MISSION STATEMENT

The Hamilton Township Division of Health is dedicated to maintaining the health and wellbeing of our residents and visitors by means of prevention, health promotion, and education.

The Hamilton Township Division of Health balances three core government Public Health Functions. These functions are essential to the maintenance of population-based services:

1) Assessment of the health of the community and its resources;
2) Development of health policy which addresses the defined needs of the community and;
3) Assurance that high quality, effective services are provided or are available to the residents of this community.

HEALTHY PEOPLE 2020/HEALTHY HAMILTON 2020

Healthy People 2020 has a ten year plan for improving the nation’s health. Healthy People 2020 envisions a society in which all people live long, healthy lives.

Mission Healthy People 2020 strives to:

- Identify nationwide health improvement priorities.
- Increase public awareness and understanding of the determinants of health, disease, and disability and the opportunities for progress.
- Provide measurable objectives and goals that are applicable at the national, state, and local levels.
- Engage multiple sectors to take actions to strengthen policies and improve practices that are driven by the best available evidence and knowledge.
- Identify critical research, evaluation, and data collection needs.

Our goal for Hamilton Township mirrors the goals set forth by Healthy People 2020 in striving to:

- Attain high quality, longer lives free of preventable disease, disability, injury, and premature death.
- Achieve health equity, eliminate disparities, and improve the health of all groups.
• Create social and physical environments that promote good health for all.
• Promote quality of life, healthy development, and healthy behaviors across all life stages.

The Hamilton Township Division of Health provides programs mandated under Minimum Standards, to be known as Practice Standards. These traditional programs are recognized as necessary in order to protect and improve the health of the residents of Hamilton Township. “A strong public health system not only identifies and addresses health problems, but also assures healthy communities by preventing conditions that threaten health” (Healthy New Jersey 2010). Great strides have been made over the past decade: life expectancy at birth increased; rates of death from coronary heart disease and stroke decreased. Nonetheless, public health challenges remain, and significant health disparities persist. It is recognized that lifestyle and environmental factors are key elements in disease prevention and health promotion. Therefore, this Health Division utilizes health promotion, health protection, and provision of preventive services to best achieve the goals for a Healthy Hamilton 2020.
In the last two decades, there has been a tremendous increase in not only the services provided by this section, but a change in how the services are delivered.

This Public Health Nursing Section strives to provide effective public health actions, which are based on accurate knowledge of the causes and distribution of health problems and of effective interventions.

Public Health Nursing is defined as the practice of promoting and protecting the health of populations using knowledge from nursing, social, and public health sciences.

The Core Functions of Public Health

1) Assessment
2) Policy development
3) Assurance

The Public Health Nursing Section has been responsible for and has provided programs in Maternal/Child Health, School Health, Communicable Disease, Chronic Disease/Adult Health Services, Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Blood Borne Pathogens/Employee Health, Bioterrorism/Emergency Management Planning, and Community Education/Health Education.

Outreach to every population, including infant, pre-school, school age, adolescent, young adult, middle age and older adult, has benefited by the increase and improved delivery of services, and with the continued support of this administration.
Maternal/Child Health

PRENATAL PROGRAM

1) **High Risk Prenatal Home Visiting**

**Health Start** is a health services program for income-eligible pregnant women and children under two years of age. Area hospitals are Health Start providers of primary care prenatal services. Home visits are seen as a vital component for women and children at risk. “High risk” patients may have physical, mental, social, and/or environmental problems. In Hamilton Township, home visits are provided by the Public Health Nurses when requested or a referral is made.

- **In the year 2014, no referrals to high risk prenatal women were requested.**

II. POSTPARTUM/INFANT PROGRAMS

1) **Home Visiting**

**Postpartum/Newborn Visits**

Home visiting to families with newborns is another valuable way to provide information and guidance on physical, emotional, nutritional, and cognitive development of infants. Home visiting was identified through Minimum Standards as a necessary component of the Maternal/Child Health program. The Hamilton Township Public Health Nursing Section has been visiting postpartum mothers and their newborns for many years. Due to the increase in population and the increase in overall programs, home visits are now limited to infants at risk and in response to families requesting a visit after receiving a welcome letter from the Mayor and this Health Office, or student nurse educational visits.

- **In 2014 there were 2043 births in Hamilton Township.**
- **Two (2) postpartum and newborn home visits were completed by the Public Health Nursing section. These visits were made to high-risk families.**

III. CHILD HEALTH CONFERENCE

1) **Assessment/Immunizations**

In an attempt to find medical homes for indigent populations, Medicaid has expanded their program into NJ KidCare and most recently, FamilyCare. It was also recognized that insured individuals should receive their well care and immunizations through their physicians.

The Vaccine For Children Program (VFC) is a federal program in which vaccines are provided to the health departments and private physicians free for all eligible clients. Clientele serviced at this health department are the uninsured. The underinsured, by law, must be referred and serviced at a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC).
In the year 2014, there were 76 Child Health Conferences held.

In the year 2014, there were approximately 153 infants, preschool, school age, and college age clients serviced at the Child Health Conference resulting in 471 visits throughout the year.

Approximately 1,100 immunizations were administered to clients aged 2 months through nineteen years.

4 lead screenings were performed.

All walk-in clients are accommodated as needed.

Clinic clientele reflects a large number of foreign-born patients/immigrants, many of whom need medical records translated from various languages which is difficult and time consuming. Clinic time length has increased due to time spent on each family’s complex medical needs.

The NJIIS (New Jersey Immunization Information System) was implemented by the State to record electronically all the immunizations received by children being serviced by health providers in the NJDHSS.

Children seen here at the Child Health Conference are enrolled into the NJIIS system with parental consent. Each immunization given is inputted into the system and becomes the child’s permanent health record which can be accessed by professionals trained in the NJIIS system.

IV. LEAD ASSESSMENT/INVESTIGATION/REMEDICATION

1) LEAD TESTING

All children through the age of six years receive testing for lead poisoning through the Child Health Conference or by referral from a physician. In the year 2014 a total of 4 children were tested with the MedTox blood testing system. 1 positive was found and family education was provided with a referral for follow up. All children and parents are provided with education regarding the hazards of elevated blood lead levels and risk reduction measures.

Early in the year, the State ended its relationship with Medtox labs to provide free lead testing to the under insured and uninsured. Local health departments were unable to perform this free testing. On September 24, 2014, the State Department of Health contracted with Tamarac Medical Agency to resume lead testing for the under insured and uninsured. The Hamilton Township Local Health Department has an account with Tamarac Medical Agency and will resume lead testing services.

In 2014, Lead education was provided to 5 Hamilton Schools by a Registered Environmental Health specialist (REHS) and Public Health Nurse.
2) **LEAD TRAX**

State Law NJAC 8:51 governs childhood lead poisoning.

The Childhood Lead Poisoning Information Database system must be checked daily for notification of any new cases of elevated blood lead levels. There are currently two PHN’s, and one REHS certified to use this system.

- In 2014, 1 new reported case was received.
- In 2014, 4 ongoing cases continue to be followed.

With the guidelines, case management involves in-depth assessment to determine a plan of care by the REHS and PHN. All case management is documented in the Lead Trax system.

Lead Education and prevention remain an ongoing Public Health measure to protect children from adverse health effects from lead exposure including neurological damage during their brain development.

V. **WOMEN, INFANTS AND CHILDREN (WIC)**

In 2014 the WIC Program (a supplemental food program), is under the administration of a private agency, The Children’s Home Society. Enrollees of this program receive checks which must be spent at local vendors who are WIC designated stores. Hamilton Health Department remains a vital, busy site for this program providing Nursing services for these clients. WIC services are provided at the Hamilton Local Health Department three Fridays a month.

- In the year 2014, there were 5800 visits made by clients to this WIC Clinic.
- At this time, there are approximately 2200 clients enrolled in the WIC Program in Hamilton Township.
I. **PRE-SCHOOL**

There are presently **52** Nursery Schools in Hamilton Township. Every Pre-School receives services from this Nursing Section, which may include all or some of the following programs: Immunization Audits, Lead Testing, Health Education Programs and Communicable Disease Follow-up.

There are approximately **2,700** pre-school children in Hamilton Township receiving services from the Public Health Nursing staff.

II. **ANNUAL IMMUNIZATION AUDITS**

Public Health Nurses conduct immunization audits on every pre-school, elementary, middle and high school in Hamilton Township.

Immunization audits are conducted annually on all preschools, elementary school grades kindergarten and 1st, all 6th graders and all newly transferred or new students from out of state or out of country.

The middle and high schools are audited annually for all new students. These schools have full audits conducted every 3 years.

- All student records found to be non-compliant are re-audited by the public health nurses.
- In the year 2014 there were approximately **6500** immunization records audited in Hamilton Township schools.
- In addition to immunization auditing the nursing staff provides ongoing daily guidance/clarification/interpretation and education of school health records for the Hamilton Township school nursing staff.
- These audits, re-audits, and nursing intervention have resulted in exemplary high immunization compliance rates for Hamilton Township.
Communicable Disease Prevention Program

I. REPORTABLE DISEASES

Chapter 57, Reportable Communicable Diseases (N.J.A.C. Title 8) mandates the reporting and follow-up of specific diseases to the Health Officer in each municipality. The Public Health Nursing Section is responsible for the Communicable Disease Program in Hamilton Township. Follow up is conducted on all reportable diseases, including outbreaks in any institution or facility. The focus is on the basic principles of epidemiology as they are applied to the surveillance, prevention, and control of communicable disease. Institutional outbreaks require immediate attention and much time is spent with the facility coordinating prevention and control measures.

Underreporting of communicable diseases is an ongoing problem in the State of New Jersey. Laboratories are mandated to report specific diseases, however, a full proof mechanism to assure this is actually occurring is not in place. Physicians often neglect to report the mandated reportable diseases. Therefore, it is known that the reported numbers below are probably an understatement and not a true indicator of the diseases present in this community.

- All reportable diseases are reported and/or obtained through the State CDRSS Program, or reporting by health facilities. Daily input of case management activities, laboratory test results and diagnosis analysis is performed.

- Public Health Nurses investigate all reportable diseases, and collaborate with clients and environmental health staff. Improved reporting procedures have resulted in better laboratory reporting, however, physician reporting continues to be problematic.

- Outbreaks in the community and nursing homes and long-term care facilities require intense investigation.

II. COMMUNITY BASED COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

In order to protect public health, certain diseases and conditions are required to be reported in a timely manner by health care providers, administrators, and laboratory directors as per New Jersey Administrative Code Title 8, Chapters 57 and 58.

- In 2014 there were 349 diseases reported via physician, lab slips and by the state-wide electronic reporting system (CDRSS).
- Of these reported diseases, 198 were confirmed positive cases.
- Sixty-nine (69) were deemed “not a case” in that they did not meet the required criteria for diagnosis,
- Nine (9) were possible cases
- Thirty One (31) were probable cases
- Forty-two cases (42) are still under investigation.

**ENTEROVIRUS D-68**

According to the CDC, Enterovirus D 68 is one of more than 100 non-polio enteroviruses. This virus was first identified in California in 1962. EV-D68 can cause mild to severe respiratory illness. Mild symptoms may include fever, runny nose, sneezing, cough, and body and muscle aches. Severe symptoms may include wheezing and difficulty breathing. Since EV-D68 causes respiratory illness, the virus can be found in an infected person’s respiratory secretions, such as saliva, nasal mucus, or sputum. EV-D68 likely spreads from person to person when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or touches a surface that is then touched by others. People are more likely to get infected with enteroviruses in the summer and fall. In general, infants, children, and teenagers are most likely to get infected with enteroviruses and become ill. That's because they do not yet have immunity (protection) from previous exposures to these viruses. We believe this is also true for EV-D68. Adults can get infected with enteroviruses, but they are more likely to have no symptoms or mild symptoms. Children with asthma may have a higher risk for severe respiratory illness caused by EV-D68 infection.

In September 2014, Hamilton Township experienced the death of a four year old child caused by EVD-68. Due to this unfortunate event, Hamilton Townships Health Officer and Public Health Nurses provided extensive education to Hamilton community residents, families and Hamilton school staff members on proper hand washing and respiratory hygiene.

EV-D68 written education and public flu vaccines were offered for free to the public.

**EBOLA:**

The CDC reports, Ebola, previously known as Ebola hemorrhagic fever, is a rare and deadly disease caused by infection with one of the Ebola virus strains. Ebola can cause disease in humans and nonhuman primates. Ebola viruses are found in several African countries. Ebola was first discovered in 1976 near the Ebola River in what is now the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Since then, outbreaks have appeared sporadically in Africa. Symptoms include severe headache, muscle pain, weakness, fatigue, diarrhea, vomiting, abdominal (stomach) pain and unexplained hemorrhage (bleeding or bruising). Symptoms may appear anywhere from 2 to 21 days after exposure to Ebola, but the average is 8 to 10 days. Recovery from Ebola depends on good supportive clinical care and the patient’s immune response. People who recover from Ebola infection develop
antibodies that last for at least 10 years. When an infection occurs in humans, the virus can be spread to others through direct contact (through broken skin or mucous membranes in, for example, the eyes, nose, or mouth) with blood or body fluids (including but not limited to urine, saliva, sweat, feces, vomit, breast milk, and semen) of a person who is sick with Ebola. Objects (like needles and syringes) that have been contaminated with the virus. Ebola is not spread through the air, by water, or in general, by food.

Hamilton Township Police were formally educated on Ebola and the use of PPE by the Hamilton Health Department.

Hamilton Township Fire Fighters were formally educated on Ebola and the use of PPE by the Hamilton Health Department.

Hamilton Township School nurses were formally educated on Ebola and the use of PPE by the Hamilton Health Department.

- In 2014, there were nine (9) Ebola surveillance cases in Hamilton who reported daily temperatures and answer questions about their health and Ebola exposure history to the Public Health Nurses at the Hamilton Township Local Department of Health for 21 days upon arrival into the United States.

- In 2014, there were no confirmed cases of Ebola in Hamilton

**MRSA OUTBREAK**

Sporatic MRSA cases were noted in 2014, but no official outbreaks were confirmed for 2014. Policies and procedures that were set up within the Hamilton school system last year have been followed to prevent another large scale MRSA outbreak.

**MENINGITIS**

No cases of meningitis were reported in 2014.

**PERTUSSIS**

The number of residents investigated for Pertussis is nine (9). Pertussis outbreaks tend to be cyclic with peaks seen every 3-5 years. To reduce the risk of Pertussis in new mothers and their young children the CDC now recommends that pregnant women receive a dose of Pertussis containing vaccine prior to going home after delivery.
All students entering 6th grade and turning 11 years of age are also required to have a booster dose of a pertussis containing vaccine (Tdap). The Hamilton Township Health Department provides this immunization free of charge to those students who are uninsured.

III. **NOSOCOMIAL DISEASE OUTBREAKS:**

In 2014, one (1) facility was investigated for Norovirus.

In 2014, two (2) facilities were investigated for Scabies outbreaks.

In 2014, one (1) case of RSV was being followed at a local hospitals’ NICU.

IV. **HEPATITIS A**

State guidelines mandate **Hepatitis A as an immediately reportable disease**.

In December of 2014, it was reported that a community member who was a food handler at a local well frequented restaurant was infected with Hepatitis A. This prompted an immediate investigation and immediate measures to stop the spread of the disease in our community.

- The Hamilton Division of Health conducted six (6) public health clinics where community members received the Hepatitis A vaccine prophylactically.
- There were approximately 650 community members vaccinated with Hepatitis A vaccine
- The vaccine was offered at a $35 charge for interested residents.

Public Health Nurses investigated and followed-up on eleven (11) cases of Hepatitis A in Hamilton in 2014.

- Six (6) cases were deemed to be “not a case”.
- Five (5) cases were confirmed.
- Of the 5 confirmed cases, 3 cases were associated with the December 2014 restaurant outbreak.

Public Health Nurses continue to educate the public regarding Hepatitis A immunization importance. Uninsured residents are eligible to receive free Hepatitis A, as well as Hepatitis B immunization through our Adult Clinic.
Due to Medical Director Services in 2014, the Public Health Nurses are able to obtain and administer prophylaxis for Hepatitis A at the Hamilton Township Health Department within the established mandatory time frame set by New Jersey State Health Department and Centers for Disease Control.

III. LEGIONELLOSIS

In 2014 there was 1 confirmed case of Legionellosis.

IV. VECTOR-BORNE DISEASE

Prior to the late 1970’s, tick-borne diseases in NJ were relatively rare and not considered a major public health threat. The first cases of Lyme disease were reported in NJ in 1978 and since then, it has been the most commonly reported tick-borne disease in the United States.

**Lyme Disease:**
New Jersey consistently ranks among the states reporting the most cases. Hamilton Township investigated 78 cases of Lyme Disease in 2014. Of these cases, 22 were confirmed in that they met all aspects of a clinical picture for Lyme Disease. Four (4) were possible cases, 4 were probable cases. Thirty-seven (37) were found to be not a case in that they did not meet the CDC’s case definition. Eleven (11) cases are still under investigation at this time.

**Chikungunya:**
In July 2014, the first Chikungunya case acquired in the US and not related to travel was seen in Florida. Soon after, 2 confirmed cases were seen in Hamilton township residents. Both cases were travel related.
In 2014, (1) possible case of chikungunya
In 2014, (1) “not a case” of chikungunya

**Babesiosis:**
In 2014, there was (1) possible case of babesiosis and (1) deemed “not a case” among Hamilton Residents

**Dengue Fever:**
In 2014, there was (1) probable case of dengue fever and (2) “not a case” of dengue fever.

**Ehrlichiosis:**
In 2014, there was (1) probable case of ehrlichiosis and (2) “not a case” of ehrlichiosis.
West Nile Virus:
There was one (1) probable case of West Nile Virus in Hamilton Township in 2014. Public Health nurses continue to educate Hamilton Township residents on ways to protect themselves against vector-borne diseases.

BLOODBORNE PATHOGEN PROGRAM

I. EMPLOYEE PROGRAM

Hepatitis (Hepatitis A, B, C) and HIV/AIDS are diseases caused by bloodborne pathogens. Therefore, since July 1992, OSHA has mandated a bloodborne pathogen prevention program which must be offered to all employees determined to be in high risk positions, including health personnel, police officers, and other designated titles at risk due to their job duties. Education must be provided to employees with specific job titles on an annual basis, and Hepatitis B vaccine is offered to employees determined to be at high risk occupationally for contracting this disease. Hepatitis B requires a series of three (3) vaccinations and all administration and follow-up is conducted by this office. Education is also provided regarding the Ryan White Act which covers first responders who are exposed to specific diseases. New employees designated as high risk must be offered the educational program and vaccine within ten (10) days after their hire date.

Twinrix is a vaccine which protects against both Hepatitis A and B. This vaccine is now used for the Bloodborne Pathogen Program in Hamilton Township. Hepatitis A may be contracted through direct contact with an infected person. Although Hepatitis A is not, for most, considered to be a job related risk, it is now offered as an option for any employee who has not received the Hepatitis A or Hepatitis B vaccination series.

- In the year 2014, a total of 30 Twinrix vaccines, 4 Hepatitis B vaccines, 1 Hepatitis A vaccine and 8 Tdap vaccines were administered to Hamilton Township employees through the Bloodborne Pathogen contracts defined below.

- All employees considered at risk occupationally for tetanus are offered the Tdap vaccination that provides protection for 10 years. Employees in the Animal Control Department, Water Pollution Control and Grounds and Maintenance were offered this vaccine.
II. CONTRACTS

The following agencies function under the same PEOSHA mandate regarding Bloodborne Pathogen Prevention. These agencies have contracted with this Health Division to provide training and Hepatitis Vaccine for their employees. Contracts (Inter-Local Agreements) already in place prior to 2000, were with the following agencies:

1. DeCou Fire Company
2. Whitehorse Fire Company
3. Colonial Fire Company
4. Groveville Fire Company
5. Hamilton Township Board of Education
6. Mercer County Special Services School District
7. Hope First Aid & Company
8. Head Start Program

- In the year 2014, there were 3 classes which resulted in 73 at-risk employees receiving Bloodborne Pathogen education.

IV. BLOODBORNE PATHOGEN (BBP) – COMMUNITY PROGRAM

Bloodborne Pathogen education is provided to the Mercer County Vocational School for Allied Health Students. The Public Health Nurse is responsible for Bloodborne Pathogen instruction. These students are also offered free flu vaccine to help them to comply with the guidelines set by the agencies in which they do their experience with.
I. EMPLOYEE PROGRAM
As of September 1995, PEOSHA required that employees must be protected from occupational exposure to TB. As a result, education to designated at-risk employees has occurred. In addition, screening for TB exposure is provided on an annual basis to those designated employees. Reports of exposures to tuberculosis are required along with continued follow-up. The Public Health Nursing Section conducts the education, screening and follow-up of all employees on a continual basis.

- In the year 2014, approximately 10 designated employees were screened with the Mantoux PPD test.
- Approximately 10 employees received education regarding tuberculosis.

II. COMMUNITY PROGRAM
Tuberculin testing is performed on specific high-risk community populations, including teachers, healthcare professional, students in healthcare professions, volunteers at specific organizations, and at times, pre-admissions to long-term care facilities.

- In the year 2014, there was a total of 68 Mantoux Tests administered.
- There were 3 positive results which required referral to the Mercer County TB Services located at Trenton Health Team located at 218 N Broad St. (Trenton Health Dept) for assessment, follow-up and treatment as needed.

III. DIRECTLY OBSERVED THERAPY (DOT) PROGRAM
Residents diagnosed with active tuberculosis are required to be treated for at least six months to a year. In an effort to assure compliance and adherence to the treatment regimen, DOT is mandated for a certain length of treatment time. Public Health Nurses make home visits on a daily basis (excluding weekends and holidays) to observe and monitor patients as they take their tuberculosis medication. This program increases patient treatment compliance and ultimately the spread of TB in our community.
There were 4 patients visited on a daily basis for DOT in 2014, resulting in a total of 398 home visits.

**SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASE & HIV TESTING SITE**

The Hamilton Township Division of Health/STD/HIV clinic is a qualified testing site. This clinic is located at the Hamilton Township Division of Health.

In 2014 we continued to provide RAPID HIV testing. This test allows the client to be pre counseled, tested and post counseled all in the same day. The client is given their results within 20 minutes after being tested. We received the lab license to perform this test in October 2011. This program is overseen by Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital New Brunswick. The license is issued by the State of New Jersey. RWJUH New Brunswick has assisted us in applying for the license and they continue to assist us for reapplying annually. Monthly site visits are made to evaluate our progress and to replenish our supplies.

Public Health Nurses must monitor temperatures for minimum and maximum daily for proper maintenance of our storage area of test kits (room temperature) and refrigerator storage area for controls.

An HIV counselor must run control testing of our RAPID HIV test kits (STAT. PAK) weekly to ensure quality control.

The RAPID blood test and the mandatory pre counseling and post counseling are all done by Public Health Nurses that are certified in HIV counseling. These nurses must rotate this job as per RAPID HIV protocol. The entire test takes approximately 20 to 30 minutes per client. RAPID HIV testing is done on a walk-in basis two days per week.

Along with our walk-in HIV testing program, testing of other sexually transmitted diseases occurs. One day a week this clinic is run by an Advanced Practice Nurse Practitioner and a Public Health Nurse (PHN) who serves as a certified STD counselor, an additional PHN providing services in the exam room and a family nurse practitioner who provides physical exams, diagnosis and treatment. Three PHN’s are certified STD/HIV counselors and four PHN’s are qualified to perform venipuncture.

- In the year 2014 there were 45 STD Clinics
- A total of 412 clients were seen
- 233 HIV tests were performed
- 374 clients were pre counseled
- 374 clients returned for post counseling
• **111 Hepatitis B or Hepatitis A & B (Twinrix), Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B vaccines were given through this clinic.**
• **Inter-Local Agreement contracts include Hopewell Township, Princeton, East Windsor, Hightstown, Lawrenceville, Ewing, Robbinsville and West Windsor.**

### ADULT HEALTH SERVICES

Chronic diseases are the leading cause of death and disability in the U.S. Baby Boomers account for nearly one third of national health care expenditures. Among seniors, the fastest growing segment of the population are people 85 years and older.

Extending years of life is a major focus in public health, however the quality of life during those years is important also. This Health Division has programs to detect elevations of blood pressure, blood sugar, and cholesterol and provides Health Education as needed.

#### I. NURSING EVALUATION CLINIC

This clinic is offered monthly, by appointment, at both of the Senior Centers in Hamilton Township (Bernice Muha Senior Center and the John O. Wilson Senior Center). Blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol tests are performed and referrals made when indicated.

• In the year 2014, a total of 150 assessments were performed.
• Follow up is conducted on every previously found referral and all new referrals. All positive screening tests are referred for private medical follow up. Health teaching is provided as needed by the Public Health Nurse.

#### II. COMMUNITY HOME EVALUATIONS

Referrals are made to this agency to assess and follow up on public health concerns/situations by other agencies as well as individuals. They range in ages of infant through adulthood as well as elderly/senior citizen referrals. These referrals range from sanitary/living condition complaints to child/elder neglect issues. Public Health nuisance threats such as head lice, bed bugs, etc are responded to in a timely fashion by the Public Health Nurses with RHES consultation as needed.

• In 2014, 2 Health Home Evaluations were acted on including assessment and actions as needed.

#### III. FLU/PNEUMONIA PREVENTION PROGRAM

According to Healthy New Jersey 2010, in the United States, more than 90% of deaths attributable to influenza occur among persons aged 65 or older. Influenza
vaccinations among the elderly have been shown to reduce the mortality and hospital admissions by sixty to seventy percent. Recommended vaccination from CDC have been expanded to include all persons 6 months and older.

This Health Division, through the Nursing Section has a very aggressive Influenza/Pneumonia vaccine program. Multiple mass immunization clinics are offered annually and home visits to homebound residents are made by the public health nursing staff. Flu vaccine is also offered to all Hamilton Township employees. The Pneumococcal vaccine is offered on a continuous basis annually.

- **In the year 2014, there were approximately 23 seasonal flu clinics held at various community sites in Hamilton Township.**
- **Approximately 3,618 influenza vaccines and were administered.**
- **Approximately 148 pneumonia vaccines were administered.**
- **There were approximately 86 home visits made to home-bound residents for flu shot administration.**

### IV. COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAMS

#### 1) HEALTH FAIRS/EVENTS/PRESENTATIONS

Numerous Health Fairs are held yearly throughout Hamilton Township. Educational materials are provided to the public on various topics regarding health and safety. The Public Health Nurses are available to answer any questions and for Health Consultation and Education.

In 2014 there were 4 Health Fairs held at the following locations:

- **RWJ Wellness Center “Heart Health Awareness Event”**
- **RWJ Falls Prevention Awareness Day at RWJ @ Hamilton Wellness Center**
- **RWJ Baby Expo at RWJ @ Hamilton Wellness Center**
- **Septemberfest**

The above Health Fairs/Events/Presentations were all well attended. Health Screenings, assessments, and appropriate referrals were completed, as well as Health education/consultation.

#### 2) SEPTEMBERFEST

In 2014, there was a Health Department tent at Septemberfest. Health professionals offered screenings and presentations on:

- Nutrition For Longevity
- Diabetes Prevention
- Heart Health
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & BIOTERRORISM

Public Health Nursing is a vital component of Emergency Preparedness & Bioterrorism

II. SMALLPOX RESPONSE TEAM
The CDC and local health departments are working to identify health care workers and first responders who could serve on response teams following a smallpox release. Participation on these teams and in the vaccination program is purely voluntary. Public Health Nurses are seen as necessary personnel since it is only RN’s, Nurse Practitioners, Physician Assistants and MD’s who may vaccinate others and provide critical services in days following an attack. Only health care workers who have been vaccinated with the smallpox vaccine will be allowed to then inject the smallpox vaccine in others. There are 5 regions in the State of New Jersey. Each region will have a response team. Hamilton Township is in the “Central West Region” and will be sent to Hunterdon County for education.

III. SMALLPOX PREPAREDNESS RESPONSE PLAN
These plans were provided to the health departments, which defined a timeline of activities and educational programs. The programs were initiated in 2003, and remain in place and are updated yearly.

IV. BIOTERRORISM CERTIFICATION
The New Jersey State Department of health (NJDHSS) has contracted with Rutgers University to provide training which is a critical component of New Jersey’s public health preparedness and response plan and has been developed specifically for local health departments in support of the importance to prepare for public health threats and emergencies. The NJDHSS expects that all local health departments professional staff complete the 40-hour certificate program.
The Nursing Staff have all attended classes and have either completed the required 40 hour certification or are in the process of obtaining their certification. Mandatory training for updates occur yearly for all PHN staff.

V. REGISTER READY

The NJ Register Ready program continues to expand. This long-term care assisted living and group homes were included in Register Ready Residents or facilities, for example long-term care, in need of assistance during an emergency are currently being enrolled. Anyone who requires assistance during an evacuation can register for first responder help. A dedicated laptop has been provided to the Public Health Nurse responsible for this program to identify and register residents and facilities in case of evacuations due to natural emergencies or bioterrorism events. The Register Ready program has grown in numbers to include housing complexes as well as private residences. We anticipate these numbers to continue to grow as our elderly and disabled population grows.

Educational Training Site

This Nursing Section has served as a clinical education site for the College of New Jersey, Drexel University, University of Wisconsin and other nursing education institutions for many years. At TCNJ Public Health Nursing courses are offered in the spring semester. Two clinical rotations take place from January through May. Approximately 4 students rotated through this clinical site. The Public Health Nursing staff serves as preceptors for the students as they learn the skills necessary for Public Health Nursing.

The Supervisor of Public Health Nursing precepts many students from various distance-learning universities to enable them to complete their community health clinical rotation. This preceptorship is free of charge to the students. This year we have added the role of preceptor to TCNJ’s Advanced Nurse Practitioner Program rotating students through various adult and pediatric clinical experiences. It is extremely important to encourage students, especially nursing students to enter the Public Health Nursing field. The extreme shortage of nurses presents a problem that needs to be addressed. It is very important to support academia to assure quality professionals for the future of Public Health.

Interlocal Agreements/Contracts

Agreements, letters of understanding and contracts exist with surrounding communities in order to provide services determined to be core activities. Services provided by the Nursing Section include:
1. Health Officer services to East Windsor Township.
2. STD/HIV Testing for residents of every Township in Mercer County except Trenton. Interlocal agreements exist between Ewing, Lawrence, Robbinsville, Hightstown, East Windsor, West Windsor, Hopewell Township, and Princeton
3. Child Health Conference Services to Robbinsville Township
4. Nursing Services for WIC program with Children’s Home Society of New Jersey
5. Nursing Services for Head Start Programs through Gateway Communities Action Partnership

- In addition to services provided to Head Start – Two Senior Public Health Nurses serve on the Health Advisory Council which is composed of dentists, physicians and local and state agencies who collaborate with Head Start.

**HOLIDAY COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES**

The Public Health Nursing section coordinates all community holiday activities. This is accomplished by adopting needy families and providing gift baskets to schools and churches to assist their families in need.

I. EASTER BASKETS & THANKSGIVING BASKETS

*Easter & Thanksgiving Food baskets* are donated from various organizations such as churches, schools, etc. Hamilton Township municipal employees in various offices also contribute food baskets for needy families. The baskets are delivered prior to the holiday.

- In 2014 $200 in Shop-Rite gift cards were donated and given to needy families
- In 2014, 8 Thanksgiving food baskets were donated and delivered to needy families as well as $350 in Shop-Rite gift cards.
- Back to School supplies were donated by a Hamilton Township Church for 2 large families with a total of 3 children.

III. ADOPT-A-FAMILY & FOOD BASKETS FOR CHRISTMAS

Various organizations and Hamilton Township municipal employees adopt families and are provided with “wish lists” on members of the family. The list includes ages, sizes, toy requests, etc. This program has grown every year. Food baskets and grocery story gift cards are donated by churches and other organizations.

- In 2014, there were approximately 19 families “adopted” to receive gifts and food baskets. Fifteen (15) $25.00 food gift cards were donated. Two local
organizations donated toys and were distributed to children associated with our health department.

HEALTH EDUCATION

*Health Education is a vital component of every program offered by the Hamilton Township Division of Health. The Health Educator offers many educational programs throughout the township for residents and employees. Health Education is provided by the Health Educator and/or Public Health Nurses.*

III. **EMPLOYEE SCREENING PROGRAM**

Prostate Screening is offered to all male employees of Hamilton Township who are 50 years of age and older. This program is offered once a year in April during regular working hours.

The screening is performed at a physician’s office and there is a digital exam as well as a PSA blood screening test. Robert Wood Johnson at University Hospital laboratory is used to perform the testing.

- In 2014, there were 14 male employees tested for prostate cancer.
- Follow-up and health education is provided as needed.

IV. **SCHOOL EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

1. **STD/HIV**

Educational classes on STD and HIV are conducted at Nottingham High School, Steinert High School and Hamilton High West.

- In 2014 there were no classes conducted.

V. **COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

1. **Lyme Disease Prevention Program**

Healthy People 2010 has defined Lyme Disease as a problem which needs to be addressed by the public health sector. Lyme Disease is a tick-borne illness, which may result in a debilitating illness if unrecognized. If left untreated, the bacterium travels through the bloodstream, establishes itself in various body tissues and can cause many symptoms, including headaches, painful arthritis, swelling of the joints, cardiac abnormalities and cognitive disorders. Education regarding prevention, high-risk tick locations, and prevention was distributed throughout the
The Lymerix vaccine is no longer available and therefore, can not be offered to high risk employees. Therefore, prevention through education becomes a vital component in the fight against this disease.

2. **West Nile Virus Program**

   This disease has become a major topic in the educational material offered through this health department. Target groups for education included: residents, schools, nursing homes and employees. The message focused on prevention since there is no vaccine available against this disease. Awareness was a major initiative through community talks, newspaper articles, WZBN announcements, the Hamilton Web-site, and inservice education to community groups and health personnel.

   Awareness education included mosquito control activities taking place in this township, the method of transmission, and signs and symptoms of the West Nile Virus.

VI. **GREATER MERCER PUBLIC HEALTH PARTNERSHIP**

   This year the Health Department joined the Greater Mercer Public Health Partnership (GMPHP) to participate in a health needs assessment of our community.

   *The mission of the Greater Mercer Public Health Partnership is to measurably improve the health of greater Mercer County residents. GMPHP’s vision is to take a leadership role and become a catalyst for change in improving the healthcare status of greater Mercer County residents by fostering collaboration, innovation, accountability, and continuous improvement based on evidence based best practice.*

   In June, the Community Health Assessment (CHA) was completed. This was a collaborate effort of our eight local health departments, and our four community hospitals and the United Way. This was a comprehensive community health planning effort to identify the health related needs and streets of our community.

   In December the Community Health Improvement Plan was completed. (CHIP) This is a plan to revive our community’s health, here and now. Improving the health of our community is critical for not only enhancing residents quality of life but also supporting their future prosperity.