

Public Health IMPACT

NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTING PUBLIC HEALTH TOPICS & EVENTS FOR THE MARION COUNTY COMMUNITY • FALL 2024/WINTER 2025 • ISSUE NO.3



Dr. Virginia A. Caine, M.D., Director and Chief Medical Officer for the MCPHD; La Keisha Jackson, Indiana State Senator; and members of MCPHD's Public Health Laboratory staff at the groundbreaking event at the corner of 38th and Rural streets..

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HHC/MCPHD celebrates groundbreaking of new Public Health Lab

More than 250 people attended a groundbreaking event on Sept. 26, 2024 across the street from the Hasbrook Building, where a new two-story public health laboratory, clinic and administrative building will be built.

The new building will house the laboratory facilities of the MCPHD, and will cover nearly triple the floorspace of the current laboratory facilities, which are currently housed in the basement of the Hasbrook Building.

Also moving to the new building will be MCPHD's Bell Flower Clinic, Vital Records offices and Immunization Records offices. The new building will also include a large multipurpose

community space for trainings and meetings and a new parking lot.

The construction of the new lab building is expected to be completed by the summer of 2026. Relocating laboratory services, vital records offices, immunization records and the sexually transmitted infection clinic to the new building will free up space in the Hasbrook Building and in the Sydney & Lois Eskenazi Hospital.

"We are excited to have an updated space and are hoping it will have a larger waiting room with more natural light," said Amie Clemons, MCPHD's Immunizations Program Manager. "We

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CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT UPDATE Q4 2024

Progress on the new Marion County Public Health Laboratory Building is proceeding as scheduled, with preparation work taking place currently, and construction expected to finish by the summer of 2026.

Asphalt from the former parking lot at the site was removed, and underground utility work and the installation of stormwater drainage pipes and structures is ongoing.

With inclement weather and holidays approaching, on-site construction activities may be limited.

Paving of the new parking lot will begin in early 2025, as will the development of the building pad for the foundation of the new lab building.

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More than 250 individuals representing staff, community members, public officials and dignitaries gathered on Sept. 26 to learn about the new investment in the Avondale Meadows neighborhood.

Groundbreaking, Continued from page 1

also hope the space is more conducive to sharing educational materials with the public. We know our clients will be happy to have more parking available to them!”

“We are very excited about the opportunities the new building will offer our clients and staff,” said Kim Amrhien, Assistant Administrator of MCPHD’s Vital Statistics Department. “Having a modern and well-designed space will project professionalism and desire to provide superior customer service to all. And the funeral directors are really going to appreciate their dedicated entrance and service area.”

“Expanding the usable lab space will allow us to train more MCPHD staff and add new testing capabilities. We will have the space and the power infrastructure to add new modern instrumentation, which will allow us to increase the speed and scope of our in-house testing, saving resources currently spent on outsourced testing,” said Dr. Michael Davis, MCPHD’s Director of Laboratories.



(left to right) Gregg Hiland, President and CEO of the YMCA of Greater Indianapolis; Paul Babcock, HHC President and CEO; Virginia A. Caine, M.D., MCPHD Director and Chief Medical Officer; La Keisha Jackson, Indiana State Senator; and Chris Tolliver, Community Engagement Specialist of Avondale-Meadows YMCA gather to celebrate the Public Health Lab groundbreaking.

“Additionally, because the new laboratory is being designed to be both modular and flexible, we will be able to expand or combine most spaces to better accommodate large-scale testing if ever the need arises, such as during a pandemic or environmental disaster,” Davis explained.

“Increasing the MCPHD lab’s testing and training capacity will allow our clinicians and environmentalists to expand their abilities to solve problems in our population or in the environment that we serve.”

Capital Improvement Projects, Continued from page 1

Steelwork is expected to start in the spring of 2025 for the construction of the building’s frame.

The new building will house the laboratory facilities of MCPHD, and will cover nearly triple the floorspace of the current laboratory facilities, which are currently housed in the basement of the Hasbrook Building.

Also moving to the new building will be MCPHD’s Bell

Flower Clinic, Vital Records offices and Immunization Records offices. The new building will also include a large multipurpose community space for trainings and meetings and a new parking lot.

For additional updates and project information, please visit <https://hhcorp.org/construction-updates/> or contact Pink Bissett at PBissett@HHCorp.org.

Program helps pregnant, parenting teens achieve personal goals, aspirations

HHC's Young Families of Indiana Network (YFIN) provides and promotes quality services for pregnant and parenting teens throughout Indianapolis, Indiana.



young families
of Indiana
network

Valerie Parker, the Executive Director of the YFIN Program, said the eight-person staff uses individual support, educational workshops, college and career tours, professional development and advocacy to improve the lives of pregnant teens and young parents across Marion County – and to help them achieve their personal goals and aspirations.

The program has existed since 1997 under different names, such as Project SHAPE, Future Promises, and currently, Young Families of Indiana Network / Future Promises. Parker joined the program as its director eight years ago.

"I really enjoy what I am doing, and we have an awesome team," Parker said.

The program purchases and stocks items needed for mom, dad and baby, and maintains them in YFIN's Baby Boutique. Participants can earn points by meeting school-based or parenting-based goals, and then use the points to purchase items at the events where they host an incentive store. Baby shampoo can cost two points, while a potty chair can cost six points, and a crib can cost 20 points.

Recent changes to the program include acquiring a 26-passenger bus from Eskenazi Health to use during field trips and receiving 14 laptop computers to loan out to participants during summer breaks so that they can work on their resumes, college searches or financial aid applications.

In the near future, Parker hopes to add a second bilingual case worker to the team to help with the rising number of Hispanic participants, and also to start a book club.

YFIN also has a D.A.D.s component (Dads Affirming Dads) that supports teen fathers, a summer youth program that fosters engagement during the summer months through weekly educational and fun-filled activities, and the Post Graduate program (Parenting Geared- Role- Models Achieving Dreams) that provides two years of post-graduate support to our participants to ensure that they identify, target and achieve the goals they have set for themselves and their families.



Valerie Parker, Executive Director of the YFIN Program, preps inventory for the program's incentive store.

The program is currently active in seven Indianapolis high schools:

- Pike
- Warren Central
- Arsenal Tech
- Lawrence North
- Lawrence Central
- Simon Youth Graduation Academy
- George Washington High School

Since its inception, the program has impacted the lives of more than 2,000 pregnant and parenting teens.

At the 2024 Year-End Awards Ceremony, 14 participants graduated and were recognized for their accomplishments in balancing parenthood, academics, employment, and life. Special awards were given to participants with the highest grade-point average and the best school attendance at each school.

"A teen pregnancy is not the end of the world," Parker said. "We work to help young parents and parents-to-be navigate their new journey of parenthood, offering direction, support and guidance."

To learn more about YFIN and the Future Promises program, please contact the office at 317-221-3190.

MARION COUNTY VITAL RECORDS SERVICES

Certified Marion County birth and death certificates can be obtained at the Marion County Public Health Department, located at 3838 N. Rural St., Indianapolis, IN (near East 38th and Keystone.)

BIRTH CERTIFICATES: \$15

DEATH CERTIFICATES: \$20

Cash, money orders and credit cards accepted.

For more information about hours, fees and acceptable forms of ID:

CALL: 317-221-2400

E-MAIL: inquire@hhcorp.org

**VISIT OUR
WEBSITE
BY SCANNING
THE QR CODE**



SMILE MOBILE INCREASES DENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN MARION COUNTY SCHOOLS

The Dental Health Department's staff have a good reason to smile: the Dental Smile Mobile is providing services at more schools and community events than ever, and is seeing an increasing number of students.

The 40-foot, fully-equipped mobile dental office provides preventative and basic services – such as dental check-ups, x-rays, cleanings, fluoride treatments, sealants, fillings and simple extractions – at many Marion County schools, summer camps and health fairs to children between the ages of one and 19. Students also receive dental education and encouragement to brush their teeth regularly, at least twice daily.

Children receiving dental services receive a report card on the dentists' findings and contact information for the Dental Health Department and its locations open to the general public. Parents can pay for services with Medicaid, or with private insurance or out-of-pocket fees. Without insurance, the cost for students is usually \$30.

Started in 1998, the Dental Smile Mobile has expanded its reach to now include visits to many public schools, private schools, daycares and HeadStart locations throughout Marion County.

In the 2021-22 school year, the Dental Smile Mobile served 488 students. In the 2022-23 school year, the number of students served increased to 600 students. And last year, the number of students served grew to more than 700.

For more information about the Dental Smile Mobile, please call (317) 221-2329.



Healthy Homes programs protect community from lead exposures

Public Health officials are adding some new tools in their efforts to protect Marion County residents from lead exposures.

Karla Johnson, the Administrator of MCPHD's Healthy Homes Department, said that while public awareness of lead exposure risks is growing, dangers persist.

"There has been significant focus on lead in drinking water lately," Johnson notes. "However, the most significant risk for our residents is lead-based paint that is chipping or peeling."

Lead has been used in a variety of products, such as gasoline, plumbing pipes, ceramics and some cosmetics. Prior to 1978, it was often used as a paint additive to help speed up drying, increase durability and resist moisture. When this paint deteriorates, it can be inhaled or ingested, posing serious health risks, particularly for young children who may face chronic growth, learning, and developmental issues due to lead exposure.

In Indiana, doctors are required to test children for lead exposure at their

one-year and two-year checkups, with blood-lead levels reported to the Indiana Department of Health. The Healthy Homes Department provides free blood lead testing for children six and younger or pregnant women, as well as lead testing of household items such as toys, cookware or other commonly used items, every Thursday from 1 to 5 p.m. at the offices at 3901 Meadows Drive. Healthy Homes staff also conduct testing at various schools and daycares throughout Marion County.

Healthy Homes staff work with families of children whose blood-lead levels is equal to or exceeding $3.5\mu\text{g/dL}$ in order to identify the exposure source and to implement strategies to lower the lead levels. Addressing lead paint or lead-contaminated soil can be complex and costly. Dietary changes, such as increasing iron and calcium intake, may help reduce blood lead levels, but they cannot reverse damage already inflicted on the brain and kidneys.

In 2023, the Healthy Homes Department identified 134 new cases of lead-exposed children. To date, in 2024, that number is

162. Johnson stated that her staff of three child caseworkers is currently working on more than 400 active cases, and approximately 750 children with suspected lead exposure still need their levels confirmed.

Lead Free Indy is an initiative by the Healthy Homes department that emerged from a collaboration between IU Indianapolis and the National Leadership Academy for the Public Health Lead Free Cities Initiative.

In September, they held their inaugural Lead Free Indy Summit, bringing together elected officials and community leaders to discuss steps to tackle lead contamination in our community. The summit also introduced the LeadADVISOR, a new tool that uses AI-powered technology to help families research if their home has a lead history or to ask specific questions regarding lead at a property or general questions.

The LeadADVISOR tool can be found at www.missionunleaded.org.

MCPHD's Healthy Homes Department can be reached at (317) 221-2155.

Fehribach Center provides internships for students with disabilities, awarded \$10M Lilly grant



Current and former interns are pictured with Greg Fehribach at the 2024 Fehribach Center Summer Celebration

PROGRAM INCLUDES PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES, ONE-ON-ONE MENTORING

A program which provides internships for college students with physical disabilities recently received a major boost with the announcement of a \$10 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc.

The grant award, which was announced by Eskenazi Health and the Eskenazi Health Foundation in October, will help support the mission of the Gregory S. Fehribach Center at Eskenazi Health.

“Eskenazi Health Foundation’s vision is to create a sustainable, equitable workforce. Through the Gregory S. Fehribach Center, that vision can become reality not just in this city, but throughout Indiana, and become a model for the rest of the country,” said Ernest Vargo II, CFRE, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Eskenazi Health Foundation. “We are so grateful to Lilly Endowment Inc. for helping make the center’s continued growth and expanded reach possible.”

Since its inception in 2013, the Fehribach Center has provided 228 college and university students from 42 colleges and universities in Indiana and surrounding states with internships at Eskenazi Health and at 46 additional partner organizations across Central Indiana.



(l to r) Fehribach Center program manager Carlos Taylor with interns Jill Maudlin and Mia Carter.



Interns Alec Cabacungan (left) and Shawn Sloan (right) with Greg Fehribach (center) at the Fehribach Center Summer Celebration

The eight-to-twelve-week internship program includes professional development opportunities and one-on-one mentoring with previous interns and volunteer board members. In addition, accessible housing and transportation are provided at no cost to the interns who need them, and the center also provides interns with workplace accommodations, such as assistive technology.

The percentage of Fehribach Center interns entering the job market who have found equitable employment (91%) is almost triple the 31.3% average for college graduates with disabilities nationwide.

“We have something special in Indianapolis, and thanks to Lilly Endowment’s generosity, we can help employers, colleges and universities and other organizations across the state and country begin to practice our groundbreaking model,” said Larry Markle, the Fehribach Center’s Director.

UPCOMING EVENTS

DIABETES MANAGEMENT

The ABCs of Diabetes Self-Management Education/Support program of the Marion County Public Health Department is committed to providing adults with ready access to educational services and information in the area of managing and preventing diabetes.

Please register at least one week prior to the first class. Participants should plan to attend all classes for the month.

QUESTIONS: email diabetes@marionhealth.org or call 317-221-2094.

REGISTER AT: www.marionhealth.org/diabetes

FEB

Marion County Public Health Department
3838 North Rural Street
Wednesdays 5, 12, 19, 26
1:30 – 3:30 p.m.

MAR

Online classes
Tuesdays 4, 11, 18, 25
5:30 – 7 p.m.

APR

Franklin Road Library
5550 S. Franklin Rd.,
Wednesdays 9, 16, 23, 30
1:30 – 3:30 p.m.



FOOD SAFETY TRAINING

Have new employees? Need refresher training?

There will also be information available for new businesses and food licensing.

Register by calling 317-221-2262.

Walk-ins welcome.

FEB 4

8:30-10:30 a.m.
4701 North Keystone Ave

NURSE-OF-THE-DAY SCHEDULE

Call clinic location to schedule an appointment.

SERVICES PROVIDED: Immunizations, TB testing, blood pressure screenings, general health counseling and referrals to community services.

WHAT TO BRING WITH YOU: Parent/guardian must be present with children under 18 years of age. Copy of current shot records, medicaid or insurance card and client/parent/guardian ID

NORTHEAST DISTRICT HEALTH OFFICE
6042 E. 21st St. • 317-221-7300

Monday • 8 a.m.- 12 p.m.
Tuesday • 2-6 p.m.
Wednesday • 8 a.m.- 12 p.m.
Thursday • 12-4 p.m.
Friday • 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.

NORTHWEST DISTRICT HEALTH OFFICE
6940 N. Michigan Rd. • 317-221-7500

Tuesday • 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. and 1-4 p.m.
Thursday • 2-6 p.m.

SOUTH DISTRICT HEALTH OFFICE
7551 S. Shelby St. • 317-221-5700

Monday • 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Tuesday • 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. and 2-6 p.m.
Wednesday • 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Thursday • 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Friday • 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.

EAGLEDALE CLINIC

2802 Lafayette Rd, Suite 13 • 317-221-7500
Monday • 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Wednesday • 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Friday • 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.



HHC SPONSORS FOURTH HABITAT FOR HUMANITY PANEL BUILD

Health & Hospital Corporation (HHC) staff helped construct the walls of a three-bedroom home during their Habitat for Humanity Panel Build Event on Aug. 22, 2024 in the HHC Hasbrook Building parking lot at 3838 N. Rural Street.



This was the fourth Habitat panel build hosted by HHC. Volunteers from the corporation – including Marion County Public Health Department and Eskenazi Health – laid out and nailed together materials provided by Greater Indy Habitat for Humanity into wall panels, which were then transported to the home site for assembly and completion.

“Housing security has a significant impact on health; as those with stable housing have better access to preventative care and mental health resources,” said Paul Babcock, President and

CEO of the Health and Hospital Corporation of Marion County. “Making our community a healthier place to live, learn, work, and play is the foundation of our mission here at HHC.”

According to Greater Indy Habitat for Humanity, one in nine Indiana households spend half or more of their income on housing.

Since 1987, Greater Indy Habitat for Humanity has helped 840 families in Marion, Hendricks, Hancock and Hamilton counties relocate from substandard and poverty housing into decent and affordable homes. Habitat homeowners complete an educational program, help build their homes alongside volunteers, and pay an affordable mortgage.

“Families aspiring to purchase their first affordable home invite us into their lives to support their dream for the stability, strength, and independence of homeownership,” said Jim Morris, President & CEO of Greater Indy Habitat for Humanity. “We are grateful for the generous support of Health & Hospital Corporation of Marion County in making those dreams a reality.”

OVERDOSE ACTION TEAM SPONSORED DOOR-TO-DOOR OUTREACH EVENT IN NEAR NORTHEAST SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD

Teams of MCPHD workers and volunteers from public health partners joined forces to make a difference in the Westminster Neighborhood on Indianapolis’ near-northeast side on Nov. 22, 2024.

MCPHD’s Overdose Data to Action team, in collaboration with Damien Center and Step Up, planned and operated a door-to-door outreach event in the neighborhood to provide information on overdose prevention and response, to inform residents about local resources for substance use disorder treatment and harm reduction, and to distribute naloxone, a medicine that rapidly reverses opioid overdoses.

Madison Weintraut, Assistant Administrator of MCPHD’s Infectious Disease and Safe Syringe Access and Support Departments, said that her team was interested in having an outreach and cleanup event in the Westminster Neighborhood because of a concentrated number of overdoses that occurred in the second quarter of 2024 in that area.

Carrie O’Brien, the Harm Reduction Program Manager for the Damien Center, said the event was about being a good neighbor to the residents in that area.



MCPHD Environmental Health Safety & Management Program workers assisted with neighborhood cleanup as part of the effort.



MCPHD staff and volunteers from our public health partners provided information and overdose preventions kits.

“This part of the city has some of the highest overdose rates in the state, and we want to change that,” said O’Brien. “These organizations have so many amazing resources available.”

In addition to the outreach efforts, 17 members of the Environmental Health Safety & Management Team took part in a community clean-up in the neighborhood with assistance from

volunteers from Adult and Child Health, Indiana University’s Fairbanks School of Public Health, and Americorps.

During the event, the Environmental Health Safety and Management team used four tool trucks and four heavy-equipment boom trucks to help with cleanup efforts. By the end of the day, 2,260 pounds of debris were collected and discarded.



3838 North Rural Street
Indianapolis, IN 46205

DIRECTORY OF SERVICES • GENERAL INFORMATION - 317-221-2000

ACTION Health Center Pediatric, Adolescent, Young Adult Services 317-221-3400 B.A.B.E. 317-221-3050 Bed Bug Education & Prevention 317-221-2155 Bell Flower Clinic • Sexually Transmitted Disease Testing & Prevention 317-221-8300 Birth and Death Certificates 317-221-2400 Body Art Facility Regulation 317-221-2270 Cardiovascular Health 317-221-2322 Child Car-Seat Helpline 317-221-2045 Chronic Disease Programs 317-221-2094 Dental Health 317-221-2329	Diabetes Education 317-221-2104 Environmental Health, Safety & Management 317-221-7596 Epidemiology 317-221-3355 Food and Consumer Safety 317-221-2222 Foreign-Born/Refugee Health 317-221-2133 Hazardous Materials 317-221-2266 Health Education, Promotion & Training 317-221-2092 Healthy Families 317-221-2349 Healthy Homes, Environmental Consumer Management & Senior Care 317-221-2155 HIV/AIDS Prevention Information 317-221-3000	Housing & Neighborhood Health 317-221-2150 Immunizations 317-221-2122 Indoor Air Quality 317-221-2266 Infectious Disease Control 317-221-2117 Injury Prevention 317-221-3145 Laboratory 317-221-4670 Maternal & Child Health 317-221-2312 Mortgage Loan Inspections 317-221-2266 Mosquito/Rodent Control 317-221-7440 Northeast District Health Office 317-221-7300 Northwest District Health Office 317-221-7500	Nutrition Services 317-221-7403 Older Adult Health 317-221-2092 School Health Services 317-221-2367 Wells & Drinking Water Quality/ Sewage & Septic System Regulation 317-221-2147 Social Work 317-221-2364 South District Health Office 317-221-5701 Substance Use Outreach Services 317-221-4618 Swimming Pool Regulation 317-221-2270 Tobacco Control 317-221-3007 Tuberculosis Control 317-221-2110 WIC 317-221-7401
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