

## 2023 Annual Report of the Quabbin Health District

### District Board of Directors:

Name	Title
William Pula	Chair
John Desmond	Vice Chair
Leeanne Connolly	Clerk
Jennifer McMartin	Member
Michael Juda	Member
Colleen Duroshea	Member
Kenneth Elstein	Member
Dr. David Gottsegen	Member
Jim Potter	Member
Melissa Nazzaro	Member
Richard Hall	Member

### District Personnel:

Name	Title
Andrea Crete; MPH, RS	Director of Public Health
John Prenosil	Health Inspector
Kirsten Krieger; RN, BSN	Public Health Nurse
Roger Bacon, PE	Title 5 Independent Contractor
Betty Barlow	Administrative Assistant/Treasurer
Mary-Jo Grenier	Senior Clerk

### Background:

The Quabbin Health District is a comprehensive regional health department serving the communities of Belchertown, Pelham, and Ware. The district was established in 1980 by a Town meeting vote and was formed under the Section 27A of Chapter 111 of the MGL. It is a joint effort by the three communities' local boards of health to provide their towns with the public health professionals and services needed to create healthy communities. The District provides public health services for the roughly 26,267 residents within these communities' 120 square mile radius. The district provides each town with the shared personnel, equipment, and other resources to carry out the required public health duties.

The Quabbin Health District employs one full time Director of Public Health, Andrea Crete; a full time Health Inspector John Prenosil; a full time Public Health Nurse Kirsten Krieger; one full time Administrative Assistant, Betty Barlow who staffs the Ware Board of Health office Monday – Friday from 8:30AM – 4PM; and a part time Senior Clerk who staffs the Belchertown Board of Health office Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 8AM-2PM.

The Quabbin Health District is governed by a Board of Directors, which is composed of the elected Board of Health members from all three communities within the District. The Health Director, Health Inspector, and Public Health Nurse work in all three communities and maintain

fully functional workplaces in both the Ware and Belchertown Town Halls. The District provides administrative / clerical personnel at both locations as well

The Quabbin Health District provides services to the member Towns including but not limited to communicable and reportable disease surveillance via an online epidemiological network (MAVEN), public health investigations, public health messaging, 24-7 public health emergency response, seasonal flu vaccination clinics, tobacco control, substance abuse prevention programs, and State mandated public health inspections and complaint management. You can visit the Quabbin Health District website for more information on services at <http://quabbinhealthdistrict.com>

The report below details the services the Quabbin Health District provided to the member Towns for the 2023 calendar year. Please contact the District office by phone at 413-967-9615 or email [bbarlow@townofware.com](mailto:bbarlow@townofware.com) with any questions, comments, requests for additional information, and to relay any specific public health concerns.

## **Public Health Programs:**

### **Community Naloxone Program (CNP):**

The CNP allows many eligible programs to obtain naloxone (Narcan) through the State Office of Pharmacy (SOPS) for reduced / no cost. Local boards of health are eligible to receive naloxone at no cost with a requirement to submit training and dispensing data monthly to the state of Massachusetts. The Quabbin Health District applied for and was approved in December 2022 as a naloxone distribution site in order to receive free naloxone and to train individuals in the district on recognizing the signs of an opioid overdose and responding with naloxone. The PHN along with the Director of Public Health Andrea Crete, have developed a training presentation for businesses and groups in the community to include understanding addiction, types of opiates, reducing stigma, and recognizing, and responding to an overdose with naloxone. The PHN also developed a shorter version to be done with individuals that includes the above listed items. Once training has been completed attendees or individuals can be given naloxone for no cost.

In 2023 the QHD distributed 72 naloxone kits at no cost while providing Opioids and Opioid rescue training to everyone the kits were given to.

### **Emergency Preparedness:**

In 2022 the Quabbin Health District joined the Hampshire Public Health Preparedness Coalition. The HPHPC works collaboratively to enhance communities' collective capacity to share resources and respond to public health threats and emergencies, including terrorism and outbreaks of infectious diseases. It strives to improve local and regional public health emergency preparedness, and meet deliverables set forth by the Department of Public Health.

HPHPC includes Boards of Health and Health Departments in the Massachusetts Preparedness Coalition Region 1C. Funding is provided through the Massachusetts Department of Public Health with a grant from the Centers for Disease Control. Coalition activities and expenditures are overseen by an executive committee which includes members who represent the broad geographic diversity of the region. Ex-officio members include representatives from Cooley Dickinson Hospital and UMass Amherst. The HPHPC grant is managed by the Northampton

Health Department as the Host Agency. The Coalition is closely aligned with other regional response partners including Hampshire Regional Emergency Planning Committee (HREPC), Western Regional Advisory Group (WAG), Western MA Medical Reserve Corps Advisory Group (MAG) and the Pandemic Flu Committee of the Western Regional Homeland Security Advisory Council (WRHSAC).

*Member Communities in the HPHPC include Amherst, Belchertown, Chester, Chesterfield, Cummington, Easthampton, Goshen, Granby, Hadley, Hatfield, Huntington, Middlefield, Northampton, Pelham, Plainfield, South Hadley, Southampton, Ware, Westhampton, and Worthington.*

**Public Health Excellence Grant:**

The Quabbin Health District is the grantee of the MA DPH’s Public Health Excellence Grant (PHE) which allows the District to provide a full time Public Health Nurse and the services provided through public health nursing which is summarized in this report under “Public Health Nursing Report,” a Title 5 Independent Contractor to handle all the soil testing, septic plan reviews and septic system inspections in the District; and a part time Administrative Support Staff. The grant also pays for a tablet based inspectional software program called Win Wam which allows all food inspection reports to now be done electronically. The Win Wam system stores the inspection reports and can generate data gathered using the reports to show where there are gaps in compliance with the Food Code that may need to be addressed in food establishments and what trainings may need to be provided in order to increase compliance and reduce food borne illness risk factors. Inspection reports are posted on the Quabbin Health District website for public access and viewing.

The grant funds the District’s monthly website hosting and maintenance fees; pays for inspectional supplies for health inspections as well as public health nursing; and staff membership and training fees. In FY24 the District was allotted a total of \$324,785.36 in grant funding. We are fortunate to receive these funds in order to increase essential public health services to the member towns.

**Public Health Inspections:**

Public Health Inspections	Belchertown	Ware	Pelham
PercTest / Deepholes and Soil Evaluations	55	23	4
Septic Application Review (New Construction)	24	5	0
Septic Application Review (Repair)	43	11	7

Septic Installation Inspections and Re-inspections	57	17	13
Well Application Review	28	N/A	1
Housing Inspections (upon complaint) And Re-inspections	6	32	0
Lead Paint Inspections	0	0	0
Condemnations (#of units)	0	1	0
Voucher Housing Inspections	0	3	0
Housing Court Appearances	0	0	1
Food Service Inspections (routine and complaint) Including School Cafeterias	89	103	2
New or Remodeled Food Plan review	3	3	0
Mobile/Temporary Food Inspections	11 mobile food 38 Temp Event	11 mobile food 2 temp event	0
Beaver Permits Applications	0	0	0
Nuisance Complaints Received and Investigated and Orders issued as warranted	2	16	2
Tanning Bed Licensure	1	1	N/A
Children Recreational Camp Inspections and Licensing	0	0	0

Tattoo/ Body Art Establishments	2	1	N/A
Public Pool and Sauna Inspections	5	0	N/A
Public Beaches	1	0	

## **Public Health Nursing:**

### **Public Health Nurse Wellness and Blood Pressure Clinics**

The Public Health Nurse provides wellness and blood pressure clinics to sites within the Quabbin Health District – offering blood pressure screening, blood sugar screening, health and wellness promotion and educational programs, connection to local health resources, and helps answer questions about chronic health conditions to assist residents in understanding their health and increasing their health literacy.

These clinics are offered at – Belchertown Senior Center on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays of every month from 10:00 am to 11:30 am, Ware Senior Center on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays of every month from 10:00 am to 11:30 am, Quabbin Wire & Cable in Ware on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of every month from 3:00 pm to 4:30 pm, Christopher Heights in Belchertown on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of every month from 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm, Cornerstone Recovery Program in Ware on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of every month from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm, The Recovery Center of Hope in Ware on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of every month from 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm, and at Pine Valley Plantation in Belchertown on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of every month from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm.

### **Health Education and Wellness Promotion Activities**

The Public Health Nurse has presented educational programs at the Ware and Belchertown public libraries, the Ware and Belchertown senior centers, the Pelham public library, Cornerstone Recovery Program, the Recovery Center of Hope, and Pine Valley Plantation on the topics of emergency preparedness, safe storage and disposal of medications, opioids and opioid rescue training, cardiovascular health, nutrition, fad diets, health literacy, and ticks and mosquitos.

The Public Health Nurse is a certified CPR/First Aid/AED and choke saving instructor for the American Heart Association and the American Red Cross. In 2023, Adult and Pediatric CPR/AED with choke saving training was taught at the Ware Town Hall for employees of the town of Ware. The Quabbin Health District became a training site for the American Red Cross in 2023.

The Public Health Nurse set up health promotion tables at the following events in the district: The Umbrella of Wellness Fair in Belchertown, Food Truck Fridays in Belchertown, National Night Out in Belchertown, and the Senior Resource Fair at Cedarbrook Village in Ware.

## **Quabbin Health District 2023 Communicable Disease Report**

The Public Health Nurse is responsible for and has been conducting MAVEN infectious disease surveillance. This requires checking in daily for notifications of infectious diseases occurring in the District. It also requires doing case investigations for diseases other than Influenza or COVID-19 by contacting hospital infection preventionists if a person hospitalized, contacting case and/or PCP office to determine potential means of exposure, contact tracing if applicable.

The types and numbers of communicable diseases reported in the District for 2023 are listed below. They are listed by the disease/illness and the number of cases (residents suspected (S), probable (P), and confirmed (C) to have an infectious illness/disease.

**Total event count by disease**

<b>Diseases Year 1/1/2023 to 12/31/2023</b>	<b>Belchertown</b>	<b>Pelham</b>	<b>Ware</b>
<b>Babesiosis</b>	<b>4C, 2P, 4S</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2C, 1S</b>
<b>Borrelia Miyamotoi</b>	<b>1C, 1S</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1C, 1S</b>
<b>Calicivirus/Norovirus</b>	<b>2C</b>	<b>1C</b>	<b>1C</b>
<b>Campylobacteriosis</b>	<b>5C, 3P</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1C, 2P</b>
<b>Ehrlichiosis</b>	<b>1C</b>		
<b>Giardiasis</b>	<b>2P</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Group A Streptococcus</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1C, 1S</b>
<b>Hepatitis B</b>	<b>1C, 2P</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Hepatitis C</b>	<b>2C, 1P</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2C, 1P</b>
<b>Human Granulocytic Anaplasmosis</b>	<b>3C, 1P, 5S</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4C</b>
<b>Influenza</b>	<b>29C</b>	<b>2C</b>	<b>42C</b>
<b>Lyme Disease</b>	<b>27P, 49S</b>	<b>1P</b>	<b>9P, 21S</b>
<b>Novel Coronavirus</b>	<b>268C, 49P</b>	<b>7C</b>	<b>208C, 23P</b>
<b>Powassan Virus Infection</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1C</b>
<b>Salmonellosis</b>	<b>2C</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1C</b>
<b>Shiga toxin producing organism</b>	<b>1P</b>	<b>1C</b>	
<b>Tuberculosis</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1C</b>	<b>10C</b>
<b>Varicella</b>	<b>2S</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1P</b>
<b>Vibrio Species</b>	<b>1C</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

I would like to thank members of the District Board of Directors for their continued support in all the great work that the District staff do. I look forward to continuing being a part of such a great organization and expanding its services to improve upon the health needs of the member Towns.

Respectfully submitted,



Andrea Crete, MPH, RS; Director of Public Health - Quabbin Health District