

## Board of Health

Rosemarie Halt, *Chair*  
Lily Higgins, MD, *Vice Chair*  
Patrick Brennan, MD  
Annemarie Hirsch  
Oni Richards



Lora Siegmann Werner, MPH  
*Health Director*  
Stephanie Reese, MSN, MBA, RN  
*Deputy Director*

*Promoting and Protecting the Health of Delaware County*

**09/25/2025**

## **Delaware County Board of Health Meeting Delaware County Department of Health Status Report**

Reporting Period: June – August 2025

### **I. Executive Summary**

DCHD continues to strengthen its role as a trusted public health leader while navigating ongoing workforce and system challenges. From June through August 2025, the department continued its progress in surveillance, program delivery, and infrastructure modernization, while also receiving national recognition for its innovation and impact.

### **Key Achievements**

- **Epidemiology & Surveillance** – Monitored increased ED utilization following the Crozer closure, seasonal COVID-19 trends, and seasonal tickborne and mosquito-borne illnesses. No measles cases were reported in Delco to date in 2025. Expanded data integrity efforts by reconciling differences between Census and PA DOH population data for age-adjusted rates.
- **Maternal & Child Health** – Completed Title V projects, including serving over 40 individuals with doula support, training 8 doulas, conducting student needs assessments, and hosting prenatal and postpartum peer support groups over the July 2024-June 2025 grant year period. In addition, DCHD hosted a Maternal Wellness Workshop on July 26 in Chester that successfully promoted maternal mental health and wellness.
- **Immunizations & Clinics** – Delivered over 275 vaccines at Chester and Yeadon August back-to-school events and continued to support Hep A/B vaccination efforts at Harwood House community-based residential treatment program. DCHD's Yeadon and Chester clinics together served more than 200 patients for routine immunizations over the June-August reporting period.
- **STI/HIV Services** – Began supporting George W. Hill Correctional Facility with STI testing to reduce county costs; conducted 249 tests through August. Established a new testing partnership with Widener College. Clinics in Chester and Yeadon collectively treated ~65 patients in August.
- **Test & Go Initiative** – Distributed 476 public health products in August, with high utilization at 69th Street Transit Center. This nationally recognized program was featured at the NACCHO360 conference as a best practice in prevention and access.
- **National Recognition** – DCHD was awarded a 2025 NACo Achievement Award in the category of "Forming a Health Department," affirming its progress as one of Pennsylvania's newest health

departments and highlighting its success in building sustainable public health infrastructure.

## Challenges & Opportunities

- **Workforce & Retention** – DCHD employed 85 staff during the quarter, with 16 separations through August 2025. Competitive compensation continues to drive resignations, particularly among clinical staff, as employees seek higher-paying opportunities.
- **Hiring Freeze** – A countywide hiring freeze remains in effect until the end of 2025, limiting replacements. Strategic exemptions are being pursued for high-need roles, including a Data Analyst, Medical Assistant, and Communications Specialist, alongside nursing positions.
- **Employee Engagement & Morale** – In collaboration with consultant Dr. Motley, DCHD is developing an employee engagement framework to improve morale, promote retention, and prepare staff for the administrative division’s relocation to Yeadon Wellness Center.
- **Fiscal Role Realignment** – Leadership is reviewing current fiscal roles and responsibilities to improve functionality, streamline processes, and ensure clearer delegation of duties across divisions.

## Infrastructure & Systems Modernization

- Facility planning is underway for administration’s move to the Yeadon Wellness Center and relocation of Environmental Health (location TBD).
- IT/Data modernization includes expansion of Freshworks for call center and contract management, AchieveIT integration of the 5-year Strategic Plan, and JotForm replacing Qualtrics for surveys.
- Fleet operations were strengthened through cross-training, and the Mobile Health Unit is now expected in October following supply chain delays.
- Contributed to the County’s Recycling Study, supporting sustainable waste management and compliance with state recycling requirements.

## Looking Ahead

- Onboarding eight staff members in September, including one re-instatement.
- Launch of expanded STI testing with Widener College in October.
- Continued maternal health equity initiatives focusing on reducing Black–White disparities.
- Implementation of cold-weather preparedness protocols and fall flu clinics.
- Rollout of the Strategic Plan in AchieveIT and onboarding of new staff.

## II. Programmatic Updates

### Epidemiology:

#### Health Systems & Utilization

- **Crozer Closure Impact:** Emergency department (ED) visits at the two remaining Delco hospitals show an upward trend, confirmed by EpiCenter data and hospital reports.

## Reportable & Seasonal Diseases

- **Respiratory Illnesses:** DCHD updated its <https://delcopa.gov/health/respiratory-illnesses> page with 2025-2026 information. COVID-19, influenza, and RSV wastewater levels remain low. COVID-19 case counts are increasing, following the dual summer/winter seasonality pattern. Drivers include variant changes, waning immunity, and increased indoor gatherings.
- **Vector-borne Illnesses:** Observing routine seasonal rise in tickborne and mosquito-borne disease activity, including one confirmed human case of West Nile virus with neurological complications this year compared to two confirmed and three suspected human cases last year.
- **Measles:** No Delco cases in 2025; investigated recent suspected exposures but these were found to be Chester County residents.
- **Mpox:** There have been recent wastewater detections for Mpox at the Delcora Western Wastewater Treatment Plant (1 positive sample in untreated wastewater, September 4) and in Philadelphia. In September 2025, DCHD also had its first Delaware County MPox patient since August 2024.

## Data Integrity & Methods

- Identified discrepancies between PA DOH EDDIE and Census data in calculating age-adjusted rates; differences are minor but must be explained in reports.
- This difference was communicated with the PA DOH office of vital statistics.

## Community Engagement, Outreach / Networking

- In coordination with Chester City Health Commissioner, proposed environmental justice theme and shared Chester City air emissions data with leadership from the Cancer and Environmental Network of Southeastern PA / Pennsylvania Cancer Coalition for upcoming state meeting.
- Created and shared summarized results from the 2025 DCHD Breast Cancer survey with the Chronic Diseases Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) workgroup (**686 responses – see details below**).
- Presented methodology for heart disease hot spot identification to state and county epidemiologists.
- Mentored Drexel MPH intern on age-adjusted mortality analysis and GIS mapping.

## Infectious/Communicable Disease Investigations

- Conducted weekly vector-borne illness surveillance (counts, trends, and visualization).
- Managed > 60 animal bite reports (including multiple bat exposures, dog bites, and cases involving unvaccinated animals), coordinated >20 lab results, and provided cross-jurisdictional support with NJ, PA, and DE.
- Opened/closed COVID-19 outbreaks at Fair Acres (3 cases) and Whitehorse Village (15 cases), plus Wallingford Skilled Nursing Facility.
- Investigated and closed an infant botulism case (ultimately ruled out).
- Evaluated Legionella, RMSF, Cryptosporidium, and West Nile virus surveillance updates.
- Consulted on hand, foot, and mouth disease cases in daycares, drafted prevention resources and parent notification letters.
- Discussed OXA-23 CRAB cases at Providence Rehab and reviewed infection control responses.
- Engaged in Hepatitis surveillance improvement: performed data quality audits on women of childbearing age, reviewed case definitions, and discussed priority schema.

## Maternal & Infant Health

- Continued emphasis on reducing Black–White disparities in maternal and infant outcomes.
- Recommendation: build community action networks focused on preconception health, addressing social determinants, and holistic prevention.

## Reportable Conditions / Surveillance

	Condition	YTD_2024	YTD_2025	Difference
1	CHLAMYDIA	2051	1692	-359
2	RSV	585	907	322
3	GONORRHEA	765	668	-97
4	LYME	471	488	17
5	HEP C PAST/PRESENT	143	233	90
6	HEP B CHRONIC	172	125	-47
7	PERTUSSIS	159	33	-126
9	SYPHILIS LATE/UNK	49	60	11
12	SYPHILIS EARLY LAT	39	19	-20
29	CPO CLIN	3	11	8

Row Labels	2022	2023	2024	Grand Total
<b>West Nile Virus Infection - neuro invasive</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>
Confirmed	1	2	2	5
Probable	1	1	3	5
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>

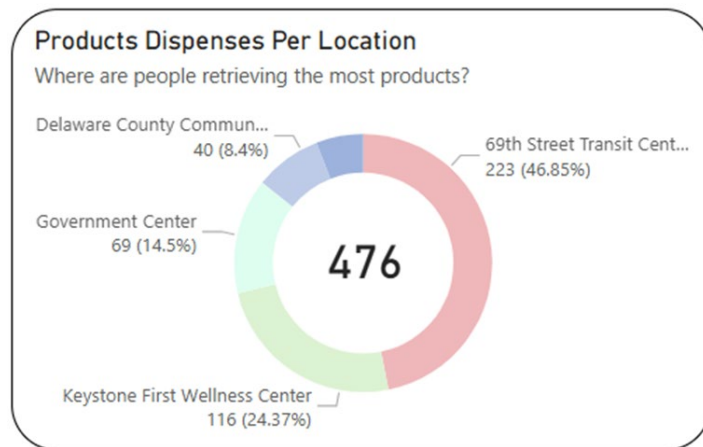
## Epidemiological Summary

- Between MMWR Weeks 1–34, 2025 shows notable increases in several conditions compared to the same period in 2024.
- The largest rise was seen in RSV (+322 cases), followed by Hepatitis C Past/Present (+90), Lyme disease (+17), and syphilis categories including late/unknown (+11) and carbapenemase-producing organisms (CPO) clinical isolates (+8).
- The greatest decreases occurred in Chlamydia (–359 cases), Pertussis (–126), Gonorrhea (–97), Hepatitis B Chronic (–47), and Campylobacter (–9).

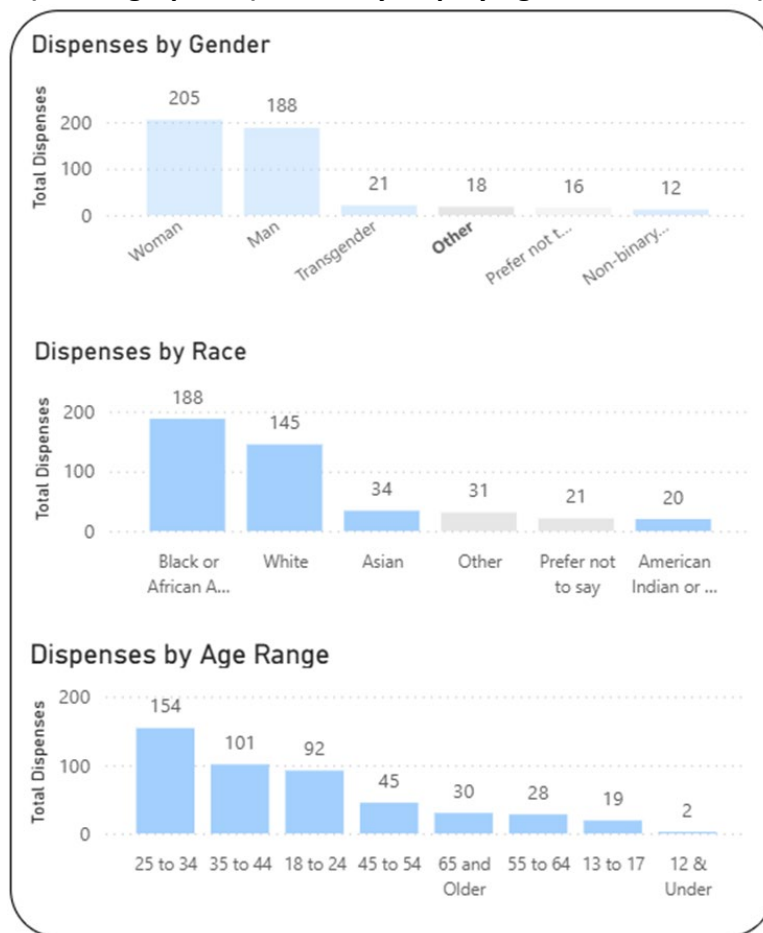
## Test & Go Kiosks:

- 476 dispensations (47% at 69th Street Transit Center).
- Most common items: condoms (32%), first aid kits (27%), and emergency blankets (16%). Majority of visitors were women (44%); African Americans were the largest group served (40%).

## 1) Dispenses by Location



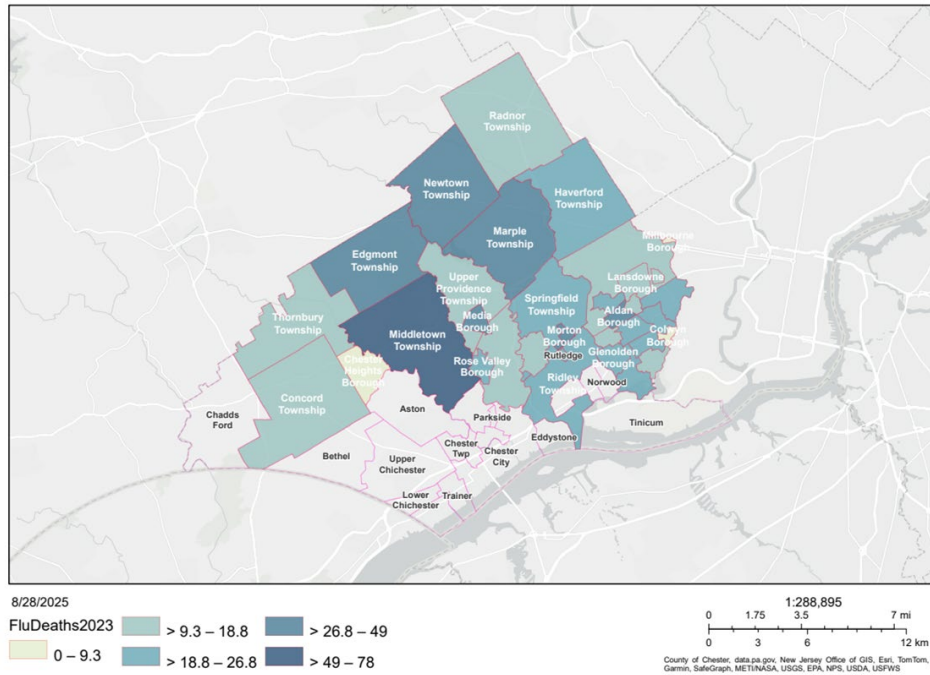
## 2) Demographics (note: only displaying counts above 10)



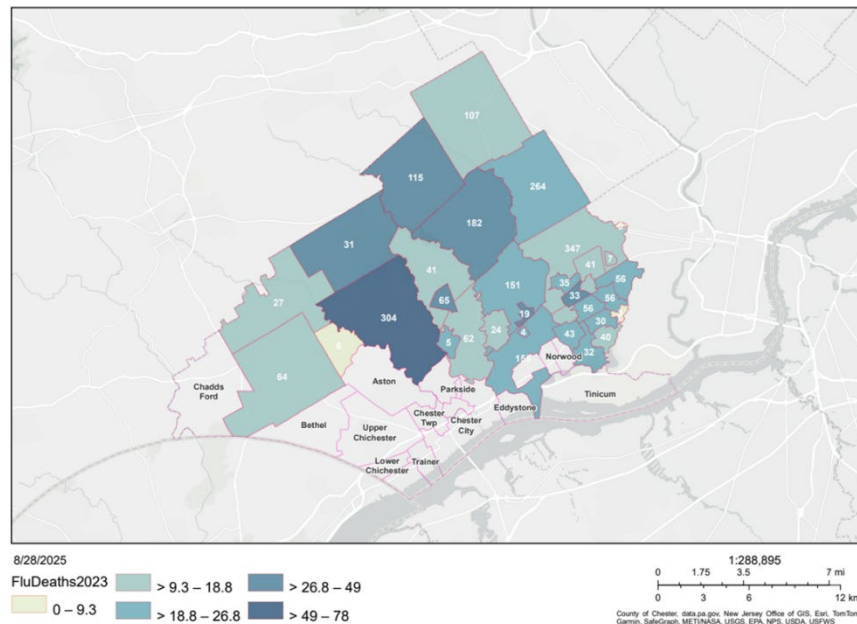
## Flu Death Crude Rates by Municipality 2023

Data analysis by Rachel Duffy, DCHD DIS & Drexel MPH candidate)

Flu Death Rates Delco 2023



Number and Rates Flu Deaths Delco 2023



## Population Health:

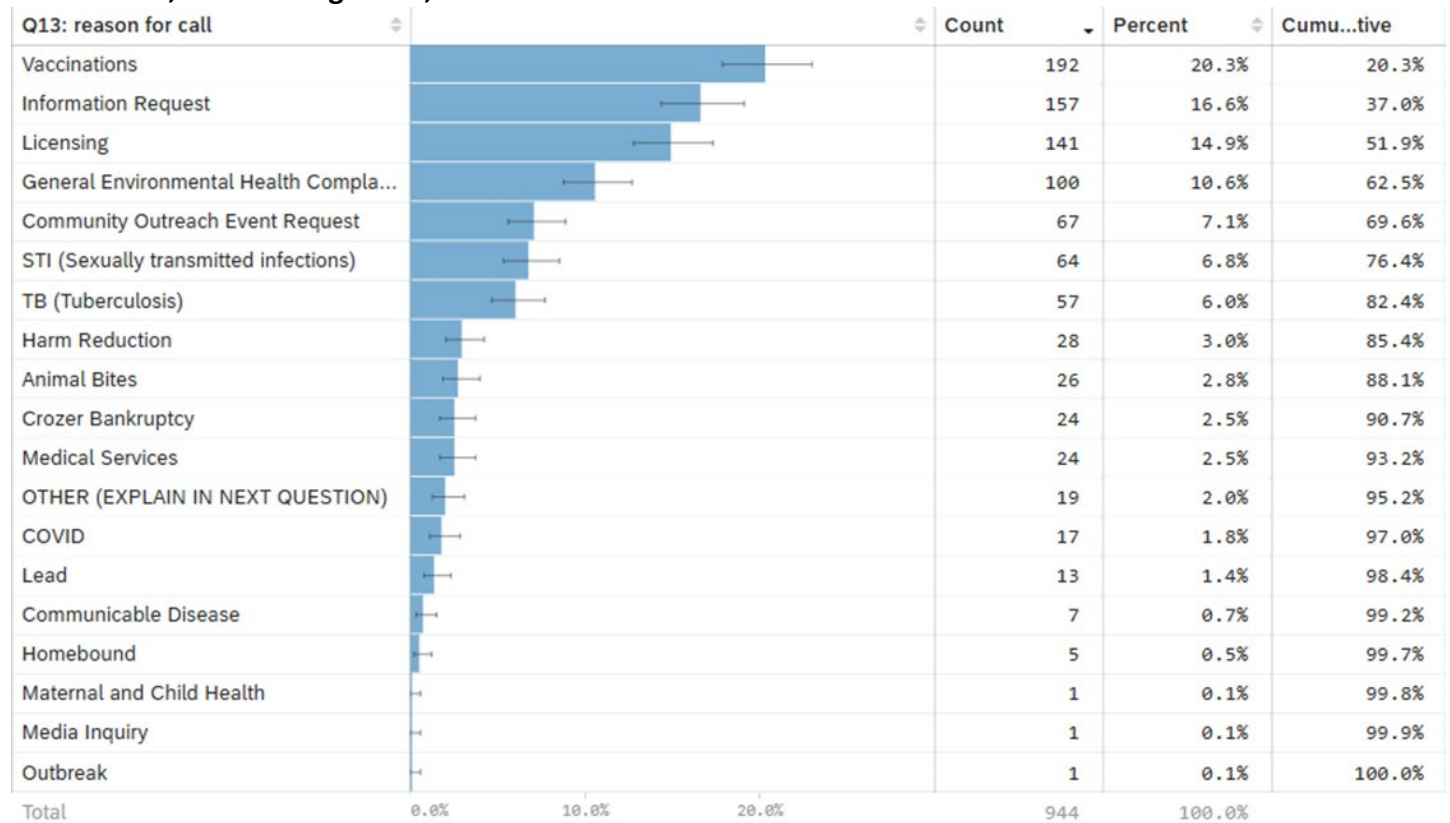
### DCHD Call Center:

Call Volume 6/1/25 through 8/27/25:

- June ~ 344 calls
- July ~ 534 calls
- August ~ 474 calls



## After June 6, 2025 to August 27, 2025 Reasons for Calls Total calls ~ 944



## Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

### August Yeadon Back-to-School Final Numbers

Backpacks Distributed	283
Vaccines Administered (multiple types)	96
Number of Children receiving vaccines	23
Dental Screenings Administered	65
Dental Follow-ups Scheduled	8
Vision Screenings Administered	65
Vision Screening Follow-Ups Scheduled	20
Face Paintings Done	65
Haircut Vouchers Disseminated	30

### Upcoming Programming and Events

Event	Date & Time	Special Notes
Navigating Healthcare Series	09/18/2025 (Yeadon) 3pm – 6pm  09/30/2025 (Chester) 1-4:30 pm	- Assist community members with the access of Crozer medical records

Breast Cancer Focus Groups & Awareness Event	10/17/25	- CHIP Chronic Disease Priority Area - Partnering with Mainline Health
Rally for Recovery	09/18/25 5:30pm -7:30pm	- CHIP Whole Person Care Priority Area - Recovery Awareness Month
Prostate Screening/Men's Health	09/18/25 10am - 2pm	- CHIP Chronic Disease Priority Area

### Delco Revive and Test and Go Metrics

#### Program Metrics Dashboard: January 1, 2025- June 30,2025

Total Naloxone Kits Distributed	4,227
Total Test Strips Distributed (Xylazine + Fentanyl)	3,954
Total Stop the Bleed® Kits	19
Total Training Participants	181
Total STI/HIV Tests Distributed	194
Total COVID-19/Flu/RSV Distributed	91



### Public Health Emergency Preparedness

- Developing County cold weather criteria for cold blue versus extreme code blue; working collaboratively with other county agencies
- Flu Clinic planning for the fall 2025 season has commenced; locations will be Tinicum Fire Company (10/12/25), Keystone First (10/21/25), and Murphy's Giving Market (10/7/25). Reached out to Sikh Temple as an additional potential location.

### Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)

- Each of the three CHIP priority committees have been meeting for one year at this point. DCHD is working with partners to reflect on the current status of initiatives and reconnect with community partners. Phone calls are being planned with committee members to identify opportunities for improvement, relevant agency-specific work that should be included in the CHIP, and to obtain ideas for how to optimize committee involvement.
- Development of a CHIP Achieve It dashboard is in progress.



- DCHD staff involved in each of the three committees are researching policy-level work conducted by other local health departments specific to their topic areas that we will use to identify potential speakers for the team and DCHD staff.

### Accreditation Readiness (PHAB)

- We met with PHMC and one of their contractors to identify tools and resources that can assist DCHD (as well as other LHDs in PA) in initial steps to take as they pursue accreditation.
- A listing of all documentation needed for accreditation has been obtained for internal reference.
- There are many elements required by the accreditation process, however, the most labor-intensive documentation that health departments must submit are driven by eight plans. Additional policies, processes, and efforts must be demonstrated, but completion of these eight plans is the first recommended action for health departments seeking accreditation. The eight plans are outlined in the table below, as well as an inventory of the status of DCHD's plans as of August 31, 2025. Of the 8 required plans, 3 are complete, 3 are underway, and 2 have not been started.
- As part of a preliminary accreditation readiness review process, 2 of the 8 major plans were reviewed and recommendations have been submitted to managers in their respective program areas.

Plan	Status	Completion Date / Notes
Community Health Assessment	Completed	March 2024
Community Health Improvement Plan	Completed	March 2025
Strategic Plan	Completed	Sept 2024
Workforce Development Plan	Not Started	Planning not begun
Emergency Operations Plan	Underway	Needs PHAB alignment
Organizational Branding Strategy	Underway	Drafted, minor edits needed
Quality Improvement Plan	Not Started	Templates available from PHAB
Performance Management System	Underway	System in place, plan needed

## Personal Health:

### STI/HIV Services

- Assisted George W. Hill (GWH) Correctional Facility with 249 STI/HIV tests between July 17 and August 28. DIS staff provided partner services for positive results.
- Established a new partnership with Widener College to expand STI testing beginning October 2025.
- Yeadon and Chester STI clinics collectively treated ~65 patients across August, with continued outreach for prevention supplies.

### Maternal & Child Health (MCH)

- Title V Projects (FY24–25) concluded June 30:
  - Over 40 individuals served with doula services.
  - 8 doulas trained through community partners.
  - 293 students assessed and 70 matched with assistive technologies.
  - Mental health and peer support services provided through Mommy Meet Ups and ongoing group sessions.
- Villanova graduated first Birth Companion cohort (11 graduates); work underway to link them with county residents.
- Maternal Wellness Workshop (July 26) successfully delivered education on maternal mental health, yoga, and linkage to resources.

### Immunizations & Community Clinics

- **Back-to-School Events:**
  - Chester (8/9): 78 physicals, 22 dental screenings, 22 children vaccinated (51 vaccines).
  - Yeadon (8/16): 23 children served with 96 vaccines administered.
- Routine Clinics (6/1–8/26): Yeadon (183 patients), Chester (28 patients).
- Ongoing support of Hepatitis A/B vaccination at Harwood House Recovery Home.

### Lead & Environmental Health

- 125 open lead cases; increase in children testing  $\geq 10$   $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  (4 cases vs typical 1–2).
- High-priority complicated case in Chester remains unresolved despite remediation; active coordination with Keystone First, ChesPenn, and PA DOH.
- New Iron Man-themed lead awareness poster distributed at community fairs and early childhood programs.
- System improvements underway: provider notification letters, enhanced referral tracking, and better alignment with insurers.

## Tuberculosis

- 16 active TB cases with ongoing management.

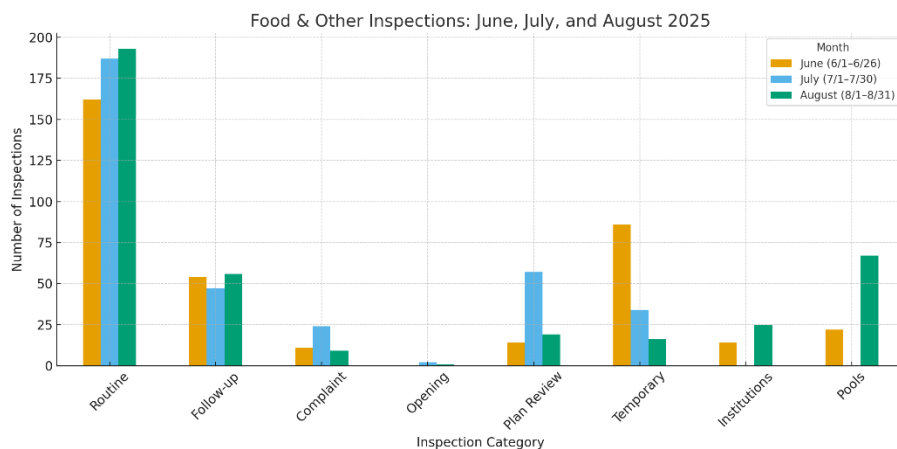
## Environmental Health:

- Working with PDA on developing a non-profit food volunteer class through DCHD EH.
  - Final draft complete and approved internally.
  - Will work with solicitor for approval of plan (certificate, no cost, liability, etc).
  - Still researching opportunities for first class.
- Team working to expand the Daily Audit reports to include complaints responses. Also, the possibility of a weekly or monthly performance report for each region.
- Working with USDA on 2 Delco facilities that are not able to provide documentation that the food they are selling is from an approved source.
  - USDA issued Citations for both facilities. Product was removed from stores. DCHD will perform follow-up inspection to verify product is not being sold.
- EH working with BOH to review/update BOH codes.

## Food & Other Inspections – June to August 2025

- June (6/1–6/26): 363 inspections (327 food, 36 other).
- July (7/1–7/30): 351 inspections, all food-related.
  - Higher number of plan reviews (57) and complaints (24) compared to June and August.
- August (8/1–8/31): 377 inspections (294 food, 83 other).
  - Marked increase in pool inspections (67) and institutional inspections (25), reflecting seasonal summer activity.

*Key Takeaway: While inspection volume remained consistent across all three months, the focus shifted—with July emphasizing food service plan reviews and complaint investigations, and August showing a seasonal surge in pool and institutional inspections.*



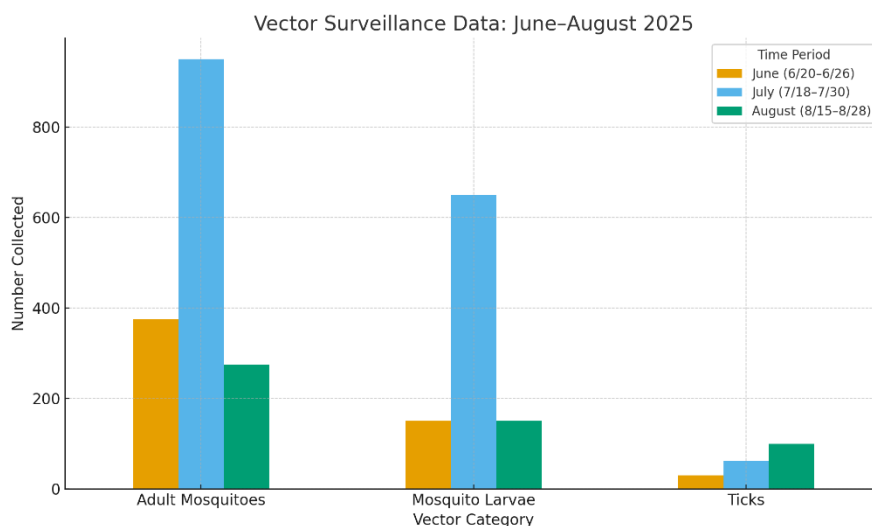
## Vector Surveillance – June to August 2025

- Adult Mosquitoes: Peaked in July (950 collected), compared to 375 in June and 275 in August.

- Mosquito Larvae: Highest in July (650), while both June and August had 150.
- Ticks: Steadily increased, from 30 in June, to 62 in July, to 100 in August.

#### Key Takeaways:

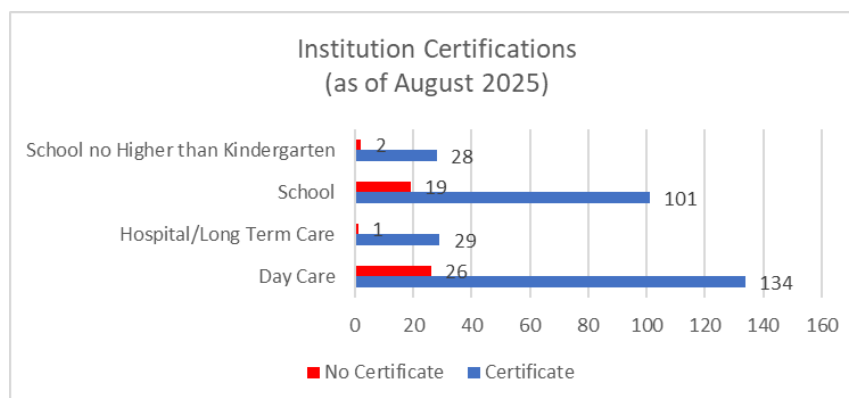
- July was the most active month for mosquito populations, coinciding with 5 positive West Nile Virus (WNV) samples and multiple larval control events.
- Tick activity peaked in August, with all drags completed for the season and testing ongoing at the state lab.
- Surveillance results guided interventions, including a scheduled ULV spray event on 9/2/25 in Brookhaven, Upland, Parkside, and Chester City.



#### Org. Camps/Campgrounds/MHP:

##### o Institutions: (ECLC, LTC, Hospitals, Schools)

- As of 8/31/25, 7 of the 48 Institutions without a Certification paid but are not signed off (may be missing applications or other documents). Updated monthly.



September 2025 Temporary Events				
Date	Event	Address	Vendors	EHS
9/6/25	Edgmont Township Community Day	1835 Middletown Rd, Glen Mills PA 19342	6	Shahida Parker-Johnson
9/6/25	Haverford Music Festival 2025	Eagle & Darby Rd Havertown PA 19083	6	Kollie Kabbah
9/6/25	Run the Vineyards 2025	124 Beaver Valley Rd, Chadds Ford PA 19317	1	Kyle Kovalkoski
9/13/25	South Wayne PorchFest	421 Midland Ave, Wayne PA 19087	1	Cara Rydzewski
9/13/25	Upper Providence Community Day	1671 N Providence Rd, Media PA 19063	1	Cara Rydzewski

### III. Infrastructure & Capital Improvements

#### Operations:

##### Facilities

- Planning underway for Administrative Division move to Yeadon Wellness Center, with minor construction and realignment of staff (e.g., integrating DIS and Population Health).
- Reviewing relocation options for Environmental Health Division with County Real Estate.
- Ongoing facility maintenance: odor issues in Yeadon, lighting replacement, pest remediation at Baldwin Tower, and work orders for Chester and Yeadon Wellness Centers.

##### IT & Data Systems

- AchieveIT: Implementation of DCHD's 2025–2030 Strategic Plan entered into platform; analysis of task assignments and reporting underway.
- CDP EMR: Intake form fully tested; Language Line video in testing; County IT adding new iPad security software.
- Freshworks Call Center: Configured and tested; next steps include staff training, data migration, and dashboards. Planned expansion into contract management, facilities requests, and MCH intake.
- JotForm: Contract renewal secured; DCHD configuration to begin in September (will replace Qualtrics).
- Workday: County-wide rollout still delayed (status RED); DCHD warehouse inventory testing to begin September.

##### Fleet

- Mobile Health Unit: Production continued to be delayed due to supply chain issues; pre delivery site inspection targeted for October/November with delivery of vehicle in late November/December 2025 at this time.
- Fleet Training: Cross-training completed to ensure operational continuity in fleet management.

## County Recycling Study

- DCHD contributed data to County Office of Sustainability for development of new trash/recycling program. Findings show much staff waste is recyclable; County plans to shift to recycling bins at desksides with centralized trash collection.

## IV. Financial Report

- Grants Update:
  - **PHIG**
    - June spenddown \$60,447.68 uploaded to PADOH's SharePoint and approved by PADOH.
    - July spenddown \$58,325.48 upload to PADOH's SharePoint and approved by PADOH.
    - Budget Revision approval for Bree Agett's new contract received.
    - Cumulative spend down = \$1,625,709.38. Balance remaining = \$3,341,357.62.
    - PHIG Interest \$19,586.54 for June & \$20,351.53 - to be remitted back to State.
    - Personnel budget revision request to add Mobile Health Coordinator approved by PADOH.
    - Workforce report due 18th August submitted to PADOH.
    - Transfer to go to County Treasury PHIG account into General Fund \$1,846,346.74.
  - **Preparedness**
    - 2024-2025 invoice workbook uploaded to PADOH SharePoint totaling \$467,783.45 being reviewed by PADOH prior to invoicing and now invoiced to March 2025.
    - Payments processed through June 2024 invoice.
    - MRC STTRONG funding FY 24/25 ended May 31, 2025.
  - **ELC**
    - FY25-26 Appendix C Budget \$1,013,942.91 received, to be finalized.
    - July 2024 to June 2025 approved by PADOH – Payments \$1,576,019.74 approved. Funds with State & County.
    - Payments processed through June 2024 invoice.
  - **HIV**
    - July Invoice for \$34,109.17 signed and submitted to PADOH 8/28.
    - FY25-26 Spend = \$34,109.17 (6.7%).
    - Balance Remaining = \$475,360.47.
    - Payments processed through May 2025 invoice.
  - **Immunization**
    - July Invoice for \$12,557.33 signed and submitted to PADOH 8/29
    - YTD Spend = \$12,557.33.
    - Payments processed through May 2025 invoice.
    - Still awaiting contract for 9-month period 10/1/2025 to 6/30/2026.



- **PAIC**
  - FY 24-25 \$4,789.91 submitted 7/31 – Awaiting check payment.
  - PAIC Coalition Services Grant for 2025–2026 received, initial \$7000 cut to \$5250.00 by PAIC.
- **TB**
  - July Invoice for \$2,463.78 submitted and approved by PADOH.
  - FY24-25 Spend = \$2,463.78 (3.9%).
  - Balance Remaining = \$48,014.22.
  - Payments processed through May 2025 invoice.
- **Maternal-Child Health Title V**
  - July Invoice for \$5,361.66 signed and submitted to PADOH 8/29- approved.
  - YTD Spend=\$5,361.66 (1.9%).
  - Balance Unspent = \$277,338.34.
  - Payments processed through May 2025 invoice.
- **Mosquito-borne Disease Control (Quarterly invoiced)**
  - YTD Spend=\$74,441.69 (49.24%).
  - Balance Remaining = \$76,730.86.
  - Q2 invoice (June 25) \$64,110.61 submitted to DEP 7/30.
- **HRSA Health Equity**
  - Total funds drawn for August 2023-July 2025 = \$1,552,629.72.
  - Remaining balance = \$197,370.28.
  - February 2025 drawdown of \$35,196.85 subject of DOGE enquiry, not yet received- following up with Federal.
- **DOL Doula**
  - Total funds drawn for the period of July 2024- July 2025 = \$52,036.83.
  - Remaining balance = \$901,963.18.
  - Spend down reports submitted: TOTAL \$29,234.61
- **Lead Hazard Reduction (LHR)**
  - Awaiting updates/instructions for next steps for invoicing in collaboration with County Office of Housing and Community Development.
- **Opioid Settlement Funds**
  - Delco Revive 6 months ended 6/30/25, \$65,517.82 submitted for payment 8/29/25.
  - Delco Revive balance remaining \$243,722.48.
  - Test & Go – no expenditure to date due to use of surplus HRSA funds and ELC grant.
  - Test & Go balance remaining \$145,740.00.
  - Opioid DCHD Personnel Subsidy –
    - Wages Q1 & Q2 2025 of \$69,261.08 billed 8/29/25

- Benefits Q1 & Q2 2025 of \$41,792.14 billed 8/28/25
- **Miscellaneous:**
  - Back to School event utilized \$7,1754.94 of funds-
    - From Sponsorship \$6,419.74
    - From Pop Health Funding \$735.20

## V. Challenges & Opportunities

### Workforce & Staffing

- DCHD employed 85 staff during the quarter, with 16 separations through August 2025. A countywide hiring freeze is in effect. Exemptions have been granted for nursing positions.
- DCHD is seeking additional exemptions to backfill critical roles including Data Analyst, Medical Assistant, and Communications Specialist to maintain operational effectiveness.
- Employee departures are largely tied to opportunities offering higher pay and flexibility. DCHD is working on efforts to strengthen retention, improve workplace culture, and support staff through the upcoming changes in the year ahead.
  - In September 2025, DCHD updated the department's prior "ad hoc" only remote work policy with a formal hybrid work policy permitting up to one day per week routine remote work for applicable positions.
  - DCHD is collaborating with consultant to design and implement an employee engagement strategy.

### Fiscal Operations

- Leadership is actively reviewing fiscal roles and responsibilities to improve functionality, accountability, and clear delegation of duties.
- This restructuring effort will support stronger financial oversight and streamline processes during a period of limited staffing capacity.

## VI. Upcoming Highlights/Success Stories

- In July, **Dr. Gifty Key** delivered a virtual on-demand presentation at the NACCHO360 Conference, highlighting the launch and implementation of DCHD's Test & Go vending machines. This presentation positioned DCHD as a leader in innovative, community-based harm reduction and public health access strategies. Through this national platform, Dr. Key showcased how DCHD is leveraging technology, partnerships, and innovation to strengthen community health infrastructure.
- **Marie Carbonara** was honored as a **2025 City & State Trailblazer in Healthcare**, recognizing her leadership and contributions to advancing public health in Delaware County and across Pennsylvania.



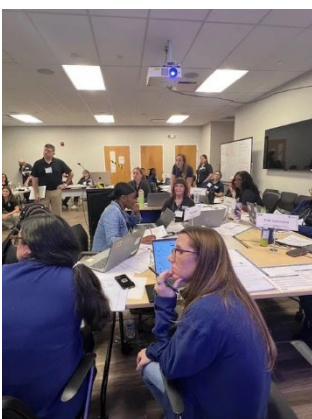
- On August 6, DCHD staff delivered a presentation at the Lansdowne Borough Lead Paint Community Forum. Special recognition goes to Mary Nixon, Shannon Dade, supported by Mary Craighead, Dr. Victor Rullan, Aminata Donzo, and Ariel Diehl for their contributions in preparation and delivery. The forum generated rich discussion around the risks of lead exposure and a proposed local ordinance aimed at prevention. This effort highlights the department's ongoing commitment to proactive strategies that prevent childhood lead poisoning and protect community health.
- On July 10, DCHD staff members Zachary Babel and Rachel Morelli delivered an outstanding presentation at the Swarthmore Rotary Club. Their session was praised by community leaders, including Frances Sheehan of the Foundation for Delaware County, who noted how informative and well-received the presentation was.



- In July 2025, the Delaware County Health Department was awarded a 2025 National Association of Counties (NACo) Achievement Award in the category of *Forming a Health Department*. This prestigious recognition celebrates 55 years of county innovation and acknowledges the vision, planning, and collaboration that made the creation of DCHD possible.



- In July 2025, DCHD facilitated the County Blood Drive, in partnership with the American Red Cross. A total of 49 units of blood were collected, which will help up to 147 patients in need.
- In July 2025, DCHD hosted a successful Bring Your Child to Work Day, thanks to the efforts of Shannon Dade, Samara Duncan, Diana Dur, Abigail Flanagan, Aaliyah Francis, Shaquanna Garrison, Cortress Hayes, Taymani Rivera-Hall, and many others who helped plan and execute the event. The afternoon was filled with fun and learning opportunities for the children.



- In August 2025, the Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) Team, led by Janet Barton, executed a countywide H5N1 response exercise following more than a year of planning. This dynamic, high-impact event simulated the challenges of preventing the spread of H5N1 in Delaware County. Important lessons learned were derived and improvement planning is underway.

- DCHD's Chester Back to School Bash and Yeadon Back-to-School events in August were a tremendous success. The Chester event was led by Diana Dur and Meagan Sheikh and was a collaboration with the city of Chester, Nemours, ChesPenn. The Yeadon event was led by Rasheeda Williamson and included the support of more than 30 dedicated DCHD staff members and their families in addition to partners from EagleEye, KidSmiles, Delco Libraries, Wawa, Acme, YMCA, and Franklin Mint. The event showcased the department's strong commitment to serving the community, with staff volunteering their time and energy to ensure families received health resources, school supplies, and support ahead of the new school year. Participants and partners praised the event for being well-organized, impactful, and deeply meaningful. A colleague from Pennie shared: "Loved every moment of the day and it is so very evident how dedicated to the local community the DCHD is."

YEADON

## A 'sweet' bookbag distribution for 600 Delco kids

And, there was a very special poster in the bags.

By Kathleen E. Carey  
kcarey@delcotimes.com

The Delaware County Health Department on Saturday distributed hundreds of bookbags filled with supplies and inside them was a poster designed by Marvel Studios.

The four-hour Back to School Fair was held at the health department's Yeadon location.

Nearly 400 families pre-registered for the distribution as health officials expected that 600 bookbags filled with supplies would be handed out during the day.

"We are just incredibly honored and grateful," Delaware County Health Director Lois Siegmund Werner said. "We feel like this is one of the ways we can connect to our neighbors."

This year was the second annual Back to School Fair, with immunizations and vision and dental screenings also part of the event.

Werner said immunizations are part of the health department's mission, but noted they may serve a more critical time this year with



KATHLEEN E. CAREY — DAILY TIMES

The Delaware County Health Department anticipated handing out 600 bookbags Saturday at the Back to School Fair.

the closure of Crozer Health.

"It is a more higher need given the situation in the county," she said. "We know people are struggling to find providers and get back to school immunizations."

Werner thanked the sponsors for making the day possible.

They included the Franklin Mint Federal Credit Union, Delaware County Libraries, Keystone First, Eagle Eye Mobile, Wawa, the YMCA, Acme Markets and Kids Smiles.

She explained that through their support and the department's action, they were able to get 600

bags to distribute this year.

"We knew it was going to be this high, so then we planned for it," she said.

"We also got backpacks through our donation drive too," Matthew Rankin, health department spokesman, said. "All of our sponsors had boxes in their locations. There was about 32 locations that we had."

He explained how the distribution worked.

Families signed up for a specific time slot this year and then, they were escorted into the Yeadon office, where bags were separated into el-



KATHLEEN E. CAREY — DAILY TIMES

Delaware County Health Director Lois Siegmund Werner shows the supplies that were included in the bookbags.

ementary, middle and high school categories.

There, the students could pick whichever bag they wanted and it was filled with supplies such as notebooks, markers and a specially designed Marvel Studios poster featuring Iron Man fighting lead poison monsters.

### The poster

Ariel Diehl, the maternal and child health nurse at the health department, was the brainstorm behind that poster.

"Last year, I had a dream and then I was inspired by

the fact that Iron Man and lead compete for absorption in the small intestine," she said. "So, if you personified lead as a villain or a monster, Iron Man could be our new hero. So, I wanted to raise awareness about it."

A friend of someone close to her works at Disney and they passed her message to Marvel.

"The comic book department loved the idea," Diehl said.

The Marvel team then designed two drafts, the county Health Department critiqued them and picked the final one of Iron Man between the two lead monsters.

For Diehl, it was important to have an empowering

picture where Iron Man is conquering the lead.

The design was created into 20,000 posters and coloring pages to be distributed throughout the county. This effort was paid through a federal grant the county received for a lead reduction and awareness campaign.

"It's such a dream come true," Diehl said. "I really feel that the idea came to me from up above. I had the faith to just carry it through and it came true."

### It's sweet

Families were thankful for the day.

"I think it's good for the community," Crystal Bowman said as she brought her niece Aaliyah to get a backpack.

I think it's sweet," a mom who identified as Tiffany said, adding that she liked everything there as her 8-year-old daughter, Mikayla, picked out a bag. "It's resources we didn't have, to be honest, especially with the supplies."

Werner said she hoped all who came knew how much Delaware County cares.

"I hope they feel the heart of us here and how we want to serve," she said of her department.



KATHLEEN E. CAREY — DAILY TIMES

Bookbag distributions were only part of the Back to School Fair. It also included immunizations, vision and dental screenings and more.



KATHLEEN E. CAREY — DAILY TIMES

Ariel Diehl, the maternal and child health nurse at Delaware County Health Department, spearheaded the effort to have Marvel Studios create a poster for the bookbag distribution.



KATHLEEN E. CAREY — DAILY TIMES

Bookbags were divided into three sections — elementary, middle and high schools — as families were invited to come and take their pick.