

# 2022 Annual Report



KNOX COUNTY  
TENNESSEE

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

# MESSAGE TO KNOX COUNTY

The end of the year is a great time to look forward to new possibilities and opportunities, and also to reflect on what led us to this point.

The 2021/2022 fiscal year saw our team lean heavily back into addressing a variety of our community's chief health issues while maintaining our commitment to mitigating COVID-19.



We are so proud of the successes we found this year. From launching the county's first annual recognition of Black Maternal Health Week to training more than 1,500 food service workers through our online food safety program, our successes have been as wide-reaching as the skills of our team members.

Employees of the Knox County Health Department; we are educators, conveners, partners, researchers, promoters, clinicians, inspectors, planners, nutritionists, and much more.

We fill these roles because we know that health looks different for everyone. Though we know all Knox Countians aspire to live a healthy life, the barriers to achieving one are different depending on who you are and what is available to you.

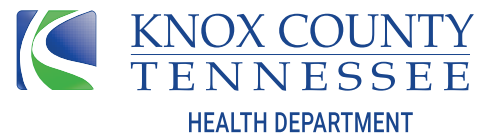
As Knox County's public health department, we are uniquely positioned to evaluate and address the many factors that influence population health. A great deal of our work is aimed at prevention because we know how important it is to reach people before they ever step foot in a doctor's office.

In this report you'll find information about who we are as well as notable accomplishments from the past fiscal year. We will continue working toward improving the health of all people in Knox County and welcome any suggestions or questions you may have.

Please feel free to contact us at 865-215-5000 or email [health@knoxcounty.org](mailto:health@knoxcounty.org).

Sincerely,

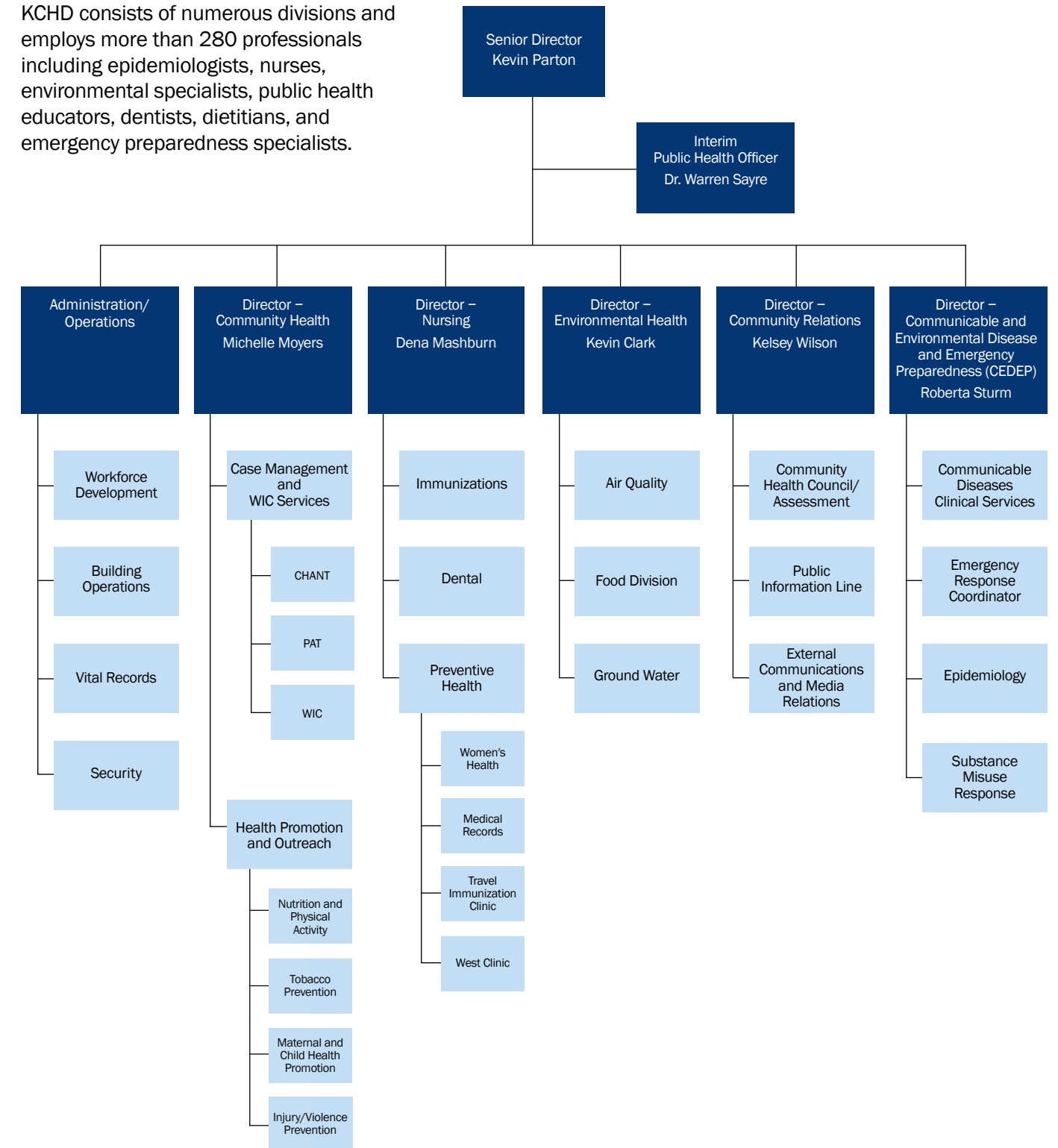
**Kevin Parton**  
Senior Director



# ORGANIZATION

The Knox County Health Department is a division of Knox County Government under the supervision of Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs.

KCHD consists of numerous divisions and employs more than 280 professionals including epidemiologists, nurses, environmental specialists, public health educators, dentists, dietitians, and emergency preparedness specialists.



# WHO WE ARE

## VISION

Every person a healthy person.

## MISSION

To encourage, promote, and support the development of an active, healthy community through innovative public health practices.

## CORE VALUES

- Responsiveness and commitment to our community
- Excellence through evidence-based and innovative practices
- Accountability and integrity in our operation
- Leading by example

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Continually assure that Knox County Health Department's infrastructure empowers us to be at the forefront of public health
- Build communitywide understanding and value for public health
- Respond effectively to our community's public health issues
- Facilitate a community approach to better health



## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Knox County Health Department

- Main Location  
140 Dameron Avenue
- West Clinic  
1028 Old Cedar Bluff Road

KCHD contact information:

- Main: 865-215-5000
- Email: [health@knoxcounty.org](mailto:health@knoxcounty.org)
- Online: [www.knoxcounty.org/health](http://www.knoxcounty.org/health)
- Facebook: @KnoxCountyHealthDepartment
- Twitter: @KnoxCoHealthTN
- Instagram: @KnoxCountyHealthDepartment

# FINANCE

According to the latest (2021) American Community Survey, the Knox County Health Department serves an estimated population of 486,677. In the 2022 fiscal year, KCHD had an operating budget of approximately \$53.5 million. No one is denied service due to an inability to pay.

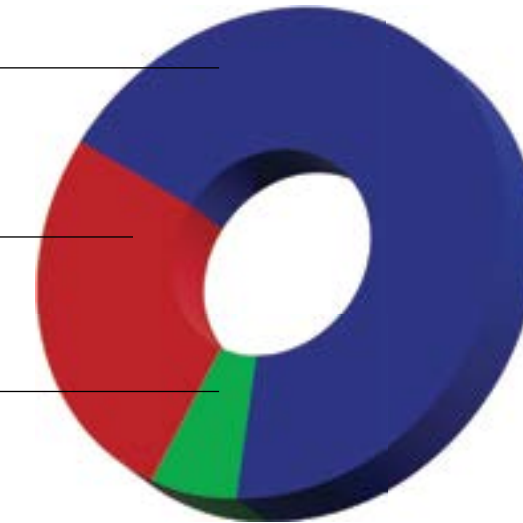
## FISCAL YEAR 2022 KCHD FUNDING SOURCES

**State and Federal Grants**  
\$36.1 million, 67%

**Knox County General Fund**  
\$14.0 million, 26%

**Fees for Services**  
\$3.4 million, 6%

Environmental Health fees (permits and groundwater services); birth and death certificate fees; clinical services fees\*



For more detailed budget information, please visit: [knoxcounty.org/finance/budget](http://knoxcounty.org/finance/budget)

Percentages reflect figures that have been rounded.

\*Some clinical services require a fee which may be based on income, diagnosis and/or eligibility. Some fees are billed to the client's insurance provider if applicable and appropriate.

## FISCAL YEAR 2022 KCHD OPERATING EXPENSES

**TOTAL EXPENSES: \$53.5 million**

**Clinical Care and Prevention**  
\$19.8 million, 37%

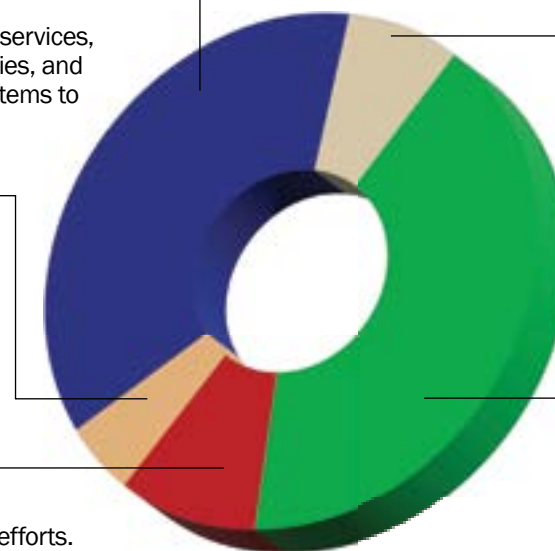
Clinical and preventive care staff and services, interpretation services, medical supplies, and social services. Includes staff and systems to monitor and investigate disease.

**Environmental Health**  
\$2.6 million, 5%

Food safety and other related inspections and permitting staff, groundwater services, and vector control program. Includes Air Quality Management.

**Community Health**  
\$5.2 million, 10%

Health education/outreach staff and efforts. Includes costs associated with the prevention of tobacco use, obesity, violence, neonatal abstinence, chronic disease, infant mortality, teen pregnancy, and other relevant issues.



**Support Services and Administration**  
\$4.2 million, 8%

Administrative, accounting, communications, workforce development, vital records, security staff, information technology, building operations. Also includes office equipment, building maintenance, and general supplies.

**Emergency Preparedness**  
\$21.7 million, 41%

Emergency Preparedness staff and education outreach efforts and epidemiology. Includes contracts with 911 Center and Volunteer Emergency Rescue Squad.

# WHAT WE DO



## EDUCATE AND ENGAGE

Providing accurate, reliable health information to the public is crucial to improving population health. Education and outreach accompany nearly every area of our work, but we don't stop with education – we also engage the community. We build strategic partnerships with schools, farmers markets, health care providers, nonprofits, law enforcement agencies, and many others. We convene coalitions and serve on community groups, including All4Knox, East Tennessee HCV Task Force, Knox/East TN Healthcare Coalition, Fetal Infant Mortality Community Action Team, and many others.

## THIS YEAR WE:

- Assisted **800** families through the Community Health Access and Navigation in Tennessee (CHANT) program, providing developmental screenings, safe sleep education, housing and shelter options, and primary medical care connections.
- Offered **510** people face-to-face education on substance misuse through our Substance Misuse Response Division.
- Counseled more than **2,000** families to assist them through a historic formula recall and subsequent nationwide formula shortage.
- Added **4** locations that offer classes to help seniors Stay Active and Independent for Life (S.A.I.L.), one of which serves seniors with developmental and physical disabilities.
- Conducted **40** presentations on the topics of healthy relationships, ACEs, and child sexual abuse prevention, reaching more than **800** students, professionals, and community members.
- Served **109** families through our Parents as Teachers program, an evidence-based parent education and family engagement program benefitting families and young children.

“**Becoming a part of the Parents as Teachers program is one of the best decisions I have made since having my son! I love how you get to build a one-on-one relationship with a parent educator that focuses on your child's development and milestones.**”

– Parent



## ASSESS AND RESPOND

We study Knox County's overall health. Epidemiologists collect and analyze health data so a comprehensive picture of the community can be shared. In addition to studying the community's overall health, the Health Department prepares for and responds to public health threats. Our highly skilled epidemiology and emergency response teams continue to be a crucial part of preventing and responding to outbreaks and providing emergency preparedness education/guidance to families, businesses, churches, partner agencies, schools, and others.

## THIS YEAR WE:

- Responded to nearly **90,000** reports of infectious disease, including: COVID-19, tuberculosis, STDs, and HIV.
- Managed and/or investigated **14** outbreaks.
- Helped to train **30** medical professionals in the “Stop the Bleed” program.
- Participated in **5** community, state, and federal emergency preparedness exercises.
- Educated **200** nursing students on emergency preparedness and public health response.

“**Our relationship with the Knoxville/East Tennessee Healthcare Coalition (co-facilitated by KCHD) is a long-standing one that continues to provide a benefit within our organization and community. Our organization experienced a challenging event over a holiday weekend, and without hesitation, the Coalition was quick to organize and offer assistance, guidance and coordination efforts. While we managed the internal event, the support externally was invaluable and contributed to our overall management of the event.**”

– **Chris Hall**  
Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center



## PROVIDE AND CONNECT TO CARE

Providing and connecting the community to medical care is a key public health service. We serve thousands each year, reducing the human and economic costs of illness and, ultimately, the burden of disease in the community. Standard services include a broad range of preventive care and treatment including adult and child immunizations, women's wellness and gynecological care, screening and treatment for sexually transmitted infections, and dental care.

### THIS YEAR WE:

- Had more than **128,000** patient visits.
- Administered more than **65,000** vaccines across our clinics and in the community.
- Provided dental health care to more than **6,000** children in our school-based program, applying more than **8,600** sealants.
- Conducted more than **31,000** tests for communicable diseases, linking many to crucial medical care.
- Worked with partners to provide rapid testing for HIV and/or hepatitis C to more than **100** people in the community.

“**Early in the pandemic, CAC Office on Aging realized that homebound adults in Knox County were at serious risk of developing COVID-19 since they had a difficult time getting to a vaccination site. KCHD nurses immediately went to vaccinate homebound individuals against both the flu and COVID. This has been an excellent partnership that has saved lives and protected our most vulnerable citizens.**”

– **Barbara Kelly**  
Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee



## PROTECT HEALTH

Part of our role as a public health agency is to enforce public health laws, which are designed to prevent and reduce potential health threats. These laws help ensure important conditions are regulated so that every resident can be healthy. The Environmental Health division enforces state public health regulations for public swimming pools, restaurants, hotels, grocery stores, and other facilities. This team also includes the Groundwater Protection Division, which works to protect the groundwater supply and environment from pollutants by enforcing state laws governing onsite wastewater systems (septic systems). And finally, this division also works to maintain the EPA's National Ambient Air Quality Standards in Knox County.

### THIS YEAR WE:

- Conducted more than **7,500** regulatory inspections at food service establishments, schools, day care facilities, hotels, body art studios, and swimming pools.
- Performed nearly **400** final inspections for septic system installations.
- Trained more than **1,500** food service workers through our online food safety program and an additional **70** Spanish-speaking participants during an in-person class.
- Conducted air quality regulatory inspections at more than **450** businesses.

“**[Our environmental specialist] has been such an instrumental part of helping me get educated and helping know our goals and guidance. Without her, I know we couldn't have been where we are, especially as such a unique and unusual setup and venue for Knoxville.**”

– **Local business operator**

# ANNUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Knox County Health Department has the only Environmental Health Program to offer a virtual bloodborne pathogen course. This year, 46 individuals completed the course, which is a prerequisite for apprenticing to becoming a licensed body art artist.
- Through our homebound vaccination program, KCHD's Community Vaccination Team provided more than 250 COVID-19 vaccines to those who are unable to leave their home or have a very hard time doing so.
- KCHD's Air Quality Management Program was awarded a \$66,000 grant from the Environmental Protection Agency to purchase new lead air monitors, air monitor shelters, and data loggers at ambient air monitoring sites.
- Through the Knox Birth Equity Alliance, KCHD celebrated the inaugural Black Maternal Health Week in Knox County. The weeklong event raised awareness and continued KCHD's work to build a foundation to address the health disparities that Black women and children face.
- The Women's Health Clinic began providing patients colposcopies, a critical procedure for cervical cancer prevention and detection.
- Six community implementation teams met monthly under All4Knox to work on diverse projects from measuring treatment capacity to applying for funding to improve judicial diversion options for justice-involved individuals with substance use disorders.
- Through the Baby and Me Tobacco-Free Program, KCHD helped 68 women and support partners stop using tobacco. After enrolling in the program, 28 women reported being tobacco-free prior to delivery, improving their health and the health of their babies.
- N.E.A.T. Harvest, a new partnership with Second Harvest Food Bank of East Tennessee, coordinated the distribution of more than 1,150 free monthly produce boxes and provided hands-on nutrition education to elementary school students and their families.
- KCHD was chosen to host an Epidemiology Fellow as part of a competitive program through the Council for State and Territorial Epidemiologists. This opportunity allows for increased support for projects pertaining to substance misuse and overdoses in Knox County.
- KCHD enrolled 28 Knox County adults in a 12-month, evidence-based Diabetes Prevention Program. This program was offered for free to Knox County adults and has been shown to cut a person's risk of developing diabetes nearly in half.
- KCHD provided grants to 14 worksites, reaching more than 6,000 employees, with resources to promote wellness through the East Tennessee Wellness Roundtable, including worksite gardens, on-site blood pressure stations, and lactation rooms, among other enhancements.
- The CHANT program partnered with Beardsley Community Farm to provide weekly fresh produce packs for CHANT families experiencing food insecurity throughout the summer.
- Through partnerships with local shelters and churches, the Community Vaccination Team provided vaccines to more than 2,600 members of the community who have lower access to care.
- The CHANT program was awarded the Community Champions Award for Innovations in Substance Misuse Prevention by Metro Drug Coalition.
- For the 2021 Farmer's Market season, 25,000 checks were provided to WIC clients (totaling \$30/client) for purchasing locally-grown produce from 16 local farmers.
- Facilitated by KCHD staff, the Knox County Overdose Fatality Review Team reviewed 60 cases and gained insight into the circumstances of fatal overdoses.
- KCHD implemented nutrition education programming with 36 afterschool programs, reaching more than 1,500 elementary school students each semester through our Nutrition Education and Activity Training program.



