

WARREN COUNTY HEALTH SERVICES

2023

ANNUAL REPORT

2024



*REMEMBERING
Patricia Auer*

May 4, 1953 – September 20, 2023

*Do all the Good you can,
by all the means you can,
in all the ways you can,
in all the times you can,
to all the people you can,
as long as ever you can.*

-John Wesley

*Thank you Pat for your exemplary leadership and
contribution to Public Health and the community.*

Warren County Health Services 1986-2018

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Warren County Health Services is
Pleased to present the Annual Report for the Year 2023

VISION:

Healthy People in Healthy Communities

MISSION:

Promote Physical and Mental Health and Prevent Disease, Injury, and Disability
Maximize the Health Potential of all Residents in Warren County

Working together and committed to excellence, we protect, promote, and provide for the health of our citizens through prevention, science, services, collaboration, and the assurance of quality health care delivery.

GOALS:

- Prevent epidemics and the spread of disease
- Protect against environmental hazards
- Prevent injuries
- Promote and encourage healthy behaviors
- Respond to disasters and assist communities in recovery
- Assure the quality provision and accessibility of Health Services in the home and in the community

WARREN COUNTY HEALTH SERVICES TEAM

Warren County communities remain fortunate to have the expertise of our staff. The quality of our Health Care Services is a direct reflection of continual commitment, dedication, care, and knowledge coupled with the excellent team efforts of the following individuals:

Jeannette Arends	Diane DeCesare	Robin McLaughlin
Sarah Arnold	Marie DeLorenzo	Laura Monroe
Dexter Baker	Stacie DiMezza	Brett Moulton
Jackie Barney	Tawn Driscoll	Mary Murphy
Alexandra Belden	Josh Duck	Patty Myhrberg
Patricia Belden	Dan Durkee	Jolie Navatka
Cheryl Bellizzi-Sharron	Nedra Frasier	Emma Nelson
Katie Boyle	Diana Gillis	Bethany Paquette
Craig Briggs	Dorothy Grover	Nancy Parsons
Jodi Brynes	Dana Hall	Kristen Phinney
Diane Caldwell	Crystal Harrington	Jennifer Rahl
Kathleen Callaghan	Sara Hettel	Cassandra Rausch
Gwen Cameron	Ginelle Jones	Emily Russom
Beth Clark	Olivia Jones	Jignasha Shah
Cathy Cloutier	Scott Jones	Isabella Shrestha
Jamie Clute	Chawna Joseph	Kassandra Smith
Olivia Cohen	Emily Lalone	Donald Stack
Meghan Collums	Deanna Lebel	Susan Sylvia
Florence Converse	Julie Madison	Debbie Toolan
Donna Cooke	Janel Martinez	Valerie Whisenant
Tara Cote	Erik Mastrianni	Molly Wilkie
Drew Crawford	Karen Mattes	Diedre Winslow

I am honored to be their colleague

HEALTH SERVICES COMMITTEE 2023

Warren County Health Services is governed by the Board of Supervisors who are the legislative body for the county. These individuals constitute the Board of Health according to Chapter 55 of the New York State Public Health Law. The board is responsible for the management, operation, and evaluation of the Health Services Agency.

The Board of Supervisors is charged to perform the following overall functions:

- To appoint a Director of Public Health and Early Intervention Official and a Director of Home Care to provide day to day management of programs
- To provide for the proper control of all assets and funds and to adopt the agency's budget and annual audits
- To enter into contracts with individuals and/or facilities to allow for services or reimbursement mechanisms as needed
- To ensure compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local statutes, rules, and regulations

A subcommittee of the full Warren County Board of Supervisors constitutes the Health Services Committee and advises the full Board of Supervisors regarding Health Services concerns. We appreciate the support of the following county supervisors:

Warren County Board of Supervisors
Health Services Committee Members

Edna Frasier, Chairwoman, Hague

Ronald Conover, Bolton
Peter McDevitt, Glens Falls
Daniel Bruno, Glens Falls
Debra Runyon, Thurman
Michael Geraci, Horicon
Mark Smith, Johnsbury

WARREN COUNTY HEALTH SERVICES 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

PURPOSE OF REPORT: This comprehensive Health Services Annual Report is intended to provide an opportunity for the Warren County Board of Supervisors to annually review and evaluate the various Health Services Programs as measured by statistical documentation of the services provided. The report further serves to demonstrate a public record of accountability for the various program areas.

It may also serve as a resource document to:

- provide public record of individual program statistical outcomes and specific program explanations
- display trend information
- motivate change
- provide measures for comparisons

LIMITATIONS OF THE REPORT: While the data contained in this document can serve as a useful resource for discussion regarding specific program areas, those who review this report should be aware of its limitations. There are, for example, many intended standards for care provision that are not measured by statistical information. Among such standards are staff attitudes, which have resulted in the development of these goals.

- Each staff person will continually demonstrate the knowledge, understanding, and appreciation for the program team in which they participate, and will continually develop the skills to express their personal talents.
- Each staff person will respect and practice basic civil values and utilize the skills, knowledge, understanding, and attitudes necessary to provide health and educational services to the community.
- Each staff person will maintain the ability to understand and respect people of different race, sex, ability, cultural heritage, national origin, religion; and political, economic and social background; and their values, beliefs, and attitudes.
- Each staff person will continually develop their general career skills, attitudes, and work habits to promote ongoing self-assessment and job satisfaction.

In each of these goals, staff attitudes are critical and directly translate into the quality of services provided to the residents of Warren County.

We are fortunate to have dedicated staff and contractors that contribute to success of all Health Services programs.

This report covers efforts and services for the past year.

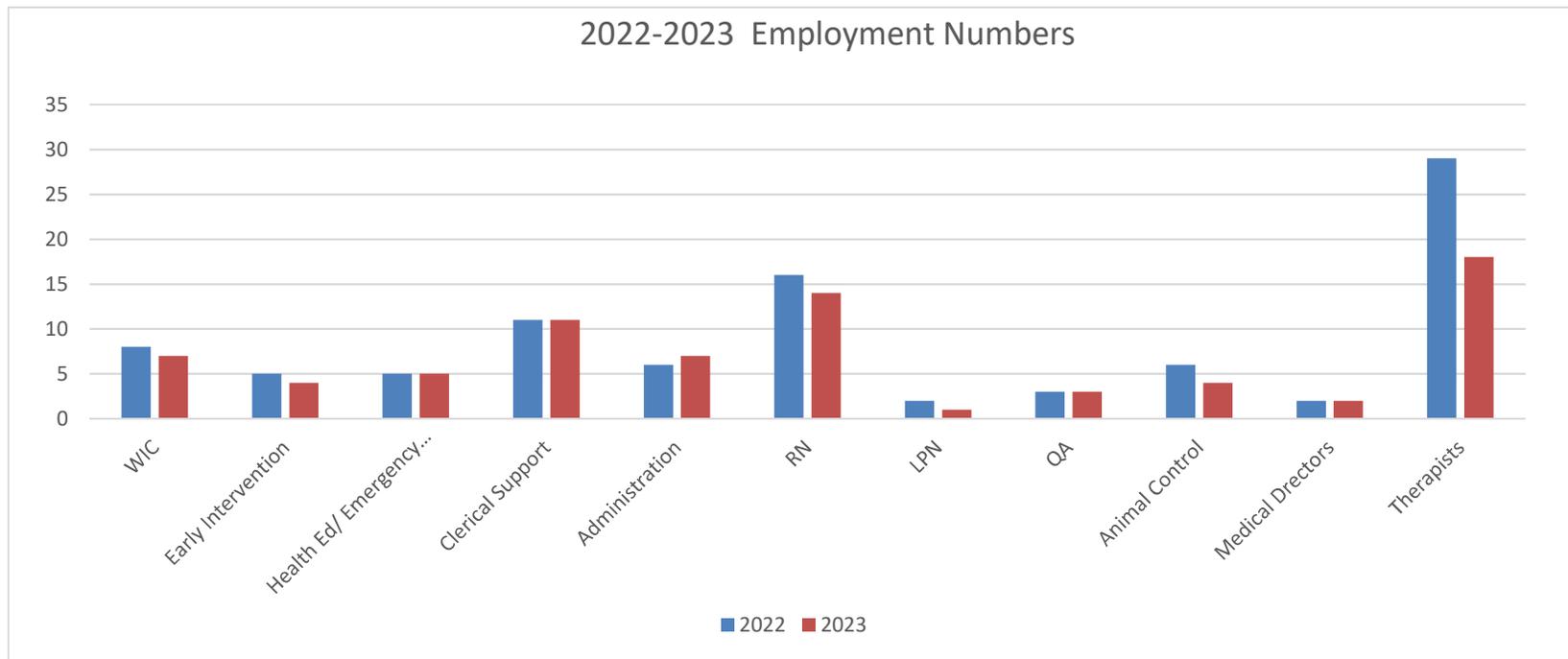
Our staff and contractors spent incredible effort promoting and protecting the health and safety of the community as they continue to lead the Covid Pandemic Response effort. Warren County demonstrated a solid and collaborative response. Staff worked until the job was done, demonstrating care, concern, compassion, and dedication. Health Services is fortunate to have such a wonderful team.

PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Professional Advisory Committee is a collaborative committee that meets quarterly to review pertinent concerns regarding current Health Services issues. Membership is composed of a cross section of professional disciplines that routinely interface with Health Services initiatives. Specific program updates are provided at these meetings and consensual advice from members is obtained when needed in this forum.

Hillary Alycon - Glens Falls Hospital - Mgr. of Infection Prevention and Control
Sarah Arnold - Warren County Health Services -Communicable Disease Program
Patricia Auer – Retired Director of Public Health and Patient Services, Consumer
Paul Bachman MD – Certified Home Health Agency Medical Director
Stephen Bassin – Doctor of Physical Therapy
Patricia Belden – Asst. Director of Public Health
William Borgos MD – Public Health Medical Director
Sara Deukmejian – ARHN Coordinator, Adirondack Health Institute
Tawn Driscoll – Warren County Health Services, Fiscal Manager
Joseph Dufour – FNP, Irongate Family Practice
Daniel Durkee – Warren County, Public Health Program Manager
Christian Hanchett – Warren County – Commissioner of Social Services
Donna Healy – SUNY Adirondack – Prof. of Nursing/Health Sciences Division Chair
Susan Hughes – Dir. Community Maternity Services
Ginelle Jones – Director – Warren County Health Services
Richard Leach MD – Medical Consultant for Infectious Diseases
Richard Mason, Community Member
Erik Mastrianni – Warren County – Children With Special Needs Program Manager
Trish McKinney – Executive Director Greater ADK Home Health Aides
Deanna Park – Director – Office of Aging
Nancy Parsons – Warren County Health Services – Immunization Program
Valerie Whisenant – Asst. Director – Warren County Health Services
Rob York – Dir. of Community Services – Warren & Washington Counties

FACTS, FIGURES, AND TRENDS
FOR HOME CARE & PUBLIC HEALTH



	Full Time	Part Time	Per Diem	
WIC	5	2		
EI	1	2	1	
Health Ed/ Em. Prep	4	1		
Support	10		1	
Admin	7			
RN	7	1	6	
LPN	0		1	
QA			3	
Animal Control			4	
Total Employed	34	6	16	56
Medical Director			2	
Therapists			18	
Total Contract			20	

Decrease in contract therapist is due to therapist deciding to become independent providers for CPSE, EI or both. They still provide services in our county.

BUSINESS ASSOCIATES CONTRACTED IN 2023 FOR THERAPY SERVICES

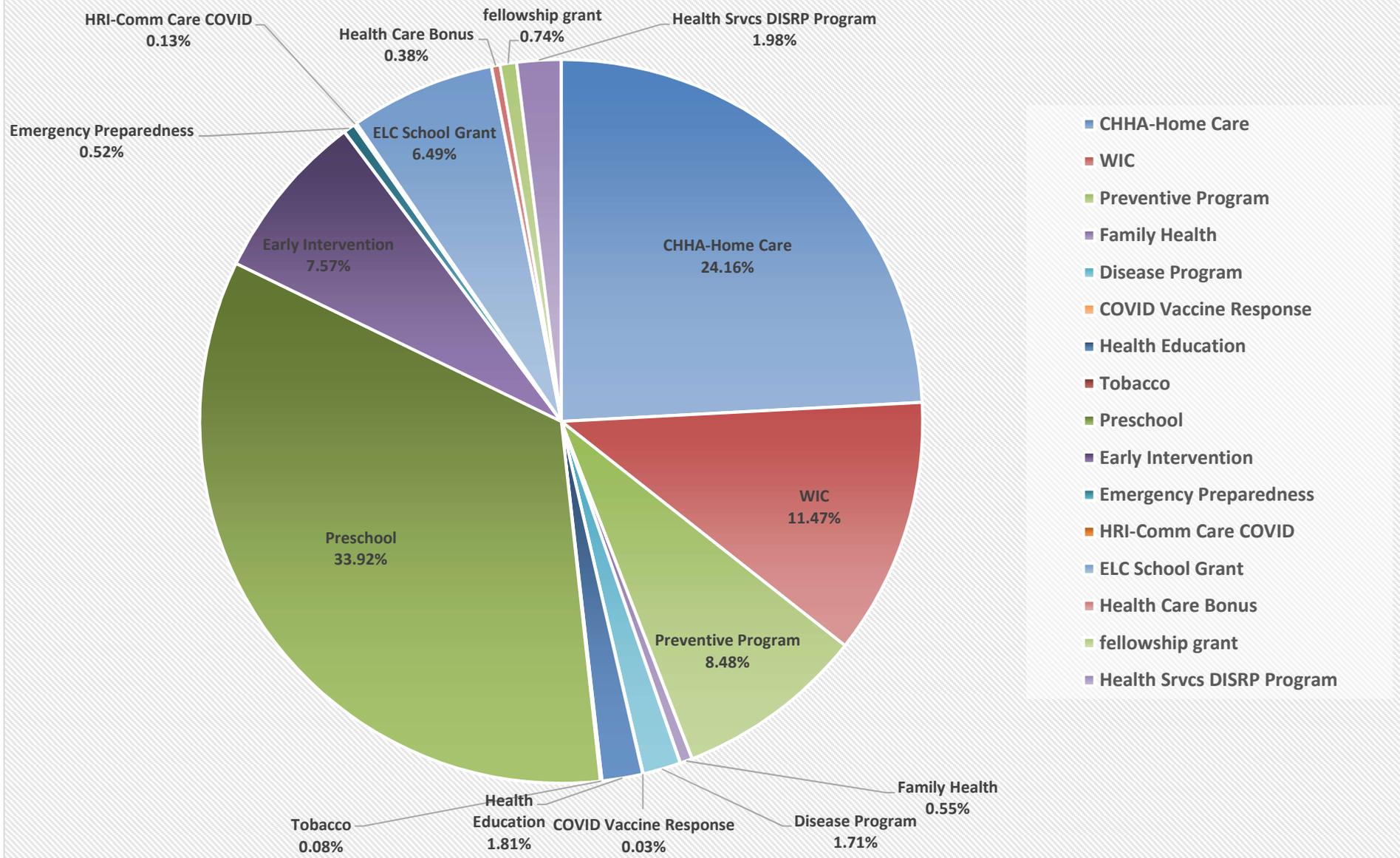
Juliet Aldrich ST
Stephen Bassin PT
Diedre Convery-Bernard ST
Stacie DiMezza ST
Colleen Downing PT
Kathleen Frasier PT
Robert Gautreau PT
Deborah Gecewicz ST
Dorothy Grover PT
Cheryl Hoffis ST

Ellen Kirker PT
Kimberly Lawson OT
Mieka LeClaire ST
Maryanne Mackenzie PT
Lindsey Maresca OT
Catherine Meehan PT
Jean Szachacz ST
Jennifer Wood OT

Health Services staff consider these people to be dedicated professionals – thanks for a job well done!

*** Many of the pediatric therapist that were previously contracted with Warren County are still providing services in our county but as independent providers.*

Source: Budget Performance Report as of 12/31/2023
 Percentage of Exenditures by Program



Total Expenditures: \$9,547,504.14
 Mandated Programs account for 43% of total expenditures (Disease Program, Preschool Program and Early Intervention Program)

WARREN COUNTY HEALTH SERVICES BUDGET ANALYSIS

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES FOR 2023

EXPENSES	2023 BUDGETED	2023 YTD ACTUAL	2022 Prior Year Totals
Salaries - Regular	\$2,996,413.26	\$2,240,621.49	\$2,130,579.05
Salaries - Overtime	\$152,700.00	\$59,872.81	\$62,381.37
Salaries - Part Time	\$579,495.00	\$247,642.15	\$265,766.35
100's PERSONAL SERVICES	\$3,728,608.26	\$2,548,136.45	\$2,458,726.77
200's EQUIPMENT	\$422,267.00	\$257,218.34	\$153,138.44
400's CONTRACTUAL	\$7,584,102.66	\$5,675,062.46	\$5,145,939.42
800's EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	\$1,256,649.55	\$1,067,166.90	\$1,075,062.81
TOTALS	\$12,991,627.47	\$9,547,584.15	\$8,832,867.44

REVENUES	2023 BUDGETED	2023 YTD ACTUAL	2022 Prior Year Totals
	\$10,858,445.75	\$6,602,336.11	\$6,238,498.31
	(\$2,133,181.72)	(\$2,945,248.04)	(\$2,594,369.13)

In 2023, Total Personal Services were down \$1,180,471.81 or 31.66% from Budget and \$89,409.68 or 3.6% above 2022 Salaries. Employee Benefits were also down from budget \$189,482.65 or 15.07% and \$7,895.91 or .01% from 2022 expenses. These savings have been primarily due to loss of staff needed for Contact Tracing and Per diem staff for clinics and also the loss of nurses in the Homecare Division. The loss of these positions decreased our employee benefits. Also, to note our Retiree Health Insurance decreased \$933.09 or 6.42% Year to date for 2023.

Contractual expenses were below budget by \$1,909,040.20 while above by 2022 by only \$529,123.04. Due the Pandemic, Health Services did receive Grant Funding for certain COVID related expenses. These Grants did assist in offsetting added expenses related to COVID activities such as Salaries and Fringe for added staff needed for Clinics and Contact Tracing in past years, however in 2023 many of these expenses were no longer being utilized. However, we were able to get approval for expenses related to the Fellowship Grant and were able to bill the State \$ 70,474.24. It should be noted, we also budgeted for the Infrastructure Grant of which we were notified in March 2023 that we were awarded these funds effective 12/2022. Within the 2023, \$110,565 was budgeted for this grant hoping to make purchases but we were still waiting for final approval and we were not able to utilize the funds. In 2024, we are able to roll forward this annual amount therefore able to budget in 2024, two years or \$221,130 and plan to add the \$110,565 each year until the grant ends November 30, 2027.

In 2023, most services /schools were back to normal. However, the Preschool and Early Intervention programs still have Provider shortages. Some children have been waiting for services. We have worked also with families and them providing transportation to their children for reimbursement as much as possible rather than utilizing the transportation vendor. The new transportation contract has become very expensive to utilize their services.

While Revenues did come under budget for 2023, the overall impact to the county was \$812,066.32 above budgeted and \$350,878.91 above the 2022 impact. The Home Care Division made up 30.62% of this impact, while the Preschool and Ei Programs (which are both mandated) made up a total 62.67% in this loss. The reduction of revenues from the Homecare Division was primarily due to the loss of Nursing staff and also due to competition from other homecare agencies, along with difficulties in dealing with Insurance company reimbursements. With less nursing staff and contract therapists, we were unable to take as many referrals, therefore less revenues. We have resumed most of our Clinics; however, we have limited our Rabies clinics to six a year from the Spring to Fall only. We no longer offer the Travel Clinics. Immunization clinics have resumed but are not as large as they once were now that local Pharmacies can offer the same services. It should also be noted, we continue to receive Medicaid revenues for our Preschool programs, which helps offset our reimbursement from the State at the 59.50%.

WARREN COUNTY POPULATION

Source: NYSDOH Statistical Data

BIRTHS AND DEATHS IN WARREN COUNTY

**STATISTICAL INFORMATION
COMPARISON TRENDS**

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Births	521	480	512	525	490
Deaths	631	689	744	622	633



Public Health

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Warren County Health Services
Division of Public Health

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

The definition of Public Health is becoming increasingly broader and encompasses many disciplines. The department receives many calls where there are no easy answers or quick fixes for the questions asked or the requests made.

Our staff always endeavors to exemplify the essence of Health Services philosophies and missions and each service we provide and question we answer in some way demonstrates the importance of multidisciplinary efforts needed to achieve long lasting positive outcomes for the people we serve.

10 ESSENTIAL PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES:

1. Assess and monitor population health status, factors that influence health, and community needs and assets
2. Investigate, diagnose, and address health problems and hazards affecting the population
3. Communicate effectively how to inform and educate people about health, factors that influence it, and how to improve it
4. Strengthen, support, and mobilize communities and partnerships to improve health
5. Create, champion, and implement policies, plans, and laws that impact health
6. Utilize legal and regulatory actions designed to improve and protect the public's health
7. Assure an effective system that enables equitable access to the individual services and care needed to be healthy
8. Build and support a diverse and skilled public health workforce
9. Improve and innovate public health functions through ongoing evaluation, research, and continuous quality improvement
10. Build and maintain a strong organizational infrastructure for public health

Public Health

PROGRAMS ON HOLD

During the COVID -19 pandemic, we had to place the following programs on hold:

- **Prenatal**
- **Maternal Child Health**
- **Lactation**
- **Synagis**

After the pandemic, the programs continued to be on hold due to a nursing shortage in Public Health. Our last Public Health Nurse resigned in September of 2022. We are excited to have hired two Public Health nurses in the Fall of 2023. We are currently assessing our community's needs and rebuilding our programs to meet those needs.

Women Infant and Children Program (WIC) 2023

The Warren County WIC Program is sponsored by Warren County Health Services (WCHS). Our program maintains five full time and two “less than part-time/20 hrs. week” staff comprised of Qualified Nutritionists, Front Desk Clerks, Coordinator and a Breast-Feeding Peer Counselor. The main office is located at the Warren County Municipal Center in Lake George NY.

October 1, 2022 marked the start of the new five-year contract between the WIC, USDA, NYS DOH and sponsoring agencies. The fiscal year of 2022-2023 was the first year of the new fiscal grant covering October 2023- September 30th 2028. There are nine WIC clinics held throughout Warren County each month, located in Lake George, Glens Falls, Queensbury, Lake Luzerne, Warrensburg, North Creek and Horicon. Appointment hours span from early morning to evening depending on the clinic and appointments are also available Monday-Friday from 8 am-4 pm at the Municipal center as needed. More appointment slots outside of normal working hours were added to better suit participant need. Five out of nine WIC sites are located at community sites that also house other participant services such as food pantries, clothing resources and pediatric health services in order to further aid participants with resource access. As of October 2022, WIC staff have returned to conducting clinics in all nine community sites and have adopted a hybrid appointment system consisting of in person appointments at the clinic locations and remote appointments over the phone. All required precautionary safety measures are being taken to prevent the spread of disease and maintain participant health and safety. The NYS DOH determines the yearly WIC budget based on a target monthly caseload of 1,125 participants or less. During the federal fiscal year 2023 WIC served an average of 2,846 participants, down from 2,911 participants in the fiscal year of 2022.

The online information management system (NYWIC) and an electronic benefit system (eWIC) are fully up, operational and in use during FFY23. NYWIC was rolled out in October 2018 and has since received an extremely positive response from both participants and WIC employees alike. The presence of WIC online has allowed Warren County to more efficiently serve those at satellite clinics as less equipment is required to run clinics, and less physical storage space is needed for participant records. Additionally, the eWIC cards participants now use to purchase groceries at the store have led to a faster shopping experience, less stigmatization at the store and a more convenient utilization of benefits. The WIC2GO application (App) for smartphones is also available for participants to download, an easy way for participants to check remaining benefits left on the card, determine which items at the store are WIC approved and view their next appointment times. All of this is geared towards making the WIC shopping experience easier for participants and increasing the retention and expansion of the WIC caseload. The system was constantly being updated and improved in FFY23 to ensure that the platform becomes more efficient and reliable with each coming year. The NYWIC system has made it easier to conduct appointments and issue benefits both remotely and in person during the transition out of the COVID 19 pandemic. This has helped keep immunocompromised participants safe and healthy by limiting exposures to COVID 19 and other diseases.

Site	Approximate Average Percentage of Participants per Site 2021	Approximate Average Percentage of Participants per Site 2022	Approximate Average Percentage of Participants per Site 2023
Village Green Apartments- Glens Falls	12%	10%	11%
Main Site- Warren County Municipal Center	36%	38%	37%
North Creek Fire House- North Creek	4%	5%	4%
Horicon Community- Brant Lake	4%	5%	4%
Hudson Headwaters Health Building- Warrensburg	8%	8%	7%
Lake Luzerne Community Center- Lake Luzerne	5%	4%	4%
VFW Post #6169- Queensbury	10%	9%	11%
United Methodist Church- Queensbury	6%	6%	5%
First Baptist Church- Glens Falls	14%	15%	16%

The focus area of Warren County WIC in FFY23 was increasing WIC community awareness and therefore increasing the number of referrals received from the community. Seven different community agencies that have a cross population with WIC. These agencies included TANF, the Counsel for Prevention, Catholic Charities, Fidelis, BHSN, Cornell Cooperative Extension, The Salvation Army and the Warren County Medicare/Social Services Department. Due to the remote nature of clinics in 2021 and 2022, contact with community agencies was limited, and it was helpful to reestablish contact and refamiliarize WIC staff and the staff from outside community agencies about the respective programs. Community Agencies were sent invitations to come give presentations and share referral information with WIC staff. There was a presentation once a month and during these meetings there were opportunities for both the community organization representative and WIC staff to ask questions and discuss services provided by each agency. The goal for 2023 was to reach out to and collaborate with 5 agencies, and 7 agencies came in, thus exceeding expectations. Overall

the reaction to these meeting was positive and WIC staff are now better able to communicate with participants the new, improved and upcoming services in Warren County.

This branch of WIC works with numerous agencies throughout the area in effort to provide resources and referrals to participants. In 2022 COVID necessitated that most outreach was remote. However, in 2023 Warren County WIC was able to participate in a variety of in-person outreach groups and committees near the end of the year due to the loosening of COVID restrictions. These include the NYS breastfeeding coalition, HENSAC meetings and the Cornell Cooperative Extension Parent Ambassador Group. Other community partners that WIC has fostered relationships and worked with during 2023 are as follows; Fidelis Cares, MVP, community farms, Cornell Cooperative Extension Parent Ambassador Coalition, NYS Breastfeeding Coalition, CDPHP, SNAP, RSVP, the GFH Smoking Cessation program, the Warren-Washington Head Start Program, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Planned Parenthood, Child Protective and Preventative Services, BOCES, the Glens Falls Farmers Market, and the numerous food pantries in the area.

By collaborating with these agencies and participating in these committees, WIC creates a “One Stop Shop” environment tailored towards participants who have limited time, transportation or knowledge of services in the community and allows them have access to a variety of services while at their WIC appointments. Obtaining up to date health assessment information at in person appointments is a core value of WIC, therefore a large focus on increasing the amount of participants who choose to come in person to clinics as opposed to choosing over the phone appointments has been a large focus in 2023. To help facilitate this focus, WIC is also now participating in and developing various health awareness campaigns both remotely and in person. Examples include sending home lunchboxes, toddler utensils and other incentives that are easy to mail, attending community health fairs, tabling at the farmers market, participation in national nutrition and breastfeeding months and maintaining a social media presence in order to disseminate health and nutrition education. Now that clinics are hybrid in person and over the phone, WIC provides toothbrushes for Children’s Dental Health Month, measuring cups for National Nutrition Month and many more incentive items throughout the year to participants who come in to clinics. These educational items are accompanied by corresponding educational displays and handouts developed by staff. Additionally, WIC also provides a student learning environment for nursing and dietetic students from SUNY ADK, Empire State College and Russell Sage College.

Per the County, the amended Budget allocated to WIC for 2023 was \$1,198,226.43. Expenses for 2023 totaled \$1,095,126.54. Food voucher values given to us from the State for WIC total was \$601,536.72. This was booked as both a Revenue and Expenses in the WIC General Ledger. Also, to note for 2023, we were able to bill \$48,888.18 in indirect costs to the State for the County’s administration of the program.

CHILD FIND

The Child Find Program is a statewide program to assure that children, ages 4 months to 3 years, are identified through periodic developmental screenings to receive the help and services needed for the best growth and development in their early years. Children can be referred based on their birth history/diagnosis, and/or by MDs, parents, or other social service and health professionals with concerns regarding the child's development. Funding for this program is received through an annual contractual grant with the New York State Department of Health. Children in the program are screened 2-3 times per year. Referrals to the EI Program are based on the screening results.

Since the major publicity efforts associated with the Child Find and Early Intervention Programs, parents and other service providers have a heightened awareness to developmental expectations for children and want them monitored, some children may not meet eligibility criteria for Early Intervention Services, thus Child Find continues to be a very cost-effective program and allows a great deal of opportunity for parent education. Physicians, pediatricians, and family practices in Warren County are very invested in the Child Find Program because of the ability the educator has to do screenings in the home. Much documentation between Child Find educator and physician is evident in this program. New York State Department of Health encourages physicians to do developmental screens on children during routine comprehensive well child care. Unfortunately, some of the most high-risk children do not see physicians regularly for preventive care, only episodic acute care for illness. Thus, the important service provided by the Child Find educator must be continued as a valued part of the Child Find Program.

YEAR	CHILDREN SERVED
2019	93
2020	50
2021	42
2022	48
2023	80

	2020	2021	2022	2023
New Admissions	21	31	40	48
Developmental Screenings Completed	37	45	66	80
Referrals to EI Completed	17	14	11	15
Discharged With Normal Development	9	10	8	10

** From mid-February 2020 through mid-May 2021 Child Find screening were completed through a questionnaire over the phone with parents. These numbers do not represent the total number of referrals but the number of children that were enrolled in the program.

EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM

The Early Intervention (EI) Program is a federal and state mandated program that provides a variety of services to eligible children with significant developmental delays or certain diagnoses, from birth to age three. All referred children receive a multi-disciplinary evaluation at no cost. Referred children work with an Initial Service Coordinator (ISC) from Public Health, who reviews the program with the family, completes intake process, schedules evaluation, and is part of the team that recommends appropriate services. Eligible children receive an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) that details the child's current level of functioning, their needs, services recommended, and goals/outcomes. Ongoing Service Coordinators (OSC) then work with the eligible children and their families to secure the recommended services, check on progress and/or ongoing needs, provide other resources to families, and eventually transition to other appropriate programs. The IFSP is reviewed every 6 months by the family, providers, and ongoing service coordinator.

EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES

Speech Therapy
Occupational Therapy
Assistive Technology Devices and Services
Group Developmental Services
Nursing Services
Respite Services
Audiology

Physical Therapy
Special Instruction
Social Work
Parent Counseling + Training
Nutrition Services
Vision Services
Psychological Services

Eligibility

To be initially eligible for the EIP based on developmental delay:

- a child must be experiencing a 12 month delay in one or more functional areas; **or**,
 - a 33% delay in one functional area or a 25% delay in each of two areas; **or**,
 - if standardized instruments are used during the evaluation process, a score of at least 2 standard deviations below the mean in one functional area or a score of at least 1.5 standard deviations below the mean in each of two functional areas.
- Physical Development
 - Cognitive Development
 - Communication
 - Social or Emotional Development
 - Adaptive Development

EARLY INTERVENTION COSTS

There are no out-of-pocket costs to families in the Early Intervention Program. Services are covered by Medicaid for children with Medicaid or Managed Medicaid plans. Until 2022, private insurance was also billed, although the reimbursement rate for private insurance was typically at around 10%. In 2022, insurance companies began to pay into a “pool” to cover eligible children with private insurance. New York State is billed directly by service providers, and pays them directly for any services not covered by Medicaid. Since April 2013, all counties pay into an escrow account to cover the county-share (51%) of these costs. NYS covers 49%. Counties also receive an EI Administration Grant to help fund staffing and other non-reimbursable costs.

EARLY INTERVENTION STATISTICS

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Referrals Received	157	117	138	220	251
Children Served	245	161	180	190	218
Dollars Received From NYS	\$263,139.09	\$169,984.28	\$53,674.83	\$164,056.69	\$145,845.40
Dollars Received From Medicaid	\$32,657	\$28,139	\$6,370	\$3,912.74	\$20,536.95
Dollars Received from Escrow	\$37,745	\$2,305	\$78	\$0	\$0
Dollars Received From EI Grant	\$24,644	\$24,644	\$19,678	\$48,566	\$36,570
Dollars Received From Private Insurance (For EI Svc Coord Only)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
All Expenses Before Reimbursement	\$805,206.57	\$526,256.07	\$593,667.29	\$674,788.71	\$722,814.61
Amount of Expenses Appropriated (budgeted, total-amended numbers)	\$815,083	\$724,411	\$629,821.21	\$740,478.69	\$798,083.41
Expenditures For County After Reimbursement Received	\$447,021.48	\$301,183.79	\$513,866.46	\$458,253.28	\$519,862.26
Average Cost to County Per Child Served	\$1,824.57	\$1,870.71	\$2,854.81	\$2,411.86	\$2,384.69
Births in County	521	480	512	525	490

Source: General Ledger Journals and cash journal for 1/1/23-12/31/23

Note: The EI Escrow account, established 4/1/13, continues to be a working system. Vendors are first paid directly by Insurances and Medicaid and then the balances are paid through the Escrow account which is then paid by the County. Expenses will now reflect only the net amount paid from this Escrow account and any internal charges that the county approves for payment. In 2023 we serviced 218 children up from 2022 of 190. This is a Mandated program. The cost per child has gone down to \$2,384.69 for 2023. It should be noted, cost per child is skewed because the calculations are based on actual cash received throughout the year and expenses noted on the General Ledger for the year. Since costs are up and funds received are up for 2023, the cost per child has slightly decreased. Expenses have increased in 2023 due the increase in number of children seen and increase in costs for both services. Warren County no longer receives payments from insurances however does receive Medicaid for Service Coordination and is paid as a vendor through Escrow. The revenue for the therapists contracted through Warren County Home Health Care (CHHA) division, is reflected through the CHHA, while expenses paid through the Escrow goes through EI and is billable to the State. Cash received in the year is directly deposited to the CHHA for services related to the therapists who are paid directly through the CHHA. The cost per child served will vary depending upon the reimbursement potential for each individual. Dollars received are based on actual cash received for the year, not revenues booked. Grant funding helps offset the cost per child. Warren County is able to bill the state for 49% of the total costs for services given.

Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE)

Children 3-5 Years Old

The Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) is a mandated program available in all school districts in New York State. Potentially eligible children are referred to the CPSE in the child's school district. Parents are given the list of approved evaluators for Warren County and select the agency they wish to evaluate their child.

Following the evaluation, the CPSE meets to discuss results, determine eligibility, and address the child's needs. A representative from Warren County attends all CPSE meetings as a member. Recommendations for services are made at that time if eligible. All eligible children are identified as a "Preschool Child With a Disability". Specific classification does not occur until the child is school age. Preschool special education services are voluntary.

CPSE services are billed by providers directly to Warren County. County funds are used to pay providers directly. Warren County attempts to bill Medicaid for eligible children for services, programs, and transportation. NYSED reimburses Warren County 59.5% for costs.

CPSE budget and payment processes are extremely complicated and not timely. It takes much dedication on the part of many county staff to assure all reimbursement measures are pursued and accurate paperwork is submitted to NYS Department of Education and the Medicaid office on a timely basis.

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

	SCHOOL YEAR Ending 2019	SCHOOL YEAR Ending 2020	SCHOOL YEAR Ending 2021	SCHOOL YEAR Ending 2022	SCHOOL YEAR Ending 2023
All Children Served	357	324	299	323	374
Services Only	300	286	262	266	293
Evaluations Only	57	38	37	57	81
Tuition Program/ Evaluations/ Therapies Costs Approved	\$2,526,560.43	\$2,677,613.45	\$2,442,012.29	\$2,278,794.49	\$2,624,737.44
Tuition Program/ Evaluations/ Therapies Costs Paid	\$2,156,913.80	\$2,520,571.20	\$2,661,561.71	\$2,441,271.03	\$2,354,123.39
Transportation Costs Approved	\$329,391.34	\$232,652.39	\$481,268.33	\$372,276.24	\$471,774.57
Transportation Costs Paid	\$325,004.29	\$224,303.07	\$461,691.55	\$406,429.60	\$450,419.38
Average Cost Per Child Before Reimbursement based on Costs Paid	\$6,952.15	\$8,471.73	\$10,445.66	\$8,816.41	\$7,498.78
Amount of Medicaid Received	\$68,849.03	\$63,062.93	\$184,111.27	\$244,710.25	\$270,066.11
Amount State Aid Received	\$1,044,507.61	\$1,201,297.56	\$1,899,562.93	\$2,220,695.10	\$1,503,049.02
Amount received for Administrative Costs paid to Schools & Reimbursement for County Administrative costs	\$199,523.05	\$112,483.20	\$141,070.02	\$119,581.15	\$118,942.50
Administrative Costs Paid to School Districts each year	\$238,408.02	\$169,697.33	\$18,662	\$287,546.56	\$1,69,585.66
Program Costs After Reimbursement	\$1,368,561.45	\$1,480,513.78	\$1,039,579.06	\$382,295.28	\$1,031,427.64
Average Cost Per Child After Reimbursements**	\$3,833.50	\$4,147.10	\$3,476.85	\$1,183.57	\$2,757.83

SPECIFIC SCHOOL DISTRICT DATA

*Source: General Ledger/Accounts Payable Reports, Cash Receipts Journal, Budget Performance Report & Preschool Reports, 1/1/23-12/31/23.

Cost per child does not include expenses or reimbursements related to Administrative Costs to School Districts. It is strictly related to services only, such as Tuition, Therapy, Evaluations, and Transportation. The cost per child is somewhat skewed due to the fact that the calculation is based on cash in/cash out for the year. For 2023 the program costs per child after reimbursement was \$2,757.83. We served 374 children in 2023 compared to 323 in 2022. Receipts seem skewed because we depend primarily on reimbursement from the State and those payments are not always consistent each year. Each year expenses such as tuitions/therapy and transportation are dependent on the needs of each child. Since this is different for each child, it makes it difficult to budget. There has been a new Transportation contract put in place with the local vendor, however due to increase in costs, we have had more parent transportations be reimbursed. We only receive 59.5% back on expenses billed to the State for Preschool activities. Medicaid reimbursements for 2023 was \$270,066.11 our highest in five years. We continue to work diligently to bill Medicaid for those children that are eligible. We are also able to bill the State for School Administrative Costs and received the 59.50% reimbursement allowed. We were able to bill the state \$75/child which is the maximum allowable rate for the County for Administration of the program. Also keep in mind there is a Provider shortage and less classes being offered, therefore children who could not receive related services were given a recommendation to receive therapy in the home or daycare. Transportation costs have gone up due to a new contract in place at higher rates. Many children are also now being transported at a further distance for services since a local vendor closed their preschool programs.

PRESCHOOL-CHILDREN QUALIFYING FOR AND RECEIVING SERVICES 2022
(Does not include children receiving evaluation services only.)

SCHOOL DISTRICT	School Year 2019-2020	School Year 2020-2021	School Year 2021-2022	School Year 2022-2023	School Year 2023-2024
Abe Wing (GF Common)	11	12	13	15	17
Bolton	4	2	2	4	2
GF City	94	80	68	73	90
Hadley Luzerne	15	14	14	20	15
Johnsburg	8	9	11	8	5
Lake George	11	9	8	5	9
No. Warren	20	19	14	16	12
Queensbury	108	116	113	106	123
Ticonderoga	0	0	0	0	0
Warrensburg	29	24	17	18	19
Minerva	0	1	1	1	0

Administrative Costs Paid to School Districts During 2023		Rate Reconciliations**	2021	2022	2023	Budget Appropriation for Contractual Services (Amended Budget)	
	21/22 SY Paid 2023	School Years Paid For	17/18,18/19 19/20 & 20/21	19/20 & 20/21 & 21/22	18/19, 21/22 & 22/23		
Bolton	\$2,552	Paid Out to Providers	\$5,373.04	\$19,391.20	\$15,970.56	2019	\$3,440,959
GF City	\$15,721.88	Received from Providers(credits)	\$7,276.22	\$766.96	\$32.77	2020	\$3,071,750
GF Common	\$8,932					2021	\$3,150,919
Hadley Luzerne	\$15,312					2022	\$2,961,299
Johnsburg	\$7,018					2023	\$3,223,000
Lake George	\$8,294						
North Warren	\$14,141.78						
Queensbury	\$82,940						
Minerva	\$638						
Warrensburg	\$14,036						
TOTAL	\$169,585.66						

*Administrative Costs for 2021-2022 from school districts were paid in 2023 which totaled \$169,585.66. . Not all school districts submit Administrative costs to the New York State Education Department for reimbursement approval, however more and more have recently submitted vouchers for reimbursement from the counties. Without State Education approval, School Districts cannot bill the County. Often by the time they are approved by the State Education Department, the numbers actually reflect previous school years.

**Rate reconciliations recorded for 2023 are reflected above for school years 2018 to 2023. Providers are able to bill the County up to three times to adjust their rates. Paid out to Providers are the amounts extra we were billed because their rates were recalculated and went up. Source: General Ledger and Accounts Payable reports from 1/1/23-12/31/23.

CHILDREN and YOUTH WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS PROGRAM (CYSHCN)

A Historical Perspective

For children with special health care needs, the effects of lack of access to health care are felt more keenly than the general childhood population, resulting in increased morbidity and mortality and decrease quality of life.

In New York State, it is estimated that between 800,000 and 1.6 million children have special health care needs. These children account for the majority of pediatric health care expenditures in New York State.

In October 1996, the Commissioner of Health appointed a CSHCN work group to determine what role state and local public health agencies should play in improving the system of care for CSHCN. The work group discussed the key issues associated with the delivery of health care that impact CSHCN and their families:

- Lack of insurance or lack of comprehensive insurance for CYSHCN
- Enrollment of CYSHCN in managed care
- Multiple service needs of CYSHCN
- Supportive services that families need to help them cope with caring for a child with special health care needs
- Involvement of parents as partners in improving the systems of care for CYSHCN

The work group discussed the necessary elements of a comprehensive, integrated private and public health system that would improve the health of CYSHCN by addressing the key issues.

The work group adopted the following definition of children with special health care needs: Children with special health care needs are those children 0-21 years of age who have or are expected to have a serious or chronic physical, developmental, behavioral or emotional condition and who also require health and related services of a type or amount beyond that required by children generally.

New York State has a long history of concern for the health of all children including those with special health care needs. The health department's involvement with children with disabilities dates back to polio clinics held in the beginning of the century.

The state is committed to continuously improving the infrastructure for delivery of health services to mothers and children. A major focus of this infrastructure building is the developing of the system's capacity to:

- Regularly report on the health status of CYSHCN
- Ensure access to medical homes for CYSHCN
- Develop local capacity to address comprehensive needs of CYSHCN
- Assist families in accessing the necessary health care and related services for their CYSHCN
- Develop a partnership with families of CYSHCN that involves them in program planning and policy development.

New York State Department of Health continues to provide funding to counties to facilitate the Children with Special Health Care Needs (CSHCN). Counties are responsible for submitting quarterly data to the NYS Department of Health that identify the types of children's health problems involved with children participating in the PHCP. The goal is to identify "gaps" with insurance coverage for children's services i.e. what types of things are not covered by insurance plans and what is the resultant impact on the involved child's health.

The CYSHCN staff at New York State Department of Health continues to be available to assist when children's insurance companies deny payment for services that are needed by the child. This program has the potential to identify important gaps in children's health services.

In Warren County, children are placed directly into appropriate programs (i.e. Child Find, Early Intervention) and managed by applicable staff which better meets individual needs. This appears to be a working system. Additionally, we offer informational programs for parents with specialists such as speech and occupational therapists. Parents have the opportunity to sample and borrow materials that may support them in promoting children's development. CYSHCN staff regularly attend Webinars in order to collaborate with other counties throughout the state to ensure that we have the latest information and share ideas. We attend quarterly meetings with a regional support staff for CYSHCN Initiative to develop a Family Engagement Plan.

Health Education

Health Education

The Warren County Public Health Education Program saw several staffing changes and an increase in program activity in 2023. The increase in the number of health education staff allowed Warren County Public Health to strengthen and expand its participation in partner organization committees, community health initiatives, and population health programs. Restoring partnerships and networks was identified as a priority in the 2022 annual report. The health education program was also able to provide most of its school-based programs and increase its community presence through numerous community engagement events scattered throughout the Warren County. Most of the community events and school programs aligned with the NYSDOH Article 6 General Public Health Work Program Requirements which remains a program priority.

With a core group of dedicated staff, the focus of the health education program is to continue to provide quality health education to Warren County residents. Additionally, the program staff will look for opportunities to increase its positive impact on the health of Warren County residents by monitoring health trends in the County and finding or creating innovative ways to address the health needs of the community.

Accomplishments/Highlights of 2023

Networks and Collaboration

Warren County Public Health played an active role in the resumption of Tobacco Coalition meetings. These meetings bring together stakeholders including Washington County Public Health, Adirondack Health Institute, Glens Falls Hospital Cancer Services Program, Glens Falls Hospital Health Promotion Center, Council for Prevention, Reality Check, School Staff and several other community organizations to address concerns regarding tobacco and its impacts on a community. The coalition was able to

- create a resource guide for schools, parents and providers to share smoking prevention and cessation resources offered by local, state, and national organizations, that are available to youth.
- approved a statement that will be shared during the public comment period at local town and County meetings regarding the impacts of tobacco on communities.

Worked with the Cancer Services Program of Warren, Washington and Hamilton Counties to

- provide 6 tabling events promoting the importance of cancer screenings and early detection and the availability cancer screening services for uninsured and underinsured individuals.
- Conducted an online ad campaign (Nov. 5 – Dec. 30th) promoting cancer screenings and services for uninsured and underinsured individuals. There were 367 link clicks for cancer screening services and over 50,000 impressions from this campaign.

Social Media and Podcast Activities

- Improved online presence with an increased number of social media posts covering a variety of health and wellness topics.
- Monthly newsletter continued to be posted
- Utilized online advertising through social media to expand the reach of public health messaging.

Radio Advertising

- Conducted a vaping prevention ad campaign from January to March with two messages. One message was directed specifically at teens the second ad targeted parents of teens.
- Worked with the immunization program to conduct a 6-week back-to-school vaccination promotion that included radio ads run on two separate radio broadcast groups from (early August – mid September)

Opioids and Harm Reduction

As opioids continue to plague our communities, Warren County’s Health Education program began to take a more active role in combatting their impacts:

- Sent staff to a two-day Statewide harm reduction symposium for local health departments. It provided evidence-based strategies and best practices to help people affected by opioid use/abuse
- Began a formal partnership with Alliance for Positive Health to train education staff to provide naloxone education programs and distribute naloxone to the public. 5 staff completed the training.
- Conducted a Narcan distribution day with community partners at two locations in Warren County where 41 kits were given out.
- Conducted naloxone training at the Warren County Employee Health Fair. Twenty-five kits were distributed
- Conducted a naloxone training for a community partner. Nine staff were trained and provided naloxone kits.

School Classroom Presentations

School-based programs saw an increase in requests for 2023. There was a 107% increase in the number of classes taught and 141% increase in the number of student contacts. A new program added to the school-based programs was Personal Safety/Child Abduction Prevention. See the chart for participation numbers.

Topic	Grades	Classes	Total Students	Notes
Bus/Pedestrian Safety	Pre K – 5 th	4	50	
Dental Health	Pre K – 5 th Grade	9	156	
Heart Health	Pre K – 5 th Grade	35	675	
Handwashing/Hygiene	Pre K – 5 th Grade	23	640	
Injury Prevention	Pre K – 5 th Grade	21	452	
Nutrition	Pre K – 5 th Grade	25	440	
Personal safety/Child Abduction	Pre K – 6 th Grade	3	120	Taught by grade level not individual class
Poison Prevention	Pre K – 5 th Grade	15	260	
Ticks & Lyme	Pre K – 5 th Grade	1	42	
Tobacco/Vaping	4 th – 12 th Grade	37	996	
Sun Safety	Pre K – 5 th Grade	15	260	
HIV/AIDS	9 th – 12 th Grade	11	232	
Totals		199	4323	The “total students” does not represent individual students. Instead it shows the number student contacts. Students often participate in more than one class topic.

Community Engagements

The Health Education program expanded its community outreach efforts throughout 2023. Health education staff were part of 23 different community events including health fairs, community events and tabling events. See the table below for details for our largest events.

Topic	# of Events	# of Interactions	Notes
Cancer Screenings/ Prevention	6	148	Includes tabling events and participation in community programs
Tick & Lyme Disease Prevention	8	155+	Includes 4 tabling events, 2 community presentations and informational table at an annual hike-a-thon event in Bolton where over 100 people took information.
General Health Information Events	6	238	Includes health fairs, kid's days and a resident's fair. Multiple health topics were covered at these events.
Fall Prevention	1	100+	Information provided at the annual Office for the Aging Senior Picnic. Non-slip socks were provided to participants by staff.

Warren County Health Educators recorded over 770 interactions for all events attended. Event attendance ranged from as few as 2 to over 100 people.

Renewed and New Community Partnerships

Warren County Public Health Educators and other staff participated in 68 planning and networking meetings in 2023. Most of the meetings staff attended were due to their participation in community coalitions and committees. The following is a list of ongoing coalitions or partner organizations with which meetings are held regularly.

Warren & Washington Counties Breastfeeding Coalition	Domestic Violence Community Coordination Council (DVCCC)
Community Health Assessment and Improvement Planning Committee	Cancer Services Program
Warren County Employee Wellness Committee	Warren County Employee Safety Committee
Warren County Public Health Mental Health Grant Planning Committee	Adirondack Rural Health Network Meeting (ARHN)
Mental Health / Addiction Recovery Subcommittees (Joint Meetings)	AHI Topics on Tobacco Coalition
Warren and Washington County Food Pantry Coalition	Long-Term Care Council

Outlook for 2024

The Warren County Public Health Education program is continuing to explore new opportunities to collaborate with our community partners to address gaps and needs identified through the Warren County Public Health Community Health Assessment and Improvement planning process. It is also the goal of the health educators to expand the types of health education programs offered to schools and community organizations.

New 2024 Initiatives

- Mental Health Mini-Grant Implementation – this grant establishes a partnership between Warren County Public Health and ASCEND Mental Health to provide 4 free mental health education programs and 1 free Mental Health First Aid training in different locations throughout Warren County in the 2024 calendar year. The target audience is the public. The goal is to reduce stigma around discussing mental health in our communities.
- Narcan Distribution Training and Education- Public Health signed an MOU with Alliance for Positive Health to increase access to harm reduction strategies, specifically Narcan education and distribution. Alliance for Positive Health is an Opioid Overdose Prevention Program (OOPP) registered with New York State Department of Health. They provided a train-the-trainer training for our health educators in August of 2023. That training now allows our health educators to provide trainings to community members and organizations and we are also able to distribute Narcan kits at those trainings. Narcan kits are requested by our health educators and provided by Alliance for Positive Health.
- Child Passenger Safety Program- Warren County Public Health anticipates becoming a Certified Child Passenger Safety Program in 2024. Planning began in December 2023 and Warren County Public Health will apply for the Child Passenger safety grant in February of 2024. The scope of the program is yet to be determined. At a minimum Public Health will hope to have at least two certified car seat technicians and offer car seats to low income families at no cost.
- Fresh Seasonal Produce for WIC Participants- The goal of this program is to utilize funds from a mini-grant to expand access to fresh produce to WIC families during the summer growing season. Families will also receive healthy nutrition information, recipes, and storage/handling and preparation information. The goal is to provide these nutrition resources to WIC families, so they will be less fearful of spoilage and poor tasting food thus increasing their desire to purchase fresh produce. Spoilage and wasted food are big concerns for families with very limited food budgets.

For information about the Warren County Public Health Education program please contact Dan Durkee, Public Health Program Administrator by email durkeed@warrencountyny.gov or by phone 518-761-6580.

LEAD POISONING PREVENTION PROGRAM 2023

Warren County has a Lead Poisoning Prevention Program funded by a NYSDOH \$36,800 grant. Key components of the program include education, screening, and follow-up. A Public Health Nurse is responsible for submitting the annual work plan and quarterly/annual reports.

Lead poisoning can cause damage to the neurological system. Lead exposure at low levels has been known to cause anemia, growth and development deficiencies, mental impairment, irritability, and hyperactivity. Decreased IQ scores have also been associated with lead exposure. High levels can be severe and cause seizures, coma, and death.

Lead exposure is preventable if common sources are known. In addition, routine screening (blood tests) can diagnose cases prior to onset of symptoms, providing an opportunity to remove the hazard before serious complications. Prevention and screening are the focus of educational efforts.

Education: Health care providers are contacted annually to encourage screening and reporting of cases. Childcare providers are educated on lead, possible sources, and screening requirements. Parents are targeted through associations, health fairs, and informational calls to Public Health. Many pamphlets are available.

Screening: NYSDOH and CDC require lead testing (blood test) for all 1 and 2-year olds for lead exposure. Medical care providers are encouraged to test children 6 months to 6 years old with risk of lead exposure and are required to test all 1 and 2-year olds. Child care providers are encouraged to educate parents on lead screening if the child has not been screened prior to enrollment. Public Health will make arrangements for the test and cover the cost if there is a financial hardship preventing the family from getting a child tested.

Follow-up: All children are tracked in the NYSDOH Web-based LeadWeb system. All labs are entered in the system electronically which updates the program as results are received. In October of 2019 New York State public health law was amended to lower the definition of an elevated blood level in a child to 5mcg/dl.

- Lead level 0-5mcg/dl: A letter is mailed when results are received in addition to a reminder letter when the child is 2 years old
- Lead level 5mcg/dl or greater: An elevated letter and educational packet is sent. A reminder letter is sent every 3 months for retest until the child is considered stable (2 consecutive blood test results separated by at least 6 months, that are less than 5mcg/dl)
- Lead level 5mcg/dl or greater confirmed. Same as for 5 level with the addition of a phone call to family to complete a lead risk assessment and exposure history. A home visit is also offered for education and prevention information and an environmental referral to NYSDOH for lead testing of the home.

Services offered by Public Health are at no cost to the family. The Lead Poisoning Prevention Program provides a great service to the community especially to affected families. Despite educational efforts, services are not fully utilized. Referrals are received from a variety of sources i.e. parents, medical care providers, child care providers, Head Start, WIC, other Public Health programs, Well Child/Immunization Clinics.

LEADWEB DATA

BLOOD LEAD SCREENING TESTS	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
0 - < 5	1076	1046	879	1173	1068
5 - <10mcg/dl	82	72	50	62	61
10- <15mcg/dl	12	5	15	15	17
15- < 20mcg/dl	3	3	2	4	5
20- <45mcg/dl	7	1	0	18	5
>45mcg/dl	0	1	0	5	1
TOTAL ELEVATED RESULTS (includes fingersticks)	104	82	67	104	89
Confirmed Elevated	11	14	10	19	15

(Note: The elevated numbers reflect the highest lab result, per child for specified year.)

Warren County Public Health Emergency Response Planning

Warren County Public Health continues to prepare for the next public health emergency. Using lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic response and traditional planning tools Public Health staff was able to revise and strengthen emergency response plans and community partnerships.

The emergency preparedness program remains limited with no full-time dedicated staff. The workload is split between a part-time staff and one full-time staff person that splits duties between multiple programs. Due to the limited staffing for the preparedness program, public health has made a concerted effort to cross train numerous staff people in preparedness planning and operations who don't regularly work on preparedness activities.

It should also be noted that preparedness staff was able to meet all the preparedness deliverable requirements New York State Department of Health, Office of Health Emergency Preparedness established for the grant cycle.

Meeting New York State DOH OHEP and Federal Mandates

- Updated and changed the Pandemic Influenza Plan to the Pandemic Viral Respiratory Disease Response Plan to reflect a broader approach towards viral respiratory disease outbreaks. The new plan incorporates many lessons learned during COVID-19 response.
- Attended four mandatory Health Emergency Preparedness Coalition Meetings.
- Updated the Points of Distribution and Dispensing Survey which includes three sections; county staging site information, points of dispensing baseline data, and points of dispensing security forms.
- Trained three new staff members to use the NYS Countermeasure Data Management System (CDMS) which is heavily utilized during response activities.
- Held two virtual and one in-person local Emergency Preparedness and Response committee meetings. These meeting allow for EPR partners to connect with one another, share updates on their current activities and promote trainings and exercise across a diverse group of organizations that may have a role in responding to large scale emergencies which includes public health emergencies.
- Completed the Annual Preparedness Survey as required.

Drills & Exercises

Public Health staff participated in numerous drills and tabletop exercises with emergency response partners in 2023.

- Conducted the required Annual 3-of-3 drill that tests Public Health staff abilities to conduct mass notifications and activation of staff and Points of Dispensing, assembly of staff and site set-up within 4-hours of activation. The drill exposed an issue with new security features NYSDOH has installed to protect patient data. Many public health staff that do not work regularly in emergency preparedness were unable to access certain secure systems needed for an effective response. Fixes have been identified and will be incorporated with plan updates.
- Participated in a TTX sponsored by Warren County Office of Emergency Services. The scenario was an coordinated attack on electric utilities leading to large scale power outages.
- Participated in a State-run Radiological Surge Tabletop Exercise (TTX) and an Infectious Disease Surge Tabletop Exercise in May and September respectively.
- Conducted two ServNY Volunteer program communication drills to test the response rates for people signed up to volunteer in Warren County during an emergency.

- Participated in the annual Chempack training with Glens Falls Hospital. Due to last minute complication the drill was limited but several suggestions were made by hospital staff during the deployment that will be incorporated in the updated Chempack Plan.
- Participated in a NYSDOH led Interoperable Communications Drill to test various communications systems used during an emergency. No major problems were found.

Real World Events/Networking

- Participated in monthly regional Public Health Coordinator meetings to share best practices and discuss ongoing and emerging preparedness concerns like disease outbreaks (Mpox), volunteer management, and weather events to name a few.
- Provided guidance to schools and community organization about dealing with wildfire smoke from Canadian wildfires that elevated air quality alerts to dangerous levels especially to high risk populations including people with respiratory issues like asthma and COPD.
- Issued public alerts and worked with local law enforcement, Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and a local municipality in response to a rabid animal attack involving at least four individuals. The animal was euthanized, and lab results showed it was ill with rabies. Appropriate treatment and follow-up were conducted with all exposed individuals.
- Continued to monitor COVID/RSV and Flu numbers in Warren County as those viruses started to rise in late 2023 and provide recommendations to mitigate their spread. Measures included masking when symptomatic, encouraging employees to stay home from work when sick and getting vaccinated for influenza, RSV (if eligible), and the COVID Bivalent Booster.

2024 Outlook

Warren County Public Health will continue to educate, and train staff should our services be needed to respond to a Public Health Emergency. The EPR program will strengthen our partnerships with Glens Falls Hospital, Warren County Office of Emergency Services and community partner to ensure and expand our response capacity and capabilities.

Unfortunately, there will still be limited staff dedicated solely to the Emergency Preparedness Program and cross-training other public health staff will remain as important as ever. The Emergency Preparedness program staff will continue to use internal and collaborative drills and exercises to ensure our public health staff can respond effectively to the next public health emergency, even with our limited capacity. Strong partnerships will be the key to any successful preparedness and response activities.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL

INFECTION CONTROL EFFORTS

Warren County Health Services works closely with physicians, health centers, and Glens Falls Hospital to encourage and ensure timely reporting of laboratory confirmed and or clinically suspected cases of reportable communicable diseases. The agency also works in collaboration with the district office of the New York State Department of Health. A Public Health Nurse follows up with clients either by telephone or home visits, to offer information and assistance to ensure appropriate treatment of infected individuals and prevent exposure to contacts as appropriate, therefore protecting the health of the public. Occasionally Warren County incurs the costs of necessary medications if the individual has no other payment source and out of pocket expense is a financial hardship. Clients are also followed to ensure tests of cure are done if indicated by the specific disease. Appropriate and timely reports are made to the New York State Department of Health. Infection Control Committee meetings are held periodically with the Preventive Program Medical Advisor to review infection control protocols and policies.

Health Services has agency-wide Infection Control, Exposure Control, and Respiratory Protection Plans in place. Staff reviews these plans annually.

As of December 20, 2023, Varicella and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) are now reportable diseases and are required by providers and labs to be reported to Local Health Departments.

These Diseases Are Reportable, However There Were No Recent Positive Lab Tests for Them in Warren County

Anthrax	Hantavirus Disease	Rubella
Botulism	Hepatitis A	Rubeola
Brucellosis	Hepatitis A in Food Handler	Tetanus
Chancroid	Hepatitis B (in pregnancy)	Toxic Shock Syndrome
Chikungunya	Listeriosis	Trichinosis
Cholera	Lymphogranuloma Venereum	Tularemia
Dengue Fever	Malaria	Varicella
Diphtheria	Measles	West Nile Virus
Ehrlichiosis	Plague	
Encephalitis	Psittacosis	

DISEASE REPORTED FROM LABORATORY CONFIRMATION

<i>DISEASE ENTITY</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>2021</i>	<i>2022</i>	<i>2023</i>		<i>DISEASE ENTITY</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>2021</i>	<i>2022</i>	<i>2023</i>
Amebiasis	0	1	0	0	1		Lyme Disease	62	18	30	197	272
Anaplasmosis	47	38	76	57	63		Meningitis (bacterial)	0	1	0	0	0
Babesiosis	4	3	5	6	16		Meningitis (viral)	0	0	1	0	1
Campylobacteriosis	10	9	8	12	17		Mumps	2	0	0	0	0
Chlamydia	147	105	122	143	133		Pertussis	1	1	0	0	0
Cryptosporidiosis	1	0	1	0	1		Rock Mountain Spotted Fever	0	0	0	0	3
Cyclospora	0	0	0	0	1		RSV	0	0	0	0	100
E. Coli	3	0	5	1	2		Salmonellosis	6	2	4	5	2
Giardiasis	8	3	6	4	7		Shigellosis	0	1	0	1	2
Gonorrhea	30	31	31	21	40		Strep Group A, Invasive	2	5	3	4	15
Haemophilus Influenzae Invasive not B	2	0	1	3	1		Strep Group B Invasive	14	4	7	9	8
Hepatitis B (acute)	1	0	0	0	1		Strep Group B Invasive, early	0	0	0	0	1
Hepatitis B (chronic)	12	2	6	2	2		Strep Pneumo Invasive, sensitive	0	1	2	2	0
Hepatitis B (infant prenatal)	1	0	0	0	0		Strep Pneumo Invasive, unknown	5	3	0	1	10
Hepatitis C (acute)	3	3	4	5	3		Swine – Origin Influenza	0	0	0	7	8
Hepatitis C (chronic)	43	29	28	27	32		Syphilis, early latent	2	4	3	0	0
Influenza, A	135	95	38	825	196		Syphilis, primary	4	4	1	2	3
Influenza, B	8	87	18	26	30		Syphilis, secondary	0	1	0	0	1
Influenza, Unspecified	0	1	85	1348	552		Syphilis, late or unknown latent	0	0	0	1	1
Legionellosis	3	0	0	0	2		Tuberculosis	0	0	0	1	1
Listeriosis	0	0	0	0	0		Vibriosis	0	0	1	1	0
							Yersiniosis	0	2	1	3	7

RABIES PROGRAM

Warren County has a Rabies Prevention Program that follows up on all animal bites/exposures, provides rabies pre-exposure immunizations, provides approval for rabies post exposure vaccination, approves rabies specimen testing, serves as a resource for providers and the community, and offers rabies vaccination clinics for pets. All animal bites/exposures are mandated by Public Health Law to be reported to the victim's county of residence.

Rabies law requires dogs, cats, and ferrets all be vaccinated against rabies by four months of age. Counties must offer at least one rabies clinic every four months. Warren County offers approximately 6 rabies clinics from May through November. Any pet involved in a bite/exposure is required to stay at home for a ten-day confinement period. Alternatively, the pet may quarantine at an approved facility, such as a veterinarian's office at the owner's expense.

Warren County continues to diligently strive by public education efforts and ongoing communication with medical providers, animal control officers, and veterinarians, to assure that the public health is protected as related to rabies.

Note: As of December 2011, the rabies law was amended to allow unvaccinated animals involved in a bite to stay at home for the 10-day quarantine period under the discretion of Public Health. Also, scratches alone are no longer considered a potential exposure and do not require a 10-day quarantine.

BITES REPORTED BY MONTH

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2019	15	19	21	26	28	31	28	16	29	13	17	15	248
2020	15	13	21	10	22	21	39	21	25	10	21	29	218
2021	21	11	19	22	24	28	21	32	20	16	10	12	228
2022	9	12	9	25	22	22	24	20	18	20	14	7	202
2023	21	9	18	22	21	19	32	23	22	16	20	11	234

**Warren County Public Health
Rabies Program**

2023

Town	<u>Different Address Owner/Victim</u> *Follow up by Town ACO				<u>Same Address Owner/Victim</u> * Follow up by Public Health				<u>Out of Town Owner</u> *Follow Up by Public Health				<u>Strays</u> Follow Up by Public Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vet's Office • Victim Watching • Victim Treated Rabies PEP • Euthanized Follow Up by ACO			
	Cats		Dogs		Cats		Dogs		Cats		Dogs		Vet	Treated with PEP	Refused PEP	Euthanized
	UTD	NOT UTD	UTD	NOT UTD	UTD	NOT UTD	UTD	NOT UTD	UTD	NOT UTD	UTD	NOT UTD				
Bolton					1			1					1			
Chester			2		1	1	2	1						1	1	2
Glens Falls			11	5	6	9	5	4			1	2	2	6	7	
Hague			1				1	1						1		
Horicon							3	3						1		
Johnsburg			1	1			1	1					1	1	2	1
Lake George			4	2		1	3	1			2	1	1		1	1
Lake Luzerne			1	1		5	2	1			1			1		1
Queensbury			13	6	10	7	19	10	1	1	2	5	2	6	6	2
Stony Creek							1					1				
Thurman				1												1
Warrensburg			3		1	3	5	1				2			2	1
Totals			36	16	19	26	42	24	1	1	6	11	7	17	19	9

*UTD- Up to date

*PEP- Post exposure prophylaxis

WARREN COUNTY RABIES PROGRAM STATISTICS

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Confirmed Rabid Animals	1 bat 1 Unsatisfactory specimen	1 bat 1 raccoon-no exposure	1 raccoon 1 fox	1skunk	2 fox 1 bat	1 Fisher
Animal Specimens Submitted for Testing	30	40 1 unsatisfactory	29	37	37	34
Animal Bites	255	259	218	228	202	234
Patients Receiving <u>Pre-Exp. Vac.</u> (3 Injections) or Booster Vacc. Fee: \$345.00/Dose	5	9	0	1	0	1
Patients Receiving <u>Post-Exp. Vac. Series @ GF Hosp.</u> (All RIG and First Injections are Given at GF Hospital)	29 @ GFH 6 @ other hospitals 6 refusals 3 boosters	25	36	35	31 13 refusals	31 19 refusals 4 boosters
Patients Receiving <u>Post-Exp. Vac. Series @ P. Health</u> (All RIG and First Injections are Given at GF Hospital)	0	1	2	0	0	0
Animal Clinics	17	17	5	5	6	6
Animals Receiving Rabies Vaccinations	693	638	160	280	393	509

	2023
Expenses paid in relation to Rabies Program	\$34,576.75
Amount vouchered to New York State (Max allowed)	\$16,653.47
Rabies Clinic Donations	\$4,537.00
Total program cost to Warren County	\$13,386.28

Note: Data above reflects actual expenses incurred and both actual cash received at clinics and amounts vouchered to the State for 2023. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have not held many clinics (6 are mandated per year), therefore less in donations. However, overall, we were able to cover 61.28% of all rabies costs in 2023. Costs to the county are skewed because we paid some expenses on behalf of patients but not all expenses have yet to be received, therefore we are unable to submit those expenses to the state until the file is closed and all expenses have been received and paid. Also, to note, expenses we were not able to claim will be carried to the next grant year to be submitted once the file is closed. In 2023, 60.59% of the Animal Clinics were covered by donations. No clinics were billed the first quarter of 2023 since we had no clinics scheduled. We can bill for the Animal Specimens and shipments, Animal clinics and Human Rabies vaccines. We find with the Human vaccines; most patients have health insurance therefore the Hospitals/Facilities are able to bill for these services and this reduces the costs to the County. However, if a patient does not have health insurance, the local hospital will discount the first dose of rabies vaccine at the Medicaid rate and the patient is then referred to the Public Health office for the remaining three or four doses of the vaccine. The difficulty is when we need to coordinate care for patients /billing with those Facilities that are out of our area. All these can be billed to the State once received and paid.

TUBERCULOSIS PROGRAM

PPD testing is offered by appointment, HHHN is the contractual medical consultant for the program and follows those individuals needing treatment who do not have their own physician. Warren County Health Services provides payment for preventive therapy medication for individuals who convert or have active tuberculosis and have no insurance to cover the cost of medication. Warren County maintains an agreement with local pharmacy whereby the agency is billed at the Medicaid rate for the medications. This is done in attempt to assure compliance with prescribed treatment.

YEAR	INDIVIDUALS TESTED	POSITIVE CONVERTERS	ACTIVE TB CLIENTS DURING YEAR
2019	131	0	0
2020	73	0	0
2021	17	0	0
2022	14	0	1
2023	8	0	1

Amount Paid for Tuberculosis Medications/Expenses	
2019	\$0.00
2020	\$0.00
2021	\$0.00
2022	\$0.00
2023	\$1,916.50

Warren/Washington County's STD Clinic Report 2023

A STD/HIV/TB Clinic is held weekly by appointment only. This clinic is shared by Warren and Washington Counties. Although counties are encouraged to bill insurance companies, clients have indicated they would not want their insurance utilized. (i.e. are not comfortable with insurance EOB's being sent to their homes). Costs are eligible for 36% state aid reimbursement.

HIV/Hep C testing is also performed at the clinic. The HIV clinic counselors are from the HIV/Ryan White program under the sponsorship of Hudson Headwaters. Any positive test is referred immediately for verification and follow-up care.

STD clinic routinely tests for gonorrhea, chlamydia and syphilis for all clients. These specimens are taken to the Glens Falls Hospital Laboratory and are billed to Warren County Public Health at the Medicaid rates. The New York State Department of Health is notified of any positive test and is in direct communication with Warren County Public Health regarding treatment and "follow-up" care.

The age range of the participation at the clinic remains from teenagers to the elderly, specifically in 2023 the age range was 22-63 yrs.

The number of clients has been declining steadily over the past five years, but the clinic remains a valuable resource to the community and to those in need of services.

Prevention is stressed at the clinic. Condoms, supplied by NYS, are available for no charge at the clinic.

The clinic is staffed by one nurse, one support staff and one provider.

In 2023 we entered a contract with Hudson Headwaters Health Network to ensure provision of a medical provider for the clinic.

HIV and STD (SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASE) CLINIC

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Clinics Held	46	50	44	5	1	0 **	7
Participants	151	117	96	13	2	3	5
Males	113	83	72	12		2	3
Females	37	34	24	1		1	2
Age Range	16-64	16-67	18-71	19-73	48-50	21-74	22-63
Warren Co. Participants	72	76	53	7		3	3
Washington Co. Participants	43	24	20	5		0	1
Saratoga Co. Participants	26	13	19	1		0	1
Other County Participants	10	4	4	0		0	0

DISEASES WITH POSITIVE TEST RESULTS

DISEASES	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Genital Herpes	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Genital Warts	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Chlamydia	13	6	3	0	0	0	1
Gonorrhea	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Syphilis	2	3	4	1	0	0	1

Our STD clinics are by weekly by appointment only. In 2023 we served 5 clients.

PERINATAL HEPATITIS B PREVENTION PROGRAM

Hepatitis B is a vaccine-preventable virus that affects the liver. It is transmitted through contact with infected blood and body fluids. Hepatitis B during pregnancy can put the baby at risk for contracting the virus, which could cause a life-long, chronic infection.

Women are routinely screened for Hepatitis B as part of prenatal bloodwork during every pregnancy. In the event a pregnant woman tests positive for Hepatitis B, the lab results are sent to the Local Health Department (LHD) where the mother resides. The LHD then works with the birthing hospital to ensure that the infant will receive proper treatment after birth. Within 12 hours of delivery, the baby receives Hepatitis B Immune Globulin (HBIG) and the first dose of the Hep B vaccine series. Two more doses are given at one month and six months of age. At 1 years old, a blood serology is done to determine the level of antibodies the infant has from vaccination. If there are adequate antibodies, the case will be completed. If there are insufficient antibody levels, the infant will either need a booster dose or complete the whole vaccine series again. This will prevent or reduce the child's chance of contracting Hepatitis B.

There were **0 cases in 2023** of pregnant women identified as Hepatitis B carriers in Warren County.

When infected pregnant women are identified, they are followed through pregnancy and up to a year after delivery by the LHD.

The LHD's role in preventing perinatal Hep B includes:

- Providing case management to ensure completion of the vaccine series and post-vaccination serology for the infant
- Providing education and follow up for all other potential contacts of the mother

The goals of this program are to promote healthy pregnancies and prevent transmission of Hepatitis B.

IMMUNIZATION ACTION PLAN

The Immunization Action Plan (IAP) is a project between NYSDOH, CDC and LHDs that works to reach specific immunization goals. LHD's must meet accountability standards each year. The IAP project runs in 5-year periods, in 2023 the 2018-2023 5-year project ended, and the 2023-2028 5-year project started.

Objectives for the 2022-2023 contract year were:

- 1.) Childhood immunizations:
 - a. Increase immunization rates for all children 24 months and older
 - b. Increase HPV immunization rates for adolescents
- 2.) Perinatal Hepatitis B Prevention (see Perinatal Hep B Prevention Program page for details)
- 3.) Increase Adult Immunization Rates
- 4.) Reduce disparities among special/underserved populations at risk for low immunization rates
- 5.) Improve county-wide New York State Immunization Information System (NYSIIS) accuracy and completeness

To achieve these goals, Warren County Public Health works closely with health care providers, schools, day cares, hospitals, community agencies, and statewide organizations.

2022-2023 Project Highlights:

- Worked on Immunization Quality Improvement for Providers (IQIP) strategies with multiple pediatric providers
- Annual school nurse meeting – provided up to date immunization information and an opportunity to clarify immunization requirements
- Assisted many school nurses throughout the school year with immunization records and keeping students up to date on required vaccinations
- Provided training and technical assistance to one school to ensure they completed the School Immunization Survey
- Worked with one day care to ensure their immunization records are up to date for all their children
- Mailed immunization requirements and education to all day care providers
- Mailed immunization education to adult immunization providers
- Warren County Public Health staff completed many trainings specific to encouraging timely vaccinations
- Warren County Public Health continued to hold COVID-19 vaccination clinics for the public, as well as for many local groups and organizations upon request
- 24-hour monitoring system of our vaccine storage units via Digital Data Loggers, continues as a safety mechanism for the viability of all vaccines.
- Promotion of immunizations for all age groups continues on the Warren County Public Health Facebook page and website, at health fairs and other events. Distribution of educational material to local groups and organizations continues throughout the year and as requested

The major goal of this contract year was to start working on the routine IAP work again, since the COVID-19 pandemic put a lot of it on hold. Most of 2023 was spent on efforts to encourage community members to get back on track with their routine vaccinations that they may have fallen behind on during the pandemic.

INFLUENZA CLINICS 2023

In 2023 Warren County ordered 420 doses of flu vaccine, 200 doses of Quadrivalent and 200 doses of High-Dose for the over 65 population and 20 doses of FluBLOK. The prebook for this ordered was done with the thought that we would be able to do outreach clinics for the community and restart Walk-in Clinics open to the public now that the office was opened post-pandemic. We had VFC and VFA Flu vaccines to give to those who qualified for government funded vaccines. FluBLOK was pulled by the manufacturer so we did not have any to administer this season. We had one staff member requiring egg-free Flu vaccine and we were able to purchase one dose from Glens Falls Hospital for this person.

For the 2023 Flu Season we held 3 staff vaccine clinics. We offered Walk-in Flu Clinics weekly on 3 Thursdays in October with a good response. We held clinics at 7 sites to include Solomen Heights, Lake Luzerne Senior Center, Johnsburg Senior Meal site, Northern GI, NYS Department of Health, Warren County Municipal Employees and Glens Falls School District Staff.

The attendance at all of our clinics was consistent. As we review the clinic numbers again this year we will schedule the 2023-2024 season accordingly. The challenge for Public Health continues to be to know how much vaccine to have available, how much staff to schedule for clinics.

Our continued goal for the 2023-2024 season will be to encourage higher rates of influenza vaccine, regardless of where it is obtained and to promote the use of the immunization registry (NYSIIS) by all parties involved.

INFLUENZA VACCINE ADMINISTRATION

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Clinics Offered Throughout the County	25	27	3	6	8	17
Vaccine Doses Administered at Clinics	447	473	153	182	141	247
CHHA/Long Term Home Visits for Administration	7	8	11	8	5	9
Homebound Visits for Administration	3	2	0	5	29	6
Miscellaneous Administration i.e. PH Appointments And Other Home Visits	156	152	0	0	102	26
Total Doses Administered	652	633	164	195	277	288

COVID IMMUNIZATION CLINICS 2023

COVID vaccines clinics continued into 2023. In the first three months we held 12 clinics where a total of 37 doses were administered. Of these 37 doses, 5 were homebound. We decided to end the weekly clinics and do vaccinations on a case by case basis. We continued to transport vaccines to nursing home facilities until we depleted our stock of Bivalent COVID vaccine.

In August they released a new strain of COVID vaccine and we offered the new vaccine to anyone interested in getting it. However, there was no longer an EUA (Emergency Use Authorization) in effect so we had to purchase private stock of the vaccine and began the process of billing for the COVID vaccines through client's insurances as we do with all vaccines we administer. We also offer VFC & VFA (publicly funded vaccines) for those who qualify. COVID vaccines are given at our regular weekly immunization clinics.

BLOOD PRESURE CLINICS 2023

Warren County Public Health Clinic Nurses serve three senior meal sites for Blood Pressure Clinics and they coincide with the serving of the noon meal. We also visit The Glen at Highland Meadows for a Blood Pressure Clinic. In March 2020 when the pandemic shut down the meal sites we had stopped doing B/P clinics. In March of this year we started to go to the three sites and to The Glen. We have had a very positive response to being back out in the community. We did B/P checks for the Senior Health Fair in September serving over 200 people and the Warren County Health Fair in October.

Blood pressures are taken by the public health nurse and recorded on the client's chart. Often, the nurse has been seeing the client for many months so that she is able to observe changes in blood pressure, appearance and state of mind. A strong feeling of caring is developed between the nurse and the client which extends a level of trust. There are times when a client is advised to see their doctor immediately because of a dramatic change in blood pressure or because of a physical complaint that the client is hesitant to take to a doctor. These clinics have been very well received by the participants.

Partial reimbursement is received from Office for the Aging to compensate for the nurse's time.

BP Clinic Site	2018	2019	2020	2023
Bolton Meal Site	37*	17	**	**
Chester Meal Site	40*	35*	**	**
Cronin High Rise	61	70	13	**
Johnsburg	111	93	15	56
Lk.Luzerne Meal Site	118	101	19	89
Presb. Church (GF)	30	26	4	**
The Glen	**	**	**	44
Solomon Heights	58	49	12	48
Stichman Towers	25	20*	3	**
Warrensburg	37*	50	9	**
TOTALS:	517	494	75	237

**No longer doing B/P screening at that site

QUALITY ASSURANCE

Public Health has a three level Quality Assurance Program.

- Level 1 utilizes the standard Chart Component List. Staff ensures the charts are complete prior to discharge. The Assistant Director monitors a random sample to ensure charts are complete at discharge
- Level 2 utilizes peer input with the intention of sharing creative interventions amongst staff and streamlining documentation.
- Level 3 utilizes subjective input from community referral sources on appropriateness of services and care rendered to families.

2023 UR Committee members:

Thank you all for your participation and dedication to Public Health

Pat Belden SPHN	Ginelle Jones RN, MSN FNP Dir. Health Services/Public Health
Sara Hettel , WIC Coordinator	Erik Mastrianni , Early Intervention Coordinator
Stacie Dimezza , SLP – Speech Therapist	

Additional Activities

1. Consultants – Annual audits by record and pharmacy consultants.
 - Records – August 18, 2023 a record audit was completed. Any deficiencies noted have been corrected.
 - Pharmacy- September 27, 2023 Pharmacy Consultant completed audit. Any deficiencies noted in report have been corrected.
2. Medical Director – Provides overall oversight to QA program and completes peer reviews to medical providers in STD program.
3. Satisfaction Questionnaires – Clients and providers complete annual questionnaires. No concerns reported.
4. Logs:
 - General Complaints – 2023, none received
 - HIPAA/FERPA Complaints – 2023, none received
 - Fire/Disaster Drills –
 - 2023- 2 fire drills
 - 1 shelter in place
 - 1 duck and cover
 - 2023 Accident/Incident Reports – 3 incidents reported / no injuries.

2023 GOALS

1. Continue with the current QA Program- It was put on hold during COVID -19 Pandemic.
2. Continue to encourage staff to assist with annual review of policies and procedures.
3. Continue to focus on program QA reports of Logs, Incident Reports/STD/CDC/WIC.
4. Start to focus and incorporate UR Committee in strategic planning process.
5. Oversight of Infection Control policies, procedures and incidents.



DIVISION OF HOME CARE

HOME CARE SERVICES

Philosophy: We at Warren County Health Services believe that the health of individuals and their families as they relate and interact in their community plays a vital role in the health care needs. Home Care recognizes the importance of psychological and physical wellness and attempts to correct the circumstances that interfere with the greatest degree of wellness that a person can achieve. The agency respects the autonomy of the patient and family to make decisions and choices affecting their present and future health status.

Home Care is patient centered, outcome oriented, and dependent on a multi-disciplinary multi-agency collaboration...

Goals: As a Certified Home Care Agency we shall provide skilled nursing, physical and occupational therapy, medical social work, nutrition and home health aide services to the patients of Warren County on an intermittent basis under the direction of a physician.

Our aim is not only to instruct and to support the patient and/or family self-care and disease management and to support care transition interventions to minimize avoidable complications. Our homecare Professionals provide health guidance to all ages so that individuals, families, and the community will be helped to achieve and maintain health; but to also recognize that the patient is the driving force of his or her healthcare.

With today's changes in healthcare, sicker patients in the hospital, patients being discharge sooner than in the past, and rising cost of healthcare it only makes sense that the consumers of healthcare make the decisions of how they would like to receive it.

With the recognition that the patient is the driving force of his or her healthcare, we as home care providers need to understand this new concept and deliver care accordingly. It is not our goals that we focus on but the goals of our patients. Our professionals here at Warren County Health Services are learning to not only empower themselves but to work collaboratively to empower the patient, understanding that Home care is not a one size fits all and not all patients need to be in the hospital.

The nurse collaborates with the physician on what might be the best way to help treat the patient whether it be through assessment and teaching, disease management, coordinating in patient care or transition to hospice or being kept comfortable in their home, which allows the patient to be the true consumer of his or her healthcare.

Warren County Health Service will continue to participate in ongoing assessments of the community's health and social needs and identify possible resources available to help meet these needs by networking with other members within our local health care arena.

QUALITY ASSURANCE PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

QAPI

Warren County Health Services Division of Home Care is committed to providing quality health care to all of its clients. The process by which our client outcomes are monitored is through the Quality Assurance Performance Improvement Program (QAPI). The Quality Assurance team is the hub of our agency's QAPI process. The Quality Assurance team is led by the Assistant Director of Patient Services who collaborates with the administrative and clinical leadership to effectuate a successful and regulatory compliant program. The Quality Assurance team fosters a culture within the agency that promotes a daily commitment to continually improving quality of care for our clients. This team empowers clinical staff to build quality improvement processes into daily work activities.

The QA team is daily reviewing current Home Health Compare data, Process Measure data and OASIS assessment data for accuracy. The implementation of the Agency's standards of care is continually monitored through our Chart Committee meetings. When the Chart Committee identifies a process as needing enhancing or revision the QA team will address. All personnel employed by our Division of Homecare play an integral part in our Quality Assurance Performance Improvement Program.

The following reports note our achievements comparing our Certified Home Health Agency (CHHA) to other CHHA's at the State and National levels.

The results of the agency's Quality Assurance Performance Improvement program for 2022 are as follows:

- **Home Health Compare Results/Process Measure Outcomes**
- **Home Health Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS):**

This survey is a Federal requirement for all CHHA's. The survey needs to be conducted by an outside independent agency that is certified by Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to do the standardized survey. We have a contract with Strategic Health Plan (SHP) for this service. The survey has 3 Composite Measures:

1. Care of Patients
2. Communications Between Providers and Patients
3. Specific Care Issues: Home Safety Issues, Medications regarding schedule and side effects, and Pain



67.19 97% Total Performance Score (TPS) and Rank

Value Based Purchasing (VBP) Measures	Your SHP Score (01/2023 - 12/2023)		CMS Large-Volume Baseline		Your CCN Baseline Score**	Points				Weight	Weighted Care Points
	Eligible	Score	Threshold* (Median)	Benchmark* (90th% Avg)		Achievement	Improvement	Care Points	National Rank		
TNC: Change in Self-Care (Risk Adj)	338	2.408	● 2.123	2.733	● 2.057	4.68	4.68	4.68	42%	8.8%	4.09
Grooming	338	0.481									
Ability to Dress Upper Body	338	0.506									
Ability to Dress Lower Body	338	0.517									
Bathing	338	0.386									
Toileting Hygiene	338	0.560									
Feeding or Eating	338	0.137									
TNC: Change in Mobility (Risk Adj)	338	0.879	● 0.744	1.011	● 0.726	5.05	4.83	5.05	46%	8.8%	4.42
Toilet Transferring	338	0.246									
Transferring	338	0.286									
Ambulation/Locomotion	338	0.287									
Improvement in Mgmt of Oral Meds (Risk Adj)	325	81.91%	● 80.99%	97.90%	● 68.96%	0.54	4.03	4.03	53%	5.8%	2.35
Improvement in Dyspnea (Risk Adj)	304	76.59%	86.31%	98.51%	77.72%	0.00	0.00	0.00	12%	5.8%	0.00
Discharged to Community (Risk Adj)	428	74.79%	● 72.65%	84.25%	● 69.78%	1.85	3.12	3.12	57%	5.8%	1.82
OASIS-Based Total								16.87	34%	35.0%	12.68
60-Day Hospitalizations	134	8.96%	● 13.91%	7.77%	● 13.96%	8.07	7.28	8.07	91%	26.3%	21.19
60-Day EC without Hospitalizations (Risk Adj)	(CC 01/24)	7.30%	● 11.78%	4.69%	● 11.50%	6.32	5.55	6.32	95%	8.8%	5.53
Claims-Based Total								14.39	98%	35.0%	26.72
Care of Patients	340	95.59%	● 89.25%	● 94.45%	● 93.00%	10.00	9.00	10.00	99%	6.0%	6.00
Communications	403	94.79%	● 86.63%	● 93.04%	● 91.00%	10.00	9.00	10.00	99%	6.0%	6.00
Specific Care Issues	460	87.83%	● 82.05%	91.20%	89.00%	6.31	0.00	6.31	69%	6.0%	3.79
% who Rated Agency 9,10	90	95.56%	● 85.94%	● 94.34%	● 93.00%	10.00	9.00	10.00	99%	6.0%	6.00
% who would Recommend	91	93.41%	● 79.99%	● 91.20%	95.00%	10.00	0.00	10.00	99%	6.0%	6.00
HHCAHPS-Based Total								46.31	96%	30.0%	27.79
Total Performance Score (TPS)											67.19

● Baseline scores outperformed

*CMS Baselines sourced from CY 2023 Implementation Performance Report (IPR) published July 2023.

- OASIS-based measures: 01/01/2022 - 12/31/2022

- Claims and HHCAHPS-based measures: 01/01/2022 - 12/31/2022

**Your CCN Baselines sourced from:

- OASIS-based measures: SHP (Dates match IPR 01/01/2022 - 12/31/2022)

- 60-Day Hospitalizations: SHP (Dates match IPR 01/01/2022 - 12/31/2022)

- 60-Day EC without Hosp: Care Compare (18 month lag 07/01/2020 - 06/30/2021)

- HHCAHPS-based measures: Care Compare (Dates match IPR 01/01/2022 - 12/31/2022)



Real-Time Star Ratings Preview - Quality of Patient Care

Warren County Health Services

OM/PM: 01/23-12/23, Hosp: 01/23-12/23

Report Date: 3/25/2024

1	Initial Decile Rating High/Low Better (+/-)	Process		Outcomes				
		Timely Initiation of Care	Mgmt of Oral Meds	Ambulation	Bed Transfer	Bathing	Dyspnea	60-Day Hospitalizations
		+	+	+	+	+	+	-
2	0.5	0.0-83.2	0.0-56.6	0.0-62.6	0.0-60.8	0.0-66.7	0.0-60.5	19.0-100.0
3	1.0	83.3-90.8	56.7-67.7	62.7-73.7	60.9-73.1	66.8-77.3	60.6-75.0	17.0-18.9
4	1.5	90.9-94.5	67.8-75.5	73.8-79.7	73.2-80.4	77.4-82.7	75.1-81.6	16.0-16.9
5	2.0	94.6-96.4	75.6-79.8	79.8-83.1	80.5-84.2	82.8-86.0	81.7-85.3	15.1-15.9
6	2.5	96.5-97.7	79.9-83.4	83.2-85.7	84.3-86.8	86.1-88.2	85.4-88.1	14.4-15.0
7	3.0	97.8-98.7	83.5-86.0	85.8-87.7	86.9-88.7	88.3-90.3	86.2-90.1	13.7-14.3
8	3.5	98.8-99.2	86.1-88.5	87.8-90.0	88.8-90.5	90.4-92.1	90.2-92.0	12.8-13.6
9	4.0	99.3-99.7	88.6-91.2	90.1-92.2	90.6-92.4	92.2-94.0	92.1-93.8	11.5-12.7
10	4.5	99.8-99.9	91.3-95.3	92.3-95.2	92.5-95.1	94.1-96.6	93.9-97.2	9.6-11.4
11	5.0	100.0-100.0	95.4-100.0	95.3-100.0	95.2-100.0	96.7-100.0	97.3-100.0	0.0-9.5
12	Your HHA Score	87.9	81.9	83.5	90.1	87.6	76.6	9.0
13	Your Initial Decile Rating (Requires N ≥ 20)	1.0	2.5	2.5	3.5	2.5	1.5	5.0
14	Your Number of Cases (N)	439	325	335	329	336	304	134
15	National (All HHA) Median	97.7	83.4	85.7	86.8	88.2	88.1	14.4
16	Your Statistical Test Probability Value (p-value)	0.000	0.246	0.152	0.049	0.370	0.000	0.041
17	Your Statistical Test Results (Is the p-value ≤ 0.050?)	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
18	Your HHA Adjusted Rating	1.0	2.5	2.5	3.5	2.5	1.5	5.0
19	Your Average Adjusted Rating							2.6
20	Your Average Adjusted Rating Rounded							2.5

Final Step: Convert Your Average Adjusted Rating Rounded (Line 20) to the 1.0 to 5.0 star scale as shown below.

21	Average Adjusted Rating Rounded	Overall HHC Star Rating	% of CCNs with Rating (CMS: 01/2024)
	4.5 and 5.0	(5.0) ★★★★★	5.75%
	4.0	(4.5) ★★★★★	13.75%
	3.5	(4.0) ★★★★★	15.31%
	3.0	(3.5) ★★★★★	16.47%
	2.5	(3.0) ☆☆☆	16.31%
	2.0	(2.5) ★★★	13.03%
	1.5	(2.0) ★★	10.21%
	1.0	(1.5) ★	7.49%
	0.5	(1.0) ☆	1.68%

Star Rating cut points: Process/Outcome Measures-10/2024 (SHP), Hospitalizations-01/2025 (SHP).

★ Parameters match Star Rating. ☆ Parameters do not match Star Rating.

**Warren County Health Services
Division of Homecare**

2023 Overview of the Utilization Review Committee

The Utilization Review Committee of Warren County Health Services held meetings during the year 2023. The meetings were held February 9th, April 12th, June 19th and November 13th.

The numbers of patient records reviewed were 5, 7, 3, and 5 giving a total of 18 patient records reviewed during the year 2023.

The number of patients on the active roster on the last working day of 2023 was 110, with a breakdown as follows: CHHA – (SN-54 and EI 15 /CPSE-41) = 110

Members of the committee are:

Valerie Whisenant, ADPS
Robin Andre, SPHN
Jodi Brynes, SPHN
Mary Murphy, PHN, QA Assistant
Craig Briggs, CHN
Karen Mattes, PHN
Laura Monroe, PHN
Lisa Morton, CHN

Breakdown of Charts Reviewed:

Number Active	6	Number CHHA	18
Number Discharged	12		

Method of Record Selection: For all meetings during the year 2023, the records chosen were a random selection of patients admitted 1-4 months prior to each meeting. The random selected patients covered all services provided by the agency: SN, PT, OT, ST, HHA, IV Therapy, and Telehealth.

Summary of Utilization of Services:

Adequate Utilization	18
Overutilization	0
Underutilization	0
Inadequate Information	0
Unable to Decide	0

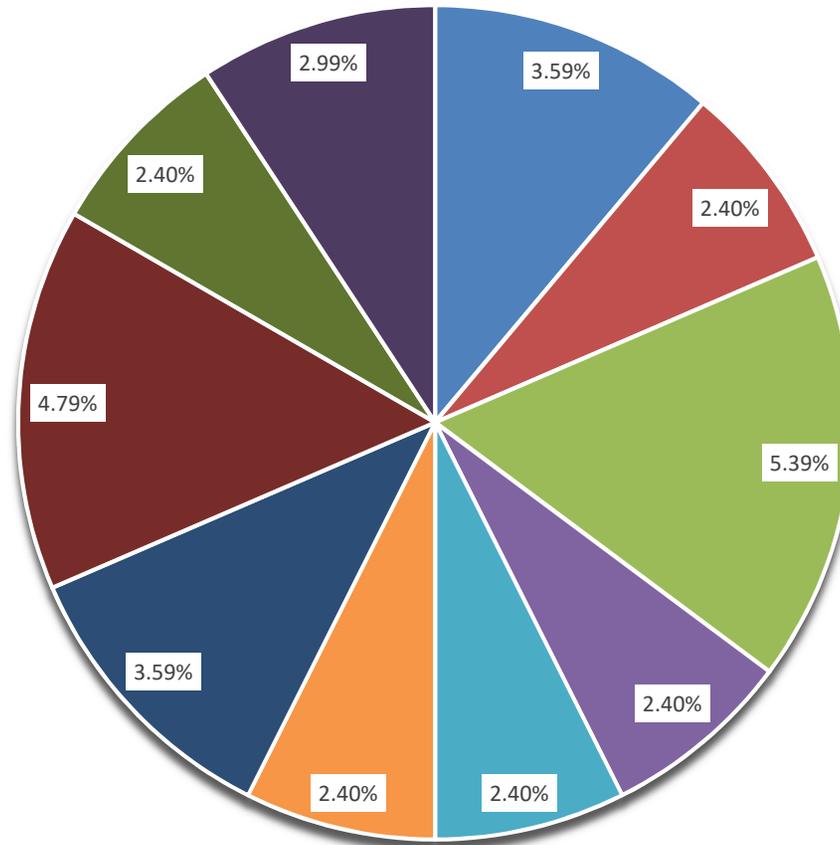
All the charts reviewed showed adequate utilization of services. It was noted by some of the reviewers that our current EMR has too many places to document. We are currently trying to get a new EMR to hopefully alleviate some of the redundancy of documentation.

Division of Home Care - SERVICES BY THE NUMBERS

**Certified Home Health Agency
VISITS BY DISCIPLINE**

Services	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Nursing	12,269	9,794	7,707	4131	3357
Physical Therapy	4,448	3,815	3,641	3137	2333
Occupational Therapy	1,108	723	479	340	196
Speech Therapy	120	152	229	37	14
Medical Social Worker	25	0	0	0	0
Nutrition	0	16	1	0	0
Home Health Aide	2,296	1,787	1,427	1122	967
TOTALS	22,285	18,307	14,875	8,767	6551

Top 10 Primary Diagnosis for Vists between 1/1/23 and 12/31/23 for Certified Home Health Agency



- I13.0 - Hyp hrt & chr kdny dis w hrt fail and stg 1-4/unsp chr kdny Count
- J44.1 - Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease w (acute) exacerbation Count
- N39.0 - Urinary Tract Infection- Unspecified
- U07.1 - COVID-19 Count
- Z48.00- Encntr for change or removal of non surgical dressing
- I48.0- Paroxysmal atrial fibrillation
- M17.0- Bilateral primary osteoarthritis of knee
- T81.43XD- Infection following a procedure, organ and space surgical site
- Z47.1 - Aftercare following joint replacement surgery Count
- Z48.812 - Encntr for surgical aftrr following surgery on the circ sys Count

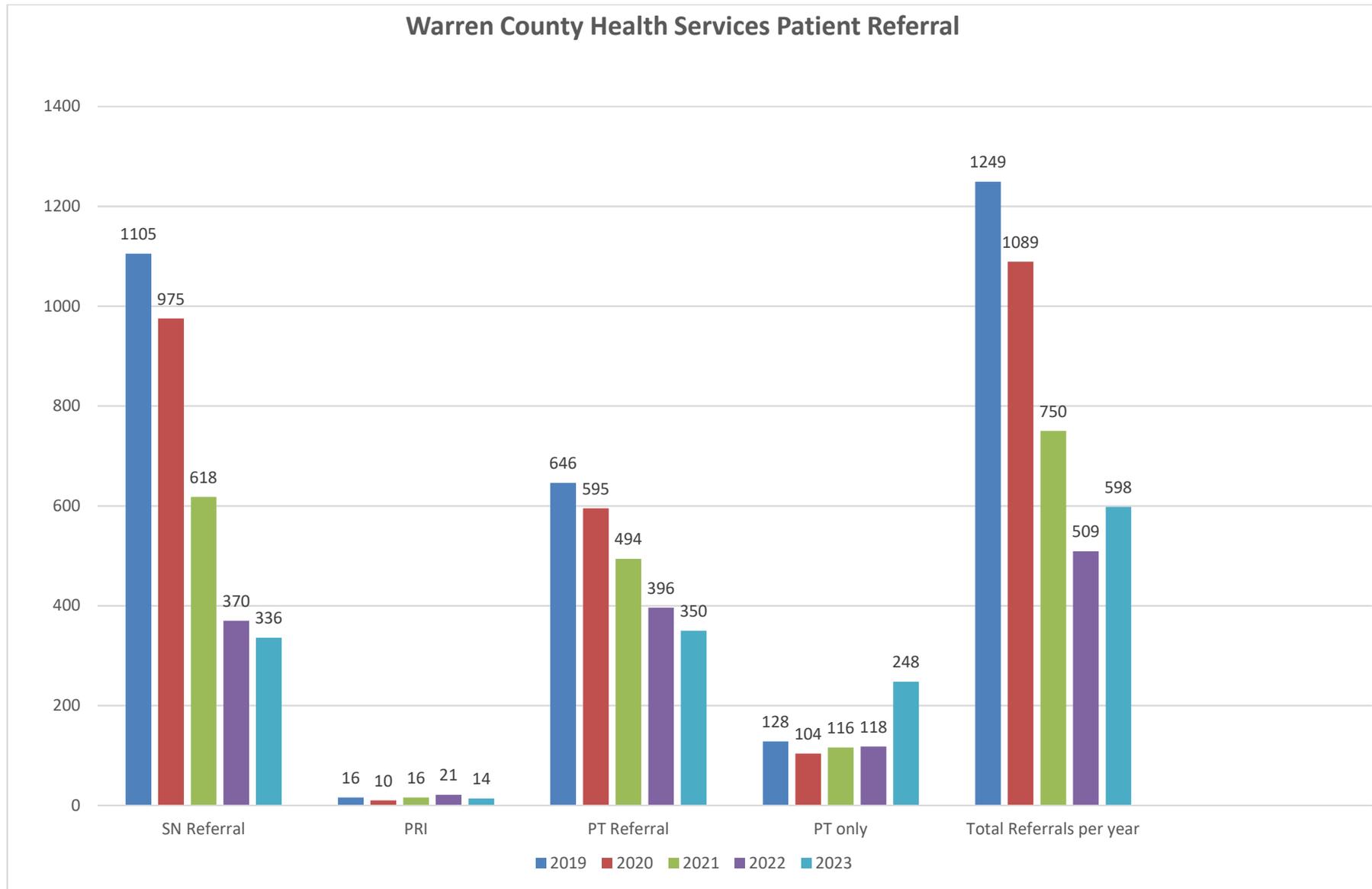
CERTIFIED HOME HEALTH AGENCY GEOGRAPHICAL STATISTICS

Patients by Town

Town	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Adirondack	29	21	21	18	6
Athol	31	21	16	16	6
Bakers Mills	24	15	12	15	8
Bolton Landing	76	64	61	30	33
Brant Lake	60	55	27	16	30
Chestertown	123	103	82	76	63
Cleverdale	13	16	3	0	0
Diamond Point	40	38	21	10	9
Glens Falls	609	525	466	308	188
Hague	27	39	36	21	21
Johnsburg	49	40	39	41	28
Kattskill Bay	12	12	3	2	5
Lake George	237	198	166	126	75
Lake Luzerne	155	121	82	35	51
North Creek	80	19	36	23	33
North River	7	11	1	1	0
Olmstedville	7	13	20	1	0
Pottersville	80	63	32	40	31
Queensbury	1253	888	710	489	404
Riparius	0	0	0	0	1
Silver Bay	1	9	11	3	5
Stony Creek	22	12	8	18	21
Warrensburg	293	237	179	122	94
Wevertown	35	6	15	9	14
Grand Total	3263	2526	2047	1420	1126

REFERRAL NUMBER REPORT

Warren County Health Services Patient Evaluations CHHA Division



REVENUE by PAYER

Traditional Medicare was 41.13% of our business for 2023 which is a 8.58% decrease from 2021 and a 26.57% decrease from 2022. Medicare reimburses the agency not by per visit (Fee for Service) but by episodes of care. The episode is a 30-day period and the Medicare payment is calculated by the score determined by the OASIS D assessment.

Managed Medicare comprised 33.15% of our revenues, which is an 3.52% increase from 2021 and a 12.85% increase from 2022. Managed Medicare reimbursement can be either Fee for Service or Episodic Rate and is determined by the Managed Care Company.

In 2023 Traditional Medicaid represented 2.97% of our CHHA revenue. While in 2021 was 2.14% and in 2022 6.3%.

In 2023 Managed Medicaid revenues were 3.68% and in 2021 .46% and 3.43% in 2022.

In 2023 Private Insurance represented 19.06% of our CHHA revenue and was 18.07% in 2021 and 5.96% in 2022.

HOME CARE GOALS FOR 2023

- ◆ Continue strong working relationships with referral sources to assure that our residents and existing clients continue to receive the quality of care provided by this agency in support of the changing times in delivering home health care.
- ◆ Market our services and accomplishments to our residents and our referral sources.
- ◆ Strengthen and Enhance the existing skilled programs we provide to our clients guiding them in managing their health.
- ◆ Continue to promote our Palliative Care Program through collaboration with local providers as well as education and training of our staff to recognize and meet the needs of our Warren County Residents.
- ◆ Increase and enhance our remote patient monitoring through the use of Telemonitoring / Telehealth.
- ◆ Maximize the full potential of our new Electronic Medical Record system to continue to improve efficiency and reporting requirements.
- ◆ Recruit/retain staff in a most challenging workforce/labor shortage.
- ◆ Strive to achieve the strongest Star Rating /HCCAPS/PDGM/HHVBP scores to provide quality and steady reimbursement.
- ◆ Advocate for federal/regulatory and reimbursement adjustments that assist the state of Home Care continuing to be a viable option in the continuum of care.

CONTINUING CHALLENGES FOR WARREN COUNTY HEALTH SERVICES IN 2024

Our mission remains advocating and assisting people to help themselves – to promote and maximize health and wellness, both physical and mental, while minimizing disease, injury, and disability. This is not an easy task. We realize gains may be slow, unpredictable, and not often immediately visible or measurable. With the COVID pandemic, many services were suspended so Health Services staff could assist with COVID response, which hugely impacted our agency's programs. In 2024, our agency will continue to address and lead our community through unprecedented public health related challenges.

Our challenge for 2024 will be to continue to assess, plan, and deliver programs that are tangible and reach out to individuals, families, neighborhoods, and institutions at the community level. Through collaboration with many multidisciplinary service providers we seek to foster personal responsibility - not dependency on others. Various strategies must be employed to assist and educate people with many diverse and ever -changing health care needs. We will continue to expand and utilize technology to optimize patient health outcomes, prevent and/or reduce the number of unnecessary hospitalizations, and use our nursing and support staff more efficiently.

In the Public Health and Home Care arenas the mission remains consistently identifiable and visible: to assure Warren County residents are protected from all undue risks of contracting communicable or vaccine preventable diseases and, in conjunction with other service providers, to recognize and design intervention strategies targeted to impact social concerns that ultimately affect public health and to provide home health care that assists our citizens to manage many health problems and diagnoses. As well, the need cannot be overstated for increasing collaboration between human service provider agencies and medical care providers to obtain the most appropriate and cost -effective use of resources.

Health Services continues effort toward normalcy. Our agency will continue to focus on rebuilding services and figuring out a way to creatively deliver community programs. This is an exciting time to truly evaluate gaps and collaborate with local agencies to promote and ensure necessary programs are available to address gaps and assist those in need. The Community Health Needs Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan processes are valuable resources to make this happen.

For further information or questions regarding the
Warren County Health Services
Annual Report:

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or

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