

Director’s Update to the Board of Health November 2024

Protecting Health – Preventing the Spread of Infectious Disease

Flu Shots

The statewide Fight FluTN effort to provide vaccinations was earlier than usual this year, in October instead of November. The week of that event we provided 1,015 vaccinations at various sites. We also had a station set up at the Oct. 1 Metro Council meeting at the request of Vice Mayor Henderson and provided 85 shots that night. As of Nov. 2, we had provided a total of 1,550 shots this season.

Improve and Sustain Family and Child Well-Being

Breast Cancer Awareness

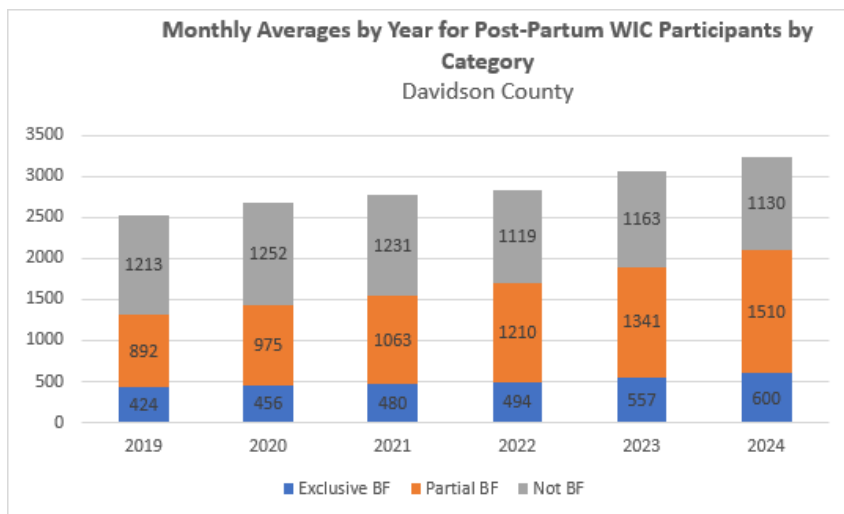
We had excellent participation at all MPHD locations (East, Lentz, Woodbine, South Nutrition, MACC) for our Annual Pink Out event Oct. 23. The MPHD Breast and Cervical Screening program raised over \$1,500 for Making Strides.

WIC Breastfeeding Rates

The Board requested an update on breastfeeding rates among WIC clients. Those rates are calculated monthly based on participation data received from the State WIC office for Davidson County.

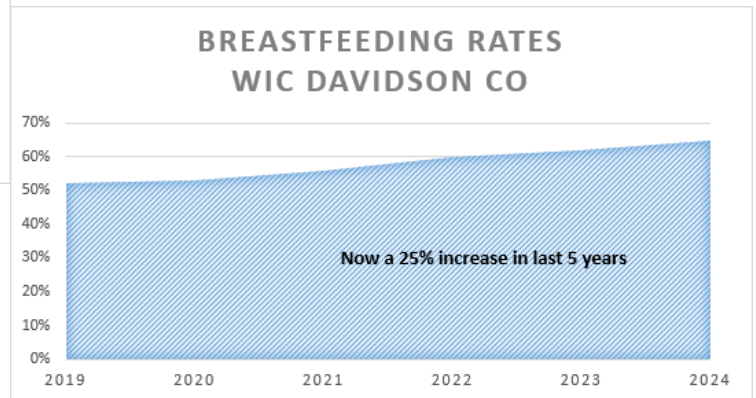
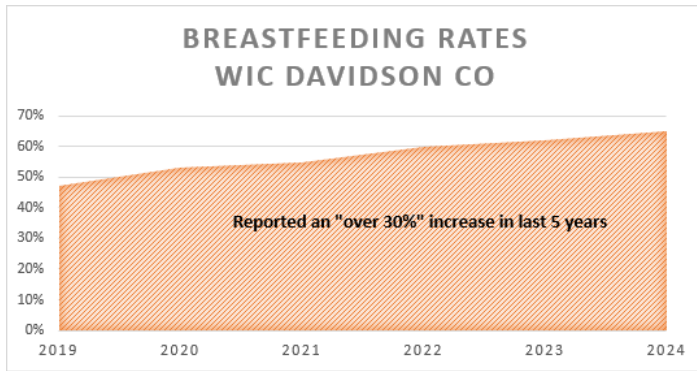
- The number of exclusive and partially breastfeeding women are combined to report a monthly “Breastfeeding” rate, and the percentage for “Breastfeeding” is calculated using the number of total post-partum women participating in WIC for the month as the denominator.
- Yearly breastfeeding rates are determined based on averages for monthly rates. This calculation method is chosen based on how data are provided to MPHD and because post-partum participants can change categories throughout their participation on WIC.
- WIC staff ask about breastfeeding status at every interaction for post-partum women on WIC and document the change in the TNWIC electronic record system.

The number of post-partum women participating in WIC has grown each year since 2019 as seen in the chart below; even so, the percentage of those breastfeeding is higher now than it was then.



Upon receiving this request and building the table above, it was noticed there was an error in the 2019 data that were being used. The error could have occurred due to differences in calculations or an error in the state’s original data; however, all data over the last 5 years were reviewed to ensure consistency in reporting methods and the table for breastfeeding rates annually was updated to reflect change in 2019. Both tables can be seen below.

Original submission:



Create Healthier Community Environments

Radon

The Environmental Bureau’s Radon program took advantage of Metro schools’ fall Break to fully test eleven public schools. Eight were found to be in compliance with Regulation No. 9, while three schools had at least one room over the action level of 4.0 pC/L. Those schools will be retested to confirm the results and MNPS will have a given amount of time to create remediation plans for these remaining schools.

Pest Management

The Pest Management team recently assisted Metro Parks and the Office of Homeless Services in surveying the Anthes homeless camp under the Silliman Evans bridge. Metro is in the process of breaking down this homeless camp and wanted an idea of the health hazards they were facing. Once a homeless camp is cleared and fenced off by Metro Parks, Pest Management will bait for rats to prevent their spread into the adjoining neighborhoods.

Pest Management is also working with Radnor Lake park rangers to get mosquito information onto their official website.

MACC

On Oct. 11, MACC had a joint rabies vaccine clinic and Mars adoption event. In four hours, staff were able to vaccinate 81 family pets and implant 27 microchips. That afternoon, eighteen dogs and 22 cats were adopted from the shelter.

In September, volunteers donated 1,332 hours of their time to helping at the shelter. In October, volunteers donated 1,172 hours of their time. This equates to having an additional eight full-time employees. This demonstrates the community support for MACC, and it shows how understaffed MACC is currently. We have staff working overtime consistently and that's with the equivalent of eight additional staff members who volunteer. It also suggests a potential problem if we ever lose volunteer support.

Food & Public Facilities Protection

In September, F&PFP inspected eight special events including: Old School BBQ Festival, Centennial Park's Musicians Corner, The Nashville State Fair, The Shakespeare Festival, RECFest, The African Street Festival, Artsville, and The Nashville Greek Festival.

In October, F&PFP inspected five special events including: the Carden International Circus, The Nashville Oktoberfest, TACA, Breakaway Nashville, and Southern Festival of Books.

Organizational Updates

Electronic Health Record

We're very excited to note that Patagonia has confirmed a go-live date for MPHD electronic health record implementation on Feb. 25 and 26. Training will be held here in mid-January. Thanks to the EHR Core members and MPHD EHR Team Champions from each area for their work in ensuring a smooth transition to this software. A special nod to Laura Varnier for her persistence and determination to make this happen.

Early Voting

Our first experience as an early voting site went very well. We were open to voters for 14 days from Oct. 16-31. All told, 13,935 Davidson County residents voted here. The election workers were happy with the way things went, and repeatedly said many of those who visited commented on what a nice facility Lentz is. We believe it was good community engagement.

Early Voting & FightFlu TN, Take II

Through the ELC COVID-19 Enhanced Detection grant, one of our primary goals is to increase access to testing and resources that help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. In October, we leveraged two key opportunities to distribute COVID-19 test kits and KN95 masks widely across our community. In total, we provided 7,730 KN95 masks and 4,260 COVID test kits during these events—an important step in supporting the health and safety of Davidson County as we approach winter. Moving forward, we will continue distributing test kits and masks through our clinics and our network of community partners.

- **Fight Flu TN Day (October 15):** Our team prepared 870 "grab bags" containing 2 at-home COVID test kits and a package of 5 masks, which were provided at flu vaccination sites. This initiative allowed community members to leave with resources for both flu prevention and COVID-19 protection.
- **Early Voting:** COVID test kits and masks were made readily available in the lobby at voting sites. Over the two-week period, we distributed 3,390 COVID test kits and 3,380 KN95 masks. Community members were shocked to see these resources offered at no-cost and expressed gratitude to the team for making them readily available. We believe this demonstrates that people are still concerned about the virus' impact and want resources to help keep their families and communities safe.

Budgeting

We currently are going through our annual budget-request process. Each bureau director presents their needs to the ELT. The ELT compiles those requests and prioritizes them with a process called quadratic voting. We have used this process the previous two years and find that it helps make the difficult decisions to choose among the many valid needs of this widely varied department. Those requests for funding will then be forwarded to the Mayor’s office for their review as they put the Metro budget proposal together for FY26.

Giving

As usual, our employees embraced the annual Metro Makes a Difference charitable campaign. In the various events we held, here are the totals raised:

Pet Photo Contest:	\$300.00
Department Yard Sale:	\$531.50
Bake Sale:	\$434.00
Chili/Soup Fundraiser:	\$282.00
Pumpkin Contest:	\$188.00
Halloween Costume Contest:*	\$207.00
 Total for Events:	 \$1,942.50

Buck-A-Week and Monetary donations Total: \$3,930

Grand Total: \$5,872.50

*Photos available upon request

WOODBINE

Discussions continue on a replacement for the Woodbine clinic, but there is no reportable progress at this time. In the meantime, we are repurposing some space in the existing clinic building to accommodate staff expansion in the Behavioral Health and Wellness division. They will be in the gym.

Appointments

The following staff members have been selected to serve on councils/boards for Metro Nashville and Davidson County.

Sheldon Walker: Public Health Administrator
Council: Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network Advisory Council
Term: September 27, 2024, to September 30, 2027

Anidolee Melville-Chester, PhD: Division Director
Council: Mayor’s Behavioral Health and Wellness Council- Co-Chair
Term: October 17, 2024, to October 30, 2027.

Jarrell Summers: Manager, Community Safety
Board : Community Corrections Advisory Board
Term: October 23, 2024, to October 30, 2026

Behavioral Health also has formulated the Opioid System of Care 21-member Collaborative and convened its first meeting. The purpose is to get key stakeholders across hospitals, education, treatment, recovery services, data management and outreach to facilitate strategic alignment, enhance inter-agency

collaboration, and optimize resource utilization for impactful outcomes in Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County.

WIC at 50

In September, the WIC program celebrated the program's 50-year anniversary, hosting a celebration with community partners and staff. While it is uncertain of the exact date the WIC program began operation through the Metro Public Health Department, we do know that it has been for more than 35 years. Today WIC serves approximately 23,000 eligible women, infants and children and employs around 60 staff. And here they (most of them) are:



EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

A sampling of the comments made by her co-workers in their nominations of Nichelle Foster:

- “She is one of the best listeners I have ever met. She always takes time to listen to others and provide feedback.”
- “She goes always the extra mile to help and support all her coworkers.”
- “Nichelle embodies MPH’s core values, such as integrity, collaboration, and respect in her daily interactions. This helps set the tone for what is expected of team members and shows you how to integrate these values into your own work.”