
HEALTH DEPARTMENT
NEWS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**KENT COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT RECEIVES
NATIONAL “PUBLIC HEALTH READY” RECOGNITION**

GRAND RAPIDS – During times of public health emergencies, natural disasters or acts of terrorism, having a team of prepared professionals ready to jump into action is critical. The Kent County Health Department (KCHD) prepares for incidents and often tests its capabilities for emergency response. Now, KCHD is being recognized by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) for its ability to plan for, respond to, and recover from public health emergencies. KCHD submitted and met the 287 benchmarks to prove readiness capabilities. These preparedness benchmarks are required for recognition by Project Public Health Ready (PPHR), a unique partnership between NACCHO and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Kent County Health Department is one of 400+ local health departments across the country that have been distinguished for excellence in preparedness through PPHR. “Our Emergency Preparedness Team is able to call on our various divisions within the health department at the most critical times,” said Adam London, Health Officer of the Kent County Health Department. “They also work hard to cooperate and collaborate with other emergency response and human service agencies. Just in the past 24 months, they have proven their abilities during responses to two natural disasters (flooding in April 2013, tornado in July 2014) in a timely, efficient manner.” KCHD has a thorough and coordinated emergency response plan in place, and staff have the training to protect the health of the community during an emergency, according to the PPHR set of national standards for public health preparedness. These standards align with federal government requirements and other national best practices.

Comments made by the PPHR reviewers include:

“The application was very well put together and organized. This is one of the best, cleanest, well laid out plans that reviewers have seen. Very well done!”

“Descriptive, well-thought out, engage those outside of their purview, written well enough that anyone outside of Emergency Preparedness can understand.”

“All disasters strike locally, and local health departments are a critical part of any community’s first response to disease outbreaks, emergencies, and acts of terrorism,” said Robert Pestronk, NACCHO Executive Director. “NACCHO commends Kent County Health Department Name for being a model of public health emergency preparedness.”

(more)

KCHD has been in the business of providing health services to Kent County since 1931. The Health Department is home to nearly 260 employees including public health nurses, sanitarians, health educators, technicians, public health administrators, and specialized staff at the Kent County Animal Shelter. The Health Department operates one main clinic and three satellite clinics located in Kentwood, Rockford, and Grand Rapids. To learn more about KCHD services, visit www.accesskent.com/health.

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The PPHR recognition affirms KCHD as one of the best health departments in the U.S. Last year, KCHD achieved national recognition through the Public Health Accreditation Board; only 60 health departments have received this honor, and Kent County is the second in Michigan to achieve this recognition.

NACCHO, the voice of the 2,800 local health departments across the country, provides resources to help local health department leaders develop public health policies and programs to ensure that communities have access to vital programs and services that people need to keep them protected from disease and disaster. Its mission is to be a leader, partner, catalyst, and voice for local health departments in order to ensure the conditions that promote health and equity, combat disease, and improve the quality and length of all lives. For more information on Project Public Health Ready, including recognized sites, project tools, and resources, visit <http://www.naccho.org/PPHR>.

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