

ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

NAUGATUCK VALLEY HEALTH DISTRICT

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ABOUT NAUGATUCK VALLEY HEALTH DISTRICT

The Naugatuck Valley Health District (NVHD) was founded in 1972 as a collaborative effort to provide public health functions to the towns of Ansonia, Derby, Seymour and Shelton. Beacon Falls and Naugatuck were included in the voluntary effort in 1980 and 1985, respectively. The NVHD is an independent governmental entity formed under the CT General Statutes. One of twenty health districts in the state of Connecticut, it was the third district to be formed. The NVHD serves a population of approximately 127,000 residents. The district is governed by a board of directors comprised of representatives appointed by the towns served by the District. It was the first health district in Connecticut to achieve national public health accreditation.

VISION

Optimal health and quality of life for our communities.

MISSION

The Naugatuck Valley Health District, as the official public health agency for its partner communities, is committed to improving the quality of life for all it serves through the promotion of health, prevention of disease, and by assuring a safe and clean environment.

VALUES

Professionalism

We will treat all our community members, clients, partners and colleagues in a caring, respectful, ethical and fair manner.

Knowledge

We will utilize the most current evidence-based information in all our work and embrace ongoing workforce and leadership development.

Integrity

We will be truthful, honest, and fair, and hold ourselves to the highest standards while being fully accountable for our decisions and actions.

Dedication

We will work to demonstrate our commitment to the Naugatuck Valley Health District and to the public health of the communities we serve.

Teamwork

We will support each other in the spirit of collaboration and cooperation for the public good.



A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to present the annual report for the 2019-2020 fiscal year for the Naugatuck Valley Health District, highlighting the accomplishments of the District



and the public health services provided to residents of the member municipalities. While the first half of this fiscal year felt "normal" with familiar programs and community work being accomplished, we swiftly shifted into public health emergency response mode at the turn of the 2020 new year.

Our staff train and prepare for responding to public health emergency events, including responding to emerging infectious diseases each year although the pandemic we are experiencing is unlike anything we have seen before in our lifetimes. Even at the time of publishing this report, we continue to learn more and more about the novel or new strain of coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, and the disease it causes, "coronavirus disease 2019" or "COVID-19". The Naugatuck Valley region has come together in adapting, learning, participating in disease surveillance and response, grieving, staying optimistic, and the list goes on. It's this type of community network, public and professional, that will continue to set our district apart from our neighbors.

Beyond the pandemic response, our public health responsibilities continue to follow the 10 Essential Services as defined by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guide to public health services in Connecticut at both the state and local level. According to the CDC, these services fall into three key areas: assessment, assurance, and policy development. The assessment standards include services for monitoring health status to identify and solve community health problems and diagnosing and investigating health problems and health hazards in the community. The policy development standards include informing, educating, and empowering people about health issues; mobilizing community partnerships and action to identify and solve health problems; and developing policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts. For the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year, the District has accomplished much in these service areas.

Wishing you the best of health,

Jessica Stelmaszek, MPH

Jessica Stelmaszek, MPH Director of Health

STRATEGIC PLAN

2015-2020

The purpose of the Naugatuck Valley Health District Strategic Plan is to:

- 1. Affirm a shared vision, mission, and core values that serve as guiding principles for our stakeholders.
- 2. Establish clearly defined priorities, goals, objectives, and strategies for the district in a realistic time frame suitable to the district's capacity for implementation.
- 3. Provide a guide for making informed decisions that balance allocation of resources with the pursuit of priorities and strategies.
- 4. Effectively communicate priorities and strategies to our staff, board, member municipalities, partners, and community.
- 5. Identify a base from which to measure progress and evaluate the need for change when required.
- 6. Provide a process to continually improve organizational focus, efficiency, and effectiveness.

Strategic Priority 1: To utilize current and emerging technologies to improve the effectiveness of our data, information management, and evaluation systems.

Goal 1: To upgrade, improve, and utilize technology to allow the staff to work more effectively.

Goal 2: To enhance information management in program evaluation (e.g., tracking goals and activities).

Strategic Priority 2: To build capacity in the organization through proactive recruiting and relevant training and development efforts.

Goal 1: Succession planning and active recruiting for the board.

Goal 2: Succession planning for the staff.

Strategic Priority 3: To raise the Agency's visibility as a means to increase the community's awareness of the District's roles, responsibilities, and services.

Goal 1: To get messages out to folks in the community about services being offered.

Goal 2: To expand the use of communication media beyond print and use more Social Media platforms, including but not limited to, Facebook and Twitter.

Strategic Priority 4: To develop a long-term financial plan to enhance management of current assets and to seek new sources of revenue.

Goal 1: To develop a long-term financial plan to enhance management of assets.

Goal 2: To explore and expand on ways to participate in Commercial Insurance and Medicaid.

Strategic Priority 5: To maintain high-quality mandated services and to implement evidence-based programs based on community needs assessments.

Goal 1: To become more proactive than reactive.

The focus of this Essential Service is the accurate collection and tracking of health data for the purpose of intervention planning and tracking and periodic assessment of the community's health status. This is achieved through the identification of health risks, attention to vital statistics and disparities, and the identification of assets and resources.

The District addresses this in several ways. The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) provides access to a surveillance tracking system which allows local public health entities to track communicable diseases and lead poisoned children. The system allows for the uniform collection of lab results and provides a conduit to DPH experts for assistance in case management/follow-up.

NVHD collaborates with community partners including Griffin Hospital and members of the Valley Council for Health & Human Services and CT DataHaven to maintain two important documents that help achieve this essential service area (1) a multi-year Community Health Improvement Plan, or a CHIP, developed from a (2) Community Health Assessment (CHA), called the Valley Index Report. Both documents were updated and released in 2019 and can be accessed at www.nvhd.org/cha-chip.

The Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) explains the significance of a CHA as being "a resource for all members of the public health system and the population at large. It is a basis for collaborations and for priority setting, planning, program development, funding applications, coordination of resources, and

Assure
Competent
Workforce
Link to /
Provide Care

Enforce
Laws

Develop
Policies
INAMO
Link to /
Provide Tare

Enforce
Laws

Develop
Policies
INAMO
Link to /
Provide Tare

Enforce
Laws

Monitor
health
status to
identify and
solve
community
health
problems

new ways to collaboratively use assets to improve the health of the population. Other governmental units and not-for-profits will use the community health assessment in their planning, program development, and development of funding applications."

The Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) explains the CHIP in the following way: "While the local health department is responsible for protecting and promoting the health of the population, it cannot be effective acting unilaterally. The health department must partner with other sectors and organizations

to plan and share responsibility for community health improvement. Other sectors of the community and stakeholders have access to additional data and bring different perspectives that will enhance planning. A collaborative planning process fosters shared ownership and responsibility for the plan's implementation. The community health improvement process is a vehicle for developing partnerships and for understanding roles and responsibilities."

The focus areas in the 2019-2021 Naugatuck Valley Community Health Improvement Plan included:

	Goal 1: To increase behavioral health education and awareness
Behavioral Health	while emphasizing the importance of social and emotional
	wellness and reducing stigma.
	Goal 2: To reduce stress, anxiety, and trauma, especially in
	young people.
	Goal 3: To reduce substance use disorders in the region and
	promote a recovery community for those with substance use
	disorders in their families through education and awareness.
Heart Health	Goal 1: To reduce premature death rates due to heart disease
neart nearm	in Naugatuck Valley.
	Goal 1: To decrease low birth weight and fetal/infant mortality by
	improving health behaviors among pregnant and non-pregnant
	women of childbearing age.
	Goal 2: To increase adequacy of prenatal care received by
Maternal and Infant Health	pregnant women by empowering women of childbearing age to
	have planned, healthy pregnancies.
	Goal 3: To reduce disparities in adequacy of prenatal care, low
	birth weight, and fetal/infant mortality experienced by racial,
	ethnic, and socioeconomic groups.



This service includes epidemiologic identification of emerging health threats; active infectious disease epidemiology programs; and technical capacity for epidemiologic investigation of disease outbreaks and patterns of chronic disease and injury. To this end, the District provided:

1,637 infectious disease follow-ups and did not have any communicable disease outbreak(s) that required an investigation.

Directly observed therapy (DOT), which consists of home visits for residents with infectious tuberculosis and screenings for the potentially exposed, significantly increased from last year. **413 home visits** were completed.

The Public Health Nurse managed human cases for those potentially exposed to the rabies virus by providing vital health education, consultation, referral and laboratory testing of animals with the state lab. The number of potential rabies cases remained stable at 7.

District residents sent 78 ticks to the CT Agricultural

Experiment Station for laboratory testing for tick borne diseases. Follow-up was provided to residents by the public health nurse. Of the ticks sent for laboratory



testing 27 were positive for a tick-borne illness.

To reduce the impact of **childhood lead poisoning**, NVHD provided case management, medical provider coordination and education for families of children under age 6 with elevated lead levels. Staff conducted environmental



Investigate
health
problems
and
environmental
public health
hazards

investigations of paint, dust, soil and water samples from premises where poisoned children were identified. Orders were issued to property owners to ensure that lead hazards are eliminated.

Investigations managed: 33

Environmental inspections and visits: 36

Orders issued: 10

Communicable Disease Cases in District Reported to NVHD 2014-2018

Selected Diseases	Cases 2019-2020	Cases 2018-2019	Cases 2017-2018	Cases 2016-2017	Cases 2015-2016
Chlamydia	197	335	361	462	373
Syphilis	44	44	47	54	9
Gonorrhea	50	76	64	32	42
Lyme	151	170	151	103	31
Babesiosis	20	8	12	13	9
Streptococcal	72	135	89	53	38
Staphylococcus	98	103	131	42	44
Influenza A & B	366	442	659	319	186
Pneumococcal Disease	22	66	58	39	20
Hepatitis B	26	32	21	32	30
Hepatitis C	191	335	250	262	208

NVHD sanitarians provided **environmental health** investigations of resident complaints subject to state and local laws and regulations with the goal to protect the health of the public from illness, disease and injury from health hazards.

Environmental Complaints Investigated

Food Establishments: 50 Housing: 142 Nuisance: 66

Septic and Sewage: 4 Pools: 3 Air: 5

Salons: 11 Schools: 0



Total Environmental Complaints Investigated: 284

This service involves providing health information that is easy for people to get and understand and providing health promotion activities and immunizations.

NVHD provided **childhood immunizations** through the **CT Vaccine Program**.

Vaccine for Children Program: 59

Adults (Cocoon Program): 3

CT WiZ, the official Immunization Information System for

Connecticut, formerly called the Childhood Immunization Registry and Tracking Service (CIRTS), tracked children's immunizations scheduled in health care providers' offices for an assigned region of NVHD, and also Oxford, Trumbull, Stratford and Monroe.

CIRTS follow-up: 1,741

Influenza vaccine, recommended for residents six months and older, was provided throughout the community at senior centers and health fairs. One emergency clinic was hosted in partnership with the Pomperaug District Department of Health in response to the high number of cases this past season.

Influenza vaccine recipients: 478





Inform,
educate
and
empower
people
about
public
health
issues

With generous funding from both the Valley Community Foundation and the Connecticut Community Foundation, the District continued to offer an evidence-based program for older adults, A Matter of Balance.

A Matter of Balance is a multi-session evidenced-based program focused on reducing the fear of falling and increasing physical activity among seniors.

Participants in this program felt it was an excellent program and felt strongly that other seniors should participate when offered again.



The District provided **100 radon home test kits** to residents at no cost. This year, 29 of the homes were found to have indoor air radon levels greater than or equal to 2.0pCi/L which is the level in the



State of Connecticut Department of Public Health recommends for follow-up testing within one month of the initial test. The action level for remediation is 4.0pCi/L. All homeowners received their test results and those with elevated levels were provided information on how to remediate the problem.

January 2020 NVHD Radon Test Kit Distribution by Town

Naugatuck	4	Total	100
Derby	8	Other	7
Beacon Falls	12	Shelton	33
Ansonia	7	Seymour	29



A monthly newsletter is distributed in the community, through both hard copy and electronic means. Topics address timely health issues and events that being held by the district.

The NVHD website, www.nvhd.org, was overhauled, re-launched and continues to offer information and links to reliable sources on a range of public health topics. The District also is active on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn. Be sure to "follow" and "like" our page!









@NaugValleyHD

@NaugatuckValleyHD

This service involves convening and facilitating community groups and associations to build coalitions focused on improving the community's health.



The Naugatuck Valley Medical Reserve Corps (NVMRC) trained and credentialed medical and non-medical volunteers to respond to various emergencies and support public health

activities in the jurisdiction. NVHD's Director of Health also became the CT Region 5 MRC Coordinator and works closely with the other two units in the region. The State of Connecticut launched a volunteer management system called CT Responds! where interested medical and non-medical volunteers can self-register and credentials can be verified. To sign up, visit ctresponds.ct.gov.

NVMRC Volunteers: 80

Regional Volunteers in CT Responds! Managed by NVHD: 744

N.O.P.E. CAMPAIGN

Naugatuck Valley Overdose Prevention & Education

The district continued its efforts addressing the opioids crisis with its Naugatuck Valley Overdose Prevention & Education (N.O.P.E.) Campaign, which provides Narcan and opioids education and data sharing to the public and community organizations. NVHD received a grant to mentor the county health department of Rockland County, NY as they look to develop an opioids program. NVHD also partnered with Chesprocott Health District to present a Hidden in Plain Sight interactive training at the two district's shared high school, Woodland High Schools, parents' night.







Mobilize
community
partnerships
to identify
and solve
health
problems

The District continued its partnership with the Waterbury Health Department to host the **WIC** Program for the jurisdiction to provide a supplemental food and nutrition education program for pregnant and postpartum women and children up to age five years.

Participants: 813



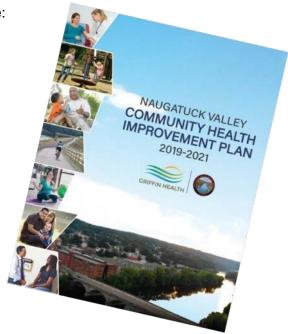
The District convened the **Valley Maternal Health Coalition** in 2014 in response to rising rates of inadequate prenatal care and decreasing availability of reproductive services to women in Naugatuck Valley. The Coalition has continued to meet every 2-3 months, serving as an ongoing networking vehicle for its partner members, which include Griffin Hospital, Griffin's high school-based health center, the two community health centers, TEAM Inc., Nurturing Families Network, Child First/Parent Child Resource Center, Valley United Way, Waterbury WIC, and the school nurses from the 6 local high schools.

As mentioned in Essential Service 1 NVHD's **Community Health Improvement Plan** completed in the summer of 2019. NVHD worked closely with Valley Community Foundation, Griffin Hospital and Prevention Resource Center to begin the process of our third CHIP. The next CHIP work will begin in the fall 2019 and continue until 2021.

The priority areas that were chosen to focus our efforts on were:

- Heart Disease
- Behavioral Health
- Inf ant Death & Inadequate Prenatal Care





This service looks to the development of codes, regulations, and legislation to guide the practice of public health.

NVHD's Body Care Code was revised in June 2020 after a Public Hearing was held to match language consistent with the State Department of Public Health's requirements for the following to become licensed pursuant to the respective Public Acts:

- Estheticians Public Act 2019-117 Sections 192 & 199
- Eyelash Technicians Public Act 2019-117 Section 193 & 199
- Nail Technicians Public Act 2019-117 Sections 194 & 199

Additional changes were made including the removal of the "Qualified Nail Technician" and "Person in Charge" requirements among other minor changes. The Body Care Code can be viewed at http://www.nvhd.org/environmental-health/.

NVHD's Director of Health joined the Advocacy and Policy Committee of the CT Association of Directors of Health (CADH). CADH submitted three testimonies in the early 2020 legislative session that were related to immunizations, marijuana, and public health funding to local health departments out of the State budget.

"CADH is the collective voice of local public health at the Capitol and encourages its local health directors to present CADH with creative ideas and potential legislation to improve public health statewide. CADH advocates by monitoring the status of pending legislation; preparing fact sheets and written and oral testimony; organizing campaigns; grassroots advocacy maintaining relationships with policymakers; and collaborating with partner organizations. CADH also analyzes proposed state and federal regulations and policies impacting public health and offers comments, develops position papers, and makes recommendations on behalf of its membership." - https://cadh.org/advocacy-and-policy/



NVHD's Director was an invited panelist at Senator
Blumenthal's February 2020 roundtable discussion to talk about the state's readiness and needs as it relates to COVID-19 ahead of his congressional emergency funding.

NVHD's Director and colleagues from Waterbury Hospital and Pomperaug District Department of Health were invited to present at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford on a collaborative project between the 3 agencies on Diabetes-Self Management Programs and sustainable public health funding for evidence based programs





Develop
policies and
plans that
support
individual
and
community
health
efforts

A large part of the District's activities fall into this essential service. In addition to the work described below, this year, the Environmental Health staff worked to prepare for the upcoming changes to the food code in anticipation of the State's eventual adoption of the FDA Food Code.

NVHD licensed, inspected, reviewed plans and provided education to **food service establishments (FSE)** including restaurants, markets, caterers, private clubs, itinerant vendors, school cafeterias, group homes, day care centers, nursing homes and temporary events.

FSE licenses issued 656
Temporary event licenses 302
Food plan reviews 34
Inspections and visits 2,036









NVHD maintains a food rating webpage on its website, www.nvhd.org.

The NVHD responded to **housing code complaints** filed by residents with investigations that may result in enforcement activities including the issuance of violation orders and/or litigation.

Complaints investigated 216
Inspections and visits 79



Enforce
laws and
regulations
that protect
health and
ensure
safety



NVHD issued permits and supervised the installation of private **subsurface sewage disposal systems (SSDS),** and provided deep-hole tests, inspections and investigations. Plans were reviewed for change of use, additions, and engineered systems.

SSDS permits issued	New: 10
33D3 permits issued	Repair: 75
SSDS visits	232
Subdivision lots	0
Test hole applications	77

NVHD issued permits and inspected all **private well** construction sites working with homeowners, the construction industry and other government agencies to resolve water quality problems and protect the water supply at the local level.

Well drilling permits issued	20
Private well water	

visits/samples 32

NVHD issued permits and inspected all **public pools**.

Inspections and visits 12 Closed 13

NVHD issued permits and inspected all tattoo and body piercing establishments and body care salons including hair, nail, massage and tanning salons.

Body Care permits	176
Inspections and visits	194
Tattoo and Body Piercing permits	8
Inspections and visits	8

NVHD provided day care inspections for state licensing and investigated school complaints.

Inspections and visits 15

NVHD provided a range of **nuisance** inspections that may have resulted in enforcement action.

Nuisance 59

This service (often referred to as "outreach" or "enabling" services) includes providing culturally and linguistically appropriate materials; targeting health information to at risk groups; and working with the community to improve health care access.

In collaboration with many partners, the District provided health education materials and outreach on the risks of lead-based paint, the need to assess homes for health risks, EEE virus, and responded to the opioid crisis through hosting Narcan trainings and participating on community panels, just to name a few!









Link people to needed personal health services and promote strategies to improve access to health care services

This service includes education and training for personnel to meet the needs of agencies involved in delivering the activities of public health. To this end, NVHD has developed a Workforce Development Plan that includes a Multi-Year Staff Training and Exercise Plan (MYTEP). The plans are reviewed annually and are based on the Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals from the Council on Linkages and the Fifteen Preparedness Capabilities from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

In addition, staff completed individual training needed to maintain licenses and certification. All staff are encouraged to participate in trainings provided by the Connecticut State Department of Public Health, professional organizations and academia throughout the year to agency staff so they can keep abreast in a dynamic science-based field.









Assure a competent public health workforce

This service calls for ongoing evaluation of health programs, based on analysis of health status and service utilization data, to assess program effectiveness and to provide information necessary for allocating resources and shaping programs.

The NVHD Quality Improvement Plan serves as the foundation for the agency's efforts to continually improve our services to our six communities. As part of our PHAB accreditation, NVHD always supports at least one administrative and one program QI project. In addition, NVHD has now recognized a number "Quick QI" projects (aka *Just Did It!* activities), which contribute incrementally to our day-to-day service to our customers.

NVHD purchased and began implementing new software to efficiently track the performance management and quality of the work being accomplished in the district. The software is called VMSG.







Evaluate
effectiveness,
accessibility
and quality of
personal and
population
based health
services

NVHD, in partnership with the Pomperaug District Department of Health (PDDH), received a grant from the Connecticut Office of Health Strategy's State Innovation Model (SIM) to explore and provide several diabetes self-management programs to specific individuals who meet certain qualifying criteria set by the Waterbury Hospital Chase Outpatient Center and Waterbury Health Access Program. The SIM is developing a strategy to promote healthier people, better care, and smarter healthcare spending and health equity by moving away from traditional medical billing to one which rewards healthcare providers for improved patient outcomes. The grant supplied funding and technical assistance for the two health districts to develop a business plan to present to healthcare organizations for the districts to supply diabetes education and management to patients in need, and be reimbursed by the healthcare organization, Waterbury Hospital, for the services. NVHD and PDDH hosted 4 successful Diabetes-Self Management Classes!



"It's Your Life...Live it Well"







Waterbury Hospital
Waterbury HEALTH



Research
for new
insights and
innovative
solutions to
public health
problems

FUNDING SOURCES

45625, 2% 294846, 16% 395177, 22% 211460, 12% 870289, 48%

FISCAL YEAR 2019-2020

- Grants (16%)
- Allocations from the State (12%)
- Allocations from Cities/Towns (48%)
- Permits, Licenses, Fees (22%)
- Other Income (3%)

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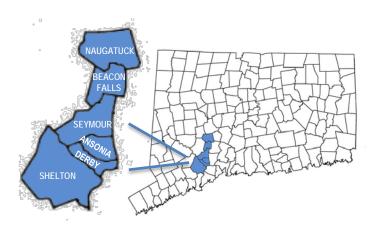
Immunization Action Plan	\$74,257	Allocations from the State	\$211,460
Public Health Emergency Preparedness	\$71,916	Allocations from Cities/Towns	\$870,289
Medical Reserve Corps	\$23,331	Permits, Licenses, Fees	\$395,177
MRC Operational Readiness Award (NACCHO)	\$7,500	Other Income	\$45,625
Preventative Health Block Grant	\$34,355	Total Other	\$1,522,551
A Matter of Balance (Valley Community Foundation)	\$12,000		
Regional Opioids Alliance & Data Sharing (ROADS) (CT Community Foundation)	\$4,700		
Opioids Mentorship Program (NACCHO)	\$50,000		
Diabetes Self-Management Program (Office of Health Strategy)	\$49,997		
Grant for Building Signage (Ion Bank)	\$3,100		
Needs & Opportunities – Technology (Valley Community Foundation)	\$9,917		
Valley Community COVID-19 Response Grant	\$3,200		
Total Grants	\$294,846		

Total Revenue including Grants*: \$1,817,397

*Figure is preliminary and unaudited at time of publication

POPULATION

Shelton 41,097		
Chaltan	44.007	
Seymour	16,509	
Naugatuck	31,288	
Derby	12,515	
Beacon Falls	6,182	
Ansonia	18,721	





NVHD BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Thomas Clifford, Exec Committee Chair, Ansonia

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Lisa Brailey, Derby

Camille Kurtyka, Derby

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