective April 3, 2026.

8. Position Complement Revision(s):

- q. Public Health Nurse Program Manager – from 5 to 4 FTEs – effective April 22, 2026 (ref. enclosed).
- r. Outreach & Linkage Liaison – from 3 to 5 FTEs – effective April 22, 2026 (ref. enclosed).

SCHEDULE D
EMPLOYEE TRAINING AND TRAVEL EXPENSES

Administration

- a. John Mills to PHI*Con/NACCHO 360 Conference: July 12 – 18, 2026. Louisville, KY.
- b. Suzanne Hrusch to The Ohio Department of Public Safety - Charles D. Shipley Building: April 30, 2026. Columbus, OH 43223.

Environmental Public Health

- c. Jeff Hanchar to the Construction & Demolition Association of Ohio Certified Operator Training: March 23 – 25, 2026. Delaware, Ohio.
- d. Robert Brand to ODNR 2026 Ohio Nature-Based Shoreline Training: May 20, 2026. Vermilion, Ohio.

Epidemiology, Surveillance and Informatics

- e. Jana Rush, Daniella Saul, Monica Williams to Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologist (CSTE) Annual Conference: May 30 – June 5, 2026. Boston, MA.

Nursing & Clinical Services

Population Health

- f. Mollie Evans, Emily Landis to the 2026 OD2A Recipient Annual Meeting: June 14 – 18, 2026. Atlanta, GA.

*Professional education under ONA contract.

SCHEDULE E
CRC REPORT AND OTHER CONTRACTS

A. CRC Report

1. April 7, 2026 1st CRC Meeting (ref. enclosed):

No Exchange of Funds

CRC 2026-032 Population Health submitting a no cost extension addendum to the contract with Case Western Reserve University, Center for Community Health Integration (Resolution 2025-108 & CRC 2026-004) under the 2025/2027 Maternal and Infant Vitality grant to revise the end of the contract from February 28, 2026 to May 31, 2026.

CRC 2026-033 Environmental Public Health Services submitting a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the City of East Cleveland to provide Phase II Stormwater services as part of the NEORS Regional Stormwater Management Program (RSMP) from January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2030. No Exchange of Funds.

CRC 2026-034 Epidemiology, Surveillance and Informatics submitting an addendum to the DUA with Cleveland Clinic for the REDMAP project, adding additional variables that would be added to dataset that CCF sends to CCBH.

Contract Approvals and Authorizations

CRC 2026-035: Cleveland Clinic Foundation- amount to be paid not to exceed \$33,800.00.

CRC 2026-036: A.J. Boggs & IXN, Inc.- amount to be paid not to exceed \$43,309.00.

CRC 2026-037: Upward Spiral Coaching & Consulting LLC- amount to be paid not to exceed \$21,905.00.

CRC 2026-038: Urban One Cleveland- amount to be paid not to exceed \$9,485.00.

CRC 2026-039: Navigate Counseling and Consultation Services- amount to be paid not to exceed \$1,260.00.

B. Other Contracts

None

ESI April 2026 Board Highlights

Leadership Updates

Data Days- Advancing Maternal & Child Health

Upcoming ESI Data Days (May 21) will convene local partners to share data, trends, and community recommendations from Child Fatality Review and Fetal Infant Mortality Review efforts, strengthening cross-sector alignment and action on maternal and child health. Register here: <https://ccbh.net/data-days/>

Infectious Disease (Communicable Disease, Respiratory, HIV/STI)

General Infectious Disease Overview for March of 2026

Key Highlights

- During March of 2026 the Cuyahoga County Board of Health (CCBH) received 365 cases of 20 reportable diseases. This represents:
 - a 24% increase in reported cases compared to March 2025 (Table 1.)
 - a 8% decrease in reported cases compared to the previous month (February 2026) (Figure 1.)
- The top 3 diseases by case volume were Respiratory Syncytial virus-associated hospitalization (95, 26%), Influenza-associated hospitalization (94, 26%), and COVID-19-associated hospitalizations (79, 6%)
- A total of 4 outbreaks were reported in March of 2026. All 4 were COVID-19 outbreaks reported in healthcare facilities comprised of 18 total cases (mean= 4.5 cases)

Other Significant Diseases and Trends

- Reports of Healthcare-Acquired Infections (HAIs) continue to rise. During March of 2026 (Table 1.):
 - 16 cases of Clinical Carbapenemase Producing Organisms (CPOs) were reported. This is 400% increase compared to the same month last year (n=4)
 - 6 cases of *C. auris* were reported. This is a 600% increase compared to the same month last year (n=1)
- Reports of chronic Hepatitis (B and C) continue to decrease/ remain stable. During March of 2026 (Table 1.):

- 14 case of Chronic Hepatitis C were reported. This is a 36% decrease compared to the same month last year (n=22)
- 9 cases of Chronic Hepatitis B were reported. This is a 33% increase compared to the same month last year

Figure 1.

Total Cases reported during March 2026 decreased sharply from last month, largely due to a decrease in respiratory illness.

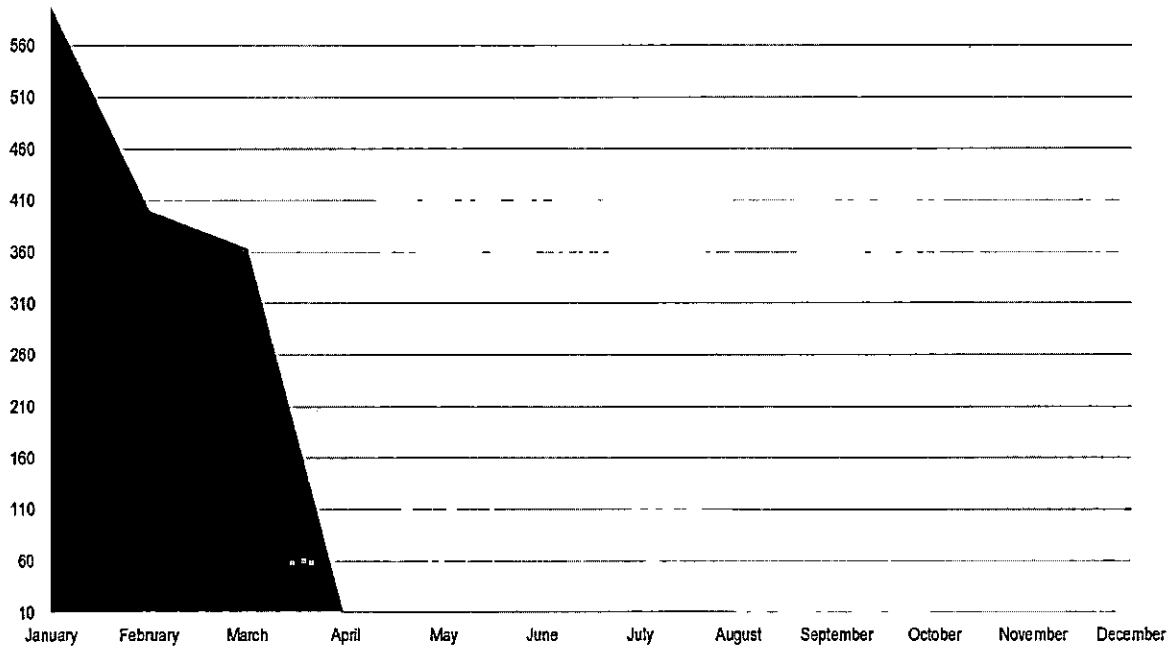


Table 1. Reportable Disease Case Counts: March 2026 vs March 2025

Disease	March 2026	March 2025	2026 Year To Date
Salmonellosis	6	17	31
<i>C. auris</i> , clinical ¹	6	1	14
Carbapenemase Producing Organisms, clinical ³	16	4	42
COVID-19-associated hospitalization ⁵	79	0	413
<i>E. coli</i> O157:H7 and other enterohemorrhagic	2	2	4
<i>Haemophilus influenzae</i> , invasive	5	2	11
Hepatitis B, chronic	9	6	25
Hepatitis C, chronic	14	22	39
Influenza-associated hospitalization	94	203	429
Legionellosis	3	2	10
Lyme disease	2	1	10
Pertussis	2	1	3
Respiratory Syncytial virus-associated hospitalization ⁶	95	0	235
Salmonellosis	8	5	17
Shigellosis	5	1	12
Streptococcal Disease, Group A, invasive	10	10	30
<i>Streptococcus pneumoniae</i> , invasive, non-resistant or unknown resistance	6	3	18
<i>Streptococcus pneumoniae</i> , invasive, resistant, or intermediate resistance	1	4	7
Varicella (chicken pox)	1	0	4
Yersiniosis	1	0	4
Total⁷	365	293	1,360

¹This represents clinical illness of *C. auris*. Colonization screenings are reported separately.

²This represents screenings of *C. auris* colonization.

³This represents clinical illness of CPO. Colonization screenings are reported separately.

⁴This represents screenings of CPO colonization.

⁵COVID-19 associated hospitalizations were made reportable on October 1, 2025, previously all cases of COVID-19 were reportable and were not included in this report

⁶ RSV associated hospitalizations were made reportable on October 1, 2025, previously RSV cases were no reportable

⁷Diseases included on the table only reflect those reported during March of 2026. March 2025 and year to date totals reflect all disease reported including those not reflected on the table

Respiratory Illnesses

The respiratory illness surveillance dashboard has been updated for MMWR week 14 (April 5-11, 2026). Please visit <https://ccbh.net/respiratory-illness-surveillance-dashboard/> for the most current data and trends.

The Cuyahoga County Board of Health (CCBH) is actively monitoring respiratory illness trends as we enter the 2025–2026 respiratory season, which spans from September 28, 2025 through May 23, 2026. This period typically sees increased activity of respiratory viruses, including COVID-19, Influenza, and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV). Through ongoing surveillance and data reporting, CCBH aims to support partners and stakeholders with timely, actionable insights to inform public health response and community preparedness.

Below are some key points for MMWR week 14 (April 5-11, 2026):

COVID-19

- COVID-19 activity is low in most areas of the country.
- COVID-19-associated hospitalizations remained stable. 2 hospitalizations were reported this week compared to 3 hospitalizations the previous week.
- There have been 1,160 COVID-19-associated hospitalizations this season. This translates to a case rate of 94.09 per 100,000 residents and is higher than the state rate of 71.64.
- 0 COVID-19 related deaths were reported this week in CCBH jurisdiction by the Ohio Department of Health Vital Statistics. There have been 11 COVID-19 related deaths this season.
- CCBH is investigating 35 COVID-19 outbreaks - 34 in congregate care settings and 1 in a healthcare-associated setting.
- Wastewater monitoring data suggest viral gene copy concentration levels were decreasing at NEORS D Easterly, Southerly, and Westerly WWTCs ([Ohio Wastewater Monitoring Data | DataOhio](#)).

Influenza

- Seasonal influenza activity continues to decrease in most areas of the country. Influenza A activity is low across all regions while trends in influenza B activity vary by region.
- 0 flu deaths were reported this week. There have been 23 flu deaths and no pediatric deaths this season.
- Influenza-associated hospitalizations (IAHs) decreased. 4 IAHs were reported this week compared to 10 the previous week. IAHs are considered 'low' this week.
- There have been 1,393 hospitalizations this season. This translates to a case rate of 112.98 per 100,000 residents and is higher than the state rate of 98.99.
- 1.5% of emergency department visits were for flu like symptoms. ED visits for fever/ILI were below the 5-year median and considered 'low' this week.
- CCBH is investigating 8 Influenza outbreaks – 6 in congregate care settings, 1 in a school, and 1 in an institutional setting.

- Wastewater monitoring data suggest viral gene copy concentration levels were low at NEORSD Easterly WWTC and not detected at NEORSD Southerly and Westerly WWTCs ([Ohio Wastewater Monitoring Data | DataOhio](#)).

RSV

- RSV activity started later than expected in most regions of the United States, though illness is not more severe compared with recent seasons. This unusual timing means that higher levels of RSV activity may continue into April in many regions. Emergency department visits and hospitalizations for RSV are highest among infants and children less than 4 years old.
- RSV-associated hospitalizations increased. 5 RSV-associated hospitalizations were reported this week compared to 2 hospitalizations the previous week.
- There have been 962 hospitalizations this season. This translates to a case rate of 78.03 per 100,000 residents and is higher than the state rate of 42.12.
- CCBH is investigating 4 RSV outbreaks – 3 in congregate care settings and 1 in a school.
- Wastewater monitoring data suggest viral gene copy concentration levels were low at NEORSD Easterly, Southerly, and Westerly WWTCs ([Ohio Wastewater Monitoring Data | DataOhio](#)).

New Releases (New Reports, Dashboards, Updates, etc.)

Annual Ohio Kindergarten Immunization Level Assessment

April 14th 2026 ODH published a new dashboard which shows basic vaccine coverage for kindergartens state wide going back to the 2017-2018 school year. Kindergarten are required to report overall vaccine information annually and this resource allows the public to directly access that data. Vaccine coverage is provided at the State, County and even individual school level. See below link to access the dashboard:

[Annual Ohio Kindergarten Immunization Level Assessment | DataOhio](#)

Overdose surveillance bulletin released

Data Analyst Kenya Moyers completed the 2025 Q4 Overdose Surveillance Bulletin for Cuyahoga County. The Q4 bulletin shows that drug overdose deaths, emergency department visits for suspected drug overdose, and naloxone distribution and administrations all decreased from Q3. Overdose Data to Action (OD2A) Component C work was also highlighted – data from this strategy indicate local efforts to connect people with opioid or stimulant use disorder to care are showing success, particularly MetroHealth’s Walk-in Motivation and Engagement Clinic and Expanded Access to MOUD program entry points. The bulletin is available online for review <https://ccbh.net/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/OD2A-2025-Q4-OD-Surveillance-Bulletin.pdf> and was distributed to OD2A program prevention partners on 4/15 at the OD2A All-Subgrantee meeting.

Overdose Data Dashboard updated

Data Analyst Svetlana Zelenskiy updated the Cuyahoga County Overdose Data Dashboard with 2025 Q4 data. The dashboard shows the same trends noted in our overdose surveillance bulletin but in greater detail and

interactive format. Preliminary overdose death totals for 2025 suggest a decline from 2024. Also it can be seen that for the first time in a decade cocaine surpassed fentanyl and the leading involved drug. The dashboard also includes police report data of suspected drug overdose incidents for the City of Cleveland, updated through 4/4. A total of 207 incidents occurred in Q4 2025 and 237 in Q1 2026. Explore all the newest data here: <https://ccbh.net/overdose-data-dashboard/>

Infant mortality and pregnancy health report

Data Analyst Tatyana Khaled generated the Cuyahoga County Infant Mortality & Birth Outcomes Data Report for April 2026. Rolling data from April 2025 to March 2026 are included. The analyses showed that the current provisional infant mortality rate for the county is 7.34 per 1,000 live births, a decrease from last month's report (7.82). However, the Black-to-White disparity is currently at 4.39. Prematurity rates remain largely stable with 12.08% of births *preterm* and 2.10% *very preterm* overall. Additionally, measures of pregnancy health were added this month, for Cuyahoga County overall, by race, and select ZIP Codes. During the 12-month period of review 81% of births started prenatal care in the 1st trimester as desired and only 2% of mothers smoked any time during pregnancy, while 33% experienced a hypertensive disorder (pre-pregnancy or gestational hypertension) and 9% had birth spacing less than 12 months, risk factors for poor birth outcomes. Black non-Hispanic mothers showed the least favorable rates across measures, compared to other race/ethnicities. Among ZIP Codes studied, 44104 had the lowest early entry into prenatal care rate (63%), 44105 had the highest smoking rate (6%), and 44110 the highest rates of hypertensive disorders in pregnancy (49%) and inadequate birth pregnancy spacing (18%). These data will inform Partner for Change project efforts. Note the stats are preliminary, subject to change, and will continue to be monitored.

2023 Childhood Lead Exposure Data Brief

Epidemiologist Daniella Saul was author of this report. This report was finalized and disseminated to community partners in April. The report provides an overview of 2023 elevated blood lead level data in the Cuyahoga County jurisdiction, which includes data on demographics and risk factors for individuals having elevated blood lead levels (EBLL). Notable data points include:

- Prevalence of EBLL in Cuyahoga County jurisdiction has been decreasing since 2021. Among children under age 6 who were tested, about 4% had an EBLL
- Among children with an EBLL, most had a blood content between 3.5 and 4.0 ug/dL. Over 10% of these children had a blood lead level of 10 ug/dL or above.
- Most of the children with EBLL were 1-2 years of age at the time of testing.
- Outside of the City of Cleveland, over 85% of children in CCBH's jurisdiction with an EBLL live in the first ring suburbs.
- Among children with an EBLL, 52% identified as Black or African American, highlighting the racial disparity that exists within EBLL outcomes.

2020-2024 Hepatitis B and C Surveillance Report

Epidemiologist Jackie Napolitano was the author of this report. This report was finalized and disseminated to community partners in April. The report is a five-year overview of Hepatitis B and C (acute and chronic)

incidence in the Cuyahoga County, and includes demographics and risk factors from 2020-2024. Notable data points include:

- The five-year period saw 14 cases of acute Hepatitis B; 527 cases of chronic Hepatitis B.
- Persons who identified as Asian had the highest incidence rate of chronic Hepatitis B
- In the five-year period, there were 21 cases of acute Hepatitis C; 2,122 cases of chronic Hepatitis C
- Most of the acute hepatitis C cases that occurred in Cuyahoga County were the known result of receiving an organ transplant from a hepatitis C positive donor.

2020-2024 Hepatitis B and C Surveillance Report | CCBH

CY2025 Ryan White Part A Summary Brief

Epidemiologist Alisha Cassady was the author of this report. This report was finalized and disseminated to community partners in April. The report is a summary of 2025 HIV care continuum outcomes for clients utilizing the Ryan White Part A program. Key data points include:

- Overall care continuum outcomes: 88% linked to care, 75% retained in care, 98% antiretroviral use, 90% viral load suppression.
- MSM Clients: 86% linked to care, 74% retained in care, 98% antiretroviral use, 90% viral suppression
- Youth 13-24 Clients: 89% linked to care, retained in care, 93% antiretroviral use, 79% viral suppression
- Injection Drug Use Clients: 93% linked to care, 75% retained in care, 95% antiretroviral use, 85% viral suppression

CY2025 Ryan White Part A Summary Data Brief | CCBH

External Engagement (Community events, Presentations/Conferences/Abstracts)

NACCHO abstracts accepted

The Data Analytics team had two abstracts accepted for presentation at the NACCHO conference this July. Data Analyst Sarah Szabo was invited to present an on-demand/digital session “Beyond the Road Map: Integrating sustainable brain health and healthy aging efforts into a local health department when resources are limited” at NACCHO360 and Supervisor Samantha Smith was invited to present a learning/sharing session “Data Modernization in Practice at a Local Health Department: Approaches and Lessons” at their PHI*con event, which focuses on public health informatics, surveillance, and IT.

Civic Data Meetup

Data Analyst Sarah Szabo delivered a Civic Data Meetup presentation for The City of Cleveland Office of Urban Analytics & Innovation on 3/27. Her session “Healthy Northeast Ohio: A Regional Data Platform Driving Community Health Action” offered an overview and live demonstration of healthyneo.org, and examples of how its data have been actioned, specifically its support of Community Health Needs Assessments

(CHNA) and Community Health Improvement Plans (CHIP). The event was well attended and the audience engaged. Branded giveaways were also provided attendees.

HOTF Data Subcommittee presentation

Data Analyst Kenya Moyers presented the 2025 Q4 Overdose Surveillance Bulletin to the USA-NDOH Heroin and Opioid Task Force Data Subcommittee on 4/2. She discussed the key overdose metrics included (fatal, nonfatal, etc.), which all showed decreases from Q3 to Q4. Local drug testing results were also reviewed, showing that fentanyl and medetomidine were the most common major drugs in tested syringes and cocaine and fentanyl were the most frequent drug seizure submissions from October-December 2025. We also were invited to continue presenting these bulletins quarterly.

Minority health event presentation

Data Analyst Svetlana Zelenskiy presented overdose data trends for Cuyahoga County and ZIP Codes 44109 and 44102 with staff from Cleveland Department of Public Health on 4/11 at “Rooted in Wellness: Community voices on substance use and well-being”, a local event coordinated by WellLink for Minority Health Month. The event focused on informing about local drug use and overdose trends and changes at the neighborhood level, offered C.R.A.F.T. training on how to help family and friends living with substance use, and provided opportunity to connect people to area resources. Members of the Hispanic/Latinx community attended as well as overdose prevention partners. Presentations/conversations were translated in English and Spanish.

Kratom overview

Data Analyst Svetlana Zelenskiy also presented an overview of kratom at the OD2A All-subgrantee meeting on 4/15. The overview discussed kratom’s alkaloids, effects, and currently available data. This presentation was responsive to OD2A prevention partner inquires and concerns about kratom. Kratom is derived from leaves of the *Mitragyna speciosa* tree and has not been approved by the FDA for any medical use. It’s two primary psychoactive compounds are Mitagynine and 7-hydroxymitagynine (7-OH). Recreational use in the US has surged recently with little regulation. Side effects and health risks are of public health concern, particularly related to synthetic productions. Per the CDC 1,314 deaths involving kratom occurred in the US in 2023 (compared to 866 in 2020), NFLIS data show at least 202 deaths in Ohio from 2019-2024, and the Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner Office has detected the presence of mitragynine in 23 decedent toxicologies, 12 of which were in 2024-2025. The 2025 Cleveland Health Survey showed 2.5% of respondents had used kratom, and concurrent use in past year with other opioids was common (62%). Other data sources indicate high availability and increasing kratom-related overdoses.

HIV Policy and Funding Collaboration

Epidemiologist Alisha Cassady is participating in bi-weekly Fast Track Cities (FTC) meetings hosted by the Cleveland Department of Public Health. These meetings convene regional HIV stakeholders to share updates on funding, Medicaid policy changes, and HIV-related policy and advocacy efforts, ensuring CCBH remains aligned with local and state priorities.

Violence Prevention Community Partnerships

Epidemiologist Daniella Saul is actively engaged in monthly meetings with the Northeast Ohio Gun Safety Coalition and the Euclid HOPE Violence Prevention Taskforce. These forums bring together community partners and stakeholders focused on violence prevention strategies and coordination across the region.

Ryan White Program

Epidemiologist Alisha Cassady will attend and present at the Ryan White Part A Full Planning Council meeting on April 15. This presentation supports regional planning efforts to improve HIV services, care coordination, and resource allocation for individuals living with HIV.

National Preparedness Conference Presentation

Epidemiologist Daniella Saul presented virtually at the NACCHO Preparedness Summit (April 13–16). Her session, “Streamlining the Cancer Cluster Investigation Process in the Digital Age,” highlighted CCBH’s investigation protocols, best practices for responding to community concerns, and the growing role of digital and social media in cancer cluster investigations. This presentation elevated CCBH’s work at a national public health forum.

Online Engagement (Social Media/ESI Webpage)

Social media related to data reports and presentations

Data Analytics team members Svetlana Zelenskiy, Kenya Moyers, Samantha Smith, and Alexis Ipsaro coordinated to promote the “Rooted in Wellness: Community voices on substance use and well-being” community event (including the registration link and flyer) and disseminate the new 2025 Q4 Overdose Surveillance Bulletin and updated dashboard data described above on CCBH social media.



Cuyahoga County Board of Health
April 1 at 12:00 AM · 🌐

Understanding Drug Use, Overdose and Health Trends Impacting Our Community. Join us for a conversation about how we can help those we love. We are gathering to look at our local data from the 44109 and 44109 zip codes - to understand how recent changes in drug use and overdose trends are affecting the health of our neighbors and families.

This is a free hybrid event – Visit <https://wellinkcommunity.com/.../rooted-in-wellness...> to register
#OverdosePrevention #SupportRecovery #SaveALife



Rooted in Wellness:
Community Voices
on Substance Use And
Well-Being

Understanding Drug Use,
Overdose, and Health Trends
Impacting Our Community

Event Date: Saturday, April 11, 2026
11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Location: Cleveland Public Library -
South Branch, 3096 Scranton Rd
with Virtual Option

Join us for a conversation in Spanish & English
about how we can help the people we love



7

Like

Comment



Cuyahoga County Board of Health
April 1 at 7:00 PM · 🌐

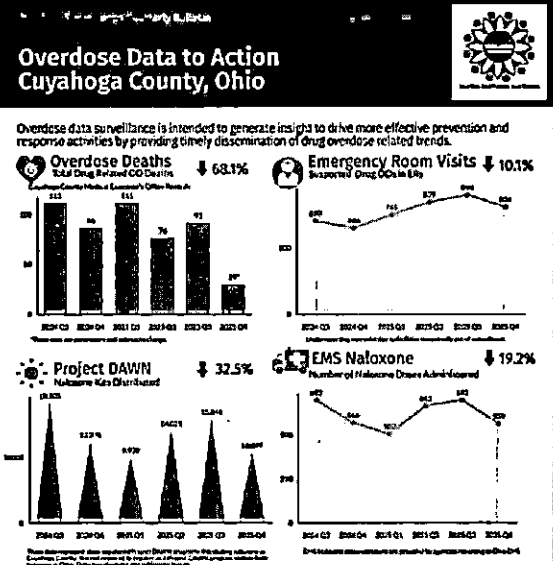
New Overdose Surveillance Quarterly Bulletin now available, featuring October–December 2025 drug overdose data.

Cuyahoga County saw declines in overdose deaths, suspected overdose-related emergency department visits, and naloxone administrations by EMS from Q3 to Q4 of 2025. Local efforts to connect people with opioid or stimulant use disorder to care are also showing success.

Read the full bulletin here: <https://ccbh.net/.../OD2A-2025-Q4-OD-Surveillance...>

For more data insights visit: <https://ccbh.net/overdose-data-dashboard/>

#OD2A #OverdoseSurveillance
#LocalDataLocalPartnersLocalSolutions



4

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Social media related to public health observances

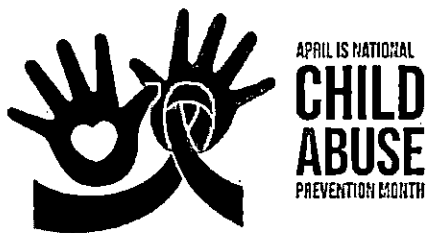
Maternal & Child Health Epidemiologist Alexis Ipsaro created and posted two social media posts for Child Abuse Prevention Month, including data, information, and resources about child abuse and neglect to raise awareness.

CCBH Cuyahoga County Board of Health
April 3 at 7:00 PM · 🌐

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month. On average, 10 children lose their lives as a result of abuse and/or neglect every year in Cuyahoga County.

Visit <https://www.nationalchildrensalliance.org/10-signs-of-/> to learn the signs of child abuse.

#ChildAbusePreventionMonth #ChildAbuseAwareness #ProtectOurKids




4

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CCBH Cuyahoga County Board of Health
April 7 at 3:16 PM · 🌐

Tomorrow, we wear blue to stand up for the safety and well-being of children in our community. Child abuse and neglect are entirely preventable when we work together.

#OhioWearsBlue2026 #ITakesACommunity



3

Like Comment


Social media related to agency recognition

Data Analyst Sarah Szabo and Epidemiologist Alexis Ipsaro coordinated to develop and post notice of CCBH's recently achieved Age-Friendly Public Health System recognition, to let the community know of our demonstrated commitment to health aging. CCBH received Advanced level designation from Trust for America's Health: <https://afphs.org/recognized-leaders/>

CCBH Cuyahoga County Board of Health
April 8 at 10:00 AM · 🌐

CCBH was recently recognized as an Age-Friendly Public Health System (AFPHS) through a national initiative of Trust for America's Health. This recognition honors CCBH's commitment to healthy aging.

To learn more about this initiative and see CCBH listed as an Advanced Recognition Leader, visit <https://afphs.org/recognized-leaders/>



2

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Agency-Wide Initiatives

Enterprise System Updates

The standing monthly Informatics and Administration meeting was held on April 13 to review enterprise system requests. Approved changes will be implemented in the Enterprise system on Monday, April 20. These updates include the AFSCME Union bulletin board, new Time and Effort reports, and additional administrative system enhancements.

Cybersecurity Training MOU

A non-financial Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) related to cybersecurity training through the State of Ohio will be presented at the April 21 CRC meeting:

CRC 2026-040 Administration Services submitting a non-financial MOU between CCBH and the University of Cincinnati for cybersecurity training and related services.

Clear Impact Strategic Plan Updates

Quarterly Clear Impact Strategic Plan updates for FY26 Q1 have been completed, including the required narrative related to Measure 8.2.

Story Behind the Curve



During this quarter (2026 Q1), a diverse cross-functional workgroup was established to lead the planning and development of community profiles aligned with Strategic Priority 8.2. The workgroup will meet ongoing to establish foundational work to define a consistent and user-friendly profile format, identify key indicators to be tracked across communities, and determine appropriate visuals and narrative elements to support data storytelling. Communications staff will be engaged to provide feedback and execution support as development progresses, ensuring alignment with organizational standards and effective dissemination.

Informatics Position Recruitment

Second-round interviews for the vacant Informatics position will begin the week of April 20. Four candidates have been identified.

Data requests

The Data Analytics team completed multiple community data requests over the last two months, including analyses of 2023 teen birth rates for Cuyahoga County, conducted by Tatyana Khaled, showing an overall teen birth rate of 14.72 per 1,000 for females aged 15-19 and 52.21 per 1,000 for females aged 20-24, with significant variation by race/ethnicity and ZIP Code. Also Alexis Ipsaro conducted analyses of sleep-related deaths from September 2023 – December 2024, showing an average of 1.7 sleep-related deaths per month, 30% occurring in ZIP Codes 44102, 44104, 44105, 44108, and 44128, and 0% in adherence with the ABCD's of safe sleep during this period.

April 2026 Health Commissioner's (HC) Report

Boards/External Committees:

- Participated in two bi-weekly meetings of the Village of Healing Black Men's Health Advisory Council.
- Attended Cleveland Peacemakers, Inc. Board of Directors meeting.

Select Meetings

- HC and Communications Team met with State Representative candidate Dionna Gore to provide an overview of CCBH services and explore potential advocacy opportunities.
- Participated in the Association of Ohio Health Commissioners' monthly all-member call.
- Held monthly coordination call with Martina Pace, Program Manager, UH Regional Community Health.
- Attended Black Child Development Institute Power-Building Fellows monthly meeting.
- Met with a representative from The Ohio State University Center for Public Health Practice to discuss challenges facing local health departments and potential support opportunities.
- HC and Dr. Andre Brown conducted a follow-up meeting with the Human Solidarity Project to explore additional leadership training for the CCBH Directors Team.

Conferences:

- Attended the NACCHO Preparedness Summit in Baltimore, MD (April 13–16, 2026).

Partnerships:

- HC and Dr. Robert Brand participated in a bi-weekly partnership call with The Ohio State University and the Northeast Ohio Black Health Coalition regarding the ongoing air quality monitoring project and related grant-seeking efforts.

Speaking:

- Served as guest alumni speaker for the University of Pittsburgh School of Public Health in recognition of National Public Health Week.
 - Related article: <https://www.publichealth.pitt.edu/news/alumnus-roderick-harris-returns-pitt-public-health-discuss-purpose-mentorship>
- Delivered an infectious disease update to Cuyahoga County DHHS leadership during the quarterly DHHS/CCBH/CDPH call.

Communications:

- Finalized the CCBH 2025 Annual Report, incorporating feedback from DAC meeting participants and follow-up conversations with select mayors. The report will be uploaded to the CCBH website by April 30, 2026.

Environmental Public Health (EPH)

- Completed larvicidal treatment at Bradley Woods to reduce mosquito populations in the North Olmsted/Westlake area.
- Sent 16 sanitarians to attend the Ohio Environmental Health Association Annual Conference.
- Continued coordinated efforts with the City of East Cleveland, Ohio EPA, and county partners to address waste accumulation at the city's service garage.
- Collaborated with the Ohio Attorney General's Office, Ohio EPA, and the City of Garfield Heights to revise the consent order for Baumann Enterprises, introducing incentives to increase the rate of residual screening material (RSM).

HEALTH COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

QUARTER 1 2026

Strategic Goal Areas & Key Updates

Access

- Nursing & Clinical Services secured new funding through Family Connects Ohio, a state program that will support CCBH's home visiting to become a universal home visiting model (Support to all families regardless of income).
- ESI leadership reviewed updated ADA Title II guidance requiring all state and local digital content to meet WCAG 2.1 Level AA by April 2026. This shifts accessibility to a proactive public-health obligation, requiring dashboards, briefs, reports, and emergency alerts to be accessible at publication. ESI will prioritize high-traffic and high-impact content, strengthen vendor accountability, and embed accessibility into data modernization to advance equity, transparency, and effective public health communication.
- ESI leadership met with team members Maurice Cole and Ladonne Montelione to review vaccine capacity, outreach, advocacy, materials, and partner networks. The review aims to strengthen ESI's vaccine education and response across the county. ESI is partnering with EDI to address hesitancy through culturally responsive messaging, stronger community partnerships, and data-informed outreach to ensure efforts are community-centered, equity-driven, and trust-focused.
- CCBH's Medical Director, Dr. Prakash Ganesh, is involved with the new implementation of Point-of-Care Syphilis Testing in the Cuyahoga County jail, in collaboration with MetroHealth.

Social Justice

- CCBH received Age-Friendly Public Health System recognition from Trust for America's Health. Data Analyst, Sarah Szabo, led the application—documenting an action plan adopting the 6Cs: creating policy change; connecting partners; coordinating support; collecting and using older-adult data; communicating public-health information; and complementing existing programs. The recognition affirms CCBH's commitment to making healthy aging a core public-health function.
- Director of EDI, Dr. Andre Brown, provided updates to the CCBH Board Diversity Committee re: CCBH's policy equity project, in addition to the EDI Council's strategic plan.
- CCBH's Communications team has teamed up with the County's Office of Violence Prevention (OVP) to provide family gun safety training around the

county, in addition to participating in the OVP listening tour events taking place throughout 2026.

Infrastructure

- At the January 2026 ESI all-Staff meeting, staff completed a Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists' Applied Epidemiology Competencies–aligned self-assessment to evaluate capacity across program, administrative, supervisory, and leadership roles. Using a standardized *Unaware-to-Advanced* scale, the developmental exercise identified strengths and growth areas and was explicitly not a performance review. Results will guide individualized development plans and targeted training to support ESI's 2026 priorities in data modernization, analytics acceleration, visualization, interoperability, and response readiness.
- ESI's Informatics team launched the new Contract Management sub-system in the Enterprise platform, notified staff, and held two training sessions. It will support the Contracts Review Committee's and Board's approval of agenda items.
- ESI Online Data Request System Implementation: The new online request form on the ESI webpage streamlines data access with standardized review, tracking, and fulfillment processes.
- On March 17th, Admin and ESI team members met with Anna Sciarretti from the Ohio Cyber Range Institute to explore potential partnership opportunities, to strengthen cybersecurity planning and training. A Memorandum of Understanding is currently being developed to formalize collaboration.
- Director of Finance, Michael Pissini, has been working with County IT to develop custom Board reports to improve financial visibility and decision-making. Also, an automated, budget-linked purchase order system is being implemented with the County to strengthen spending controls, accountability, and efficiency, with staff training planned before a go-live date.
- A total of 13 members of the CCBH staff completed LEAN Six Sigma Training. All participants were certified as both Yellow Belts and Green Belts.

Staff & Community Engagement

- ESI hosted CCBH Data Days on 1/27/26 on brain health with the Alzheimer's Association. Data Analyst, Sarah Szabo, presented local brain health data, and Mary Schwartz presented *Brain Health 101* with prevention tips and recent research. There were 63 attendees from CCBH, local governments, schools, health departments, community organizations, and the public rated the session highly. The recording and materials are available at ccbh.net/data-days.
- The preparedness team launched a CCBH–HOSA Future Health Professionals partnership to engage and empower students in health leadership. HOSA is a global student-led organization focused on education, collaboration, and experiential leadership in health. The CCBH-led Medical Reserve Corps and the American Red Cross will provide emergency preparedness and public health education to students in the Berea School District.
- Matt Johnson and Suzanne Hrusch presented at the January 20th East Cleveland City Council meeting about CCBH services in the community and answered questions about the contract with CCBH to serve as their health authority.

- The Ending the HIV Epidemic team staffed outreach tables at two sold-out Cleveland Cavaliers games, engaging fans and distributing HIV self-test kits, condoms, educational materials, and program giveaways near the main gate/escalator to Loudville. The Cavs committed additional no-cost marketing spots as cancellations arise and already provided extra free airtime for the Love Lead Here commercial featuring CCBH's Sonji Deal and Cavs host Ahmaad Crump.
- CCBH's Medical Director, Dr. Prakash Ganesh, recently joined the National Association of County & City Health Officials' Advisory Council for the Elimination of Tuberculosis (TB), which aims to shape TB policy and strategy.
- Data Analytics Supervisor, Samantha Smith, tabled at Parma Powers Library's *Bingo for All* on 2/24/26, promoting healthy aging and brain health. She engaged older adults, people with developmental disabilities, and other patrons, shared ten brain-health tips and CCBH resources, and distributed giveaways (including brain stress balls, helmet-safety coloring books, and pedometers).
- Samantha Smith and Maurice Cole represented CCBH at the Live Well, Age Well Expo in Richmond Heights on 2/27, sharing dementia risk-reduction and early-detection information via signage and one-on-one discussions. Two handouts—the Alzheimer's Association "10 Healthy Habits for Your Brain" and the U.S. POINTER Study Brain Health Recipe—were distributed and fully taken by attendees.
- In January 2026, the communications team led measles outbreak media engagement (Jan 6–13)—securing 14 radio/TV/print stories with Dr. Ganesh as the primary interviewee, and handling media releases, interviews, website updates, and social posts.
 - Ongoing Communications activities include: forming a CCBH-focused 501(c)(3); smoking-cessation messaging with EDI; community screening events with CWRU and partners; and supporting a Trinity High School intern. The team is also advancing a media partnership with Radio One, continuing flu/measles social messaging, using *Hootsuite* for managing social media, and updating website content.
- Community Health Needs Assessment: Completed prioritization with partner and community input and, with CCBH and CDPH leadership, selected five top priorities: Behavioral Health & Health Care Access; Housing & Community Conditions; Safety/Injury/Violence; Maternal, Infant & Child Health; and Chronic Disease. Subsequently, CCBH leadership and staff conducted a MAPP 2.0–guided power analyses for each of the five priorities, to map stakeholders and influence. This entailed identifying who has power over the issue, which partners are aligned, and who may oppose; assess each stakeholder's influence, interests, and potential roles; and use that mapping to inform engagement and strategy. Cleveland Department of Public Health conducted a parallel process.