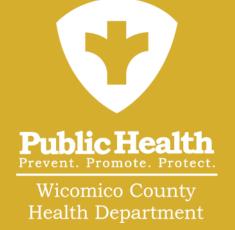
# Annual Report Fiscal Year 2021







## WICOMICO COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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## WICOMICO COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

### **VISION**

**Healthy People in Healthy Communities** 

## **MISSION**

To Maximize the Health and Wellness of All Members of the Community through Collaborative Efforts

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- Maximize health status through prevention, education, clinical, monitoring, advocacy, and regulatory services
- Initiate programs in response to identified needs
- Strengthen the physical, behavioral and environmental health of all citizens of Wicomico County
- Commitment to all populations while striving for health equity
- Address social determinants of health

### **OUR LOCATIONS**

E.S. Adkins Building 801 N. Salisbury Blvd Salisbury, MD 21801 Fritz Building 300 W. Carroll Street Salisbury, MD 21801 Hurdle Building 108 East Main Street Salisbury, MD 21801 Village Dental Center 705 N. Salisbury Blvd Salisbury, MD 21801





## MESSAGES FROM LEADERSHIP



As the COVID-19 pandemic persisted again this year, the Wicomico County Health Department has provided increased services to fight the virus locally such as additional testing clinics throughout the community, a large-scale vaccine clinic and coordinated community vaccination clinics. Never pausing in our commitment to our community, the health department worked tirelessly with local, state and federal partners to equitably provide testing and vaccination access.

In addition to our pandemic response, regular program services kept adapting to the new working environment through telework, telehealth and curbside options so that we could better serve our community. And as overdoses surged from the pandemic, our COAT

program and SHORE Center coordinated resources, and interventions to help those struggling with substance use.

The pandemic isn't quite over yet, but the health department continues to fight the COVID-19 battle and improve the health of its community.

Lori Brewster Health Officer

Over the past year, the Wicomico County Health Department has fought a constant battle against the COVID-19 pandemic in our community. Resolving misinformation, conducting contact tracing, and coordinating testing and vaccination efforts, they exemplified the importance of public health in our community. Their dedication and tireless efforts have not gone unnoticed.

As the health department continued with regular operations in addition to the extra duties brought on by the pandemic, staff monitored opioid overdoses and responded quickly to allocate additional resources and support to those suffering with substance abuse during these difficult times.



With the health department's continued efforts in stemming COVID-19, Wicomico County will get through this pandemic.

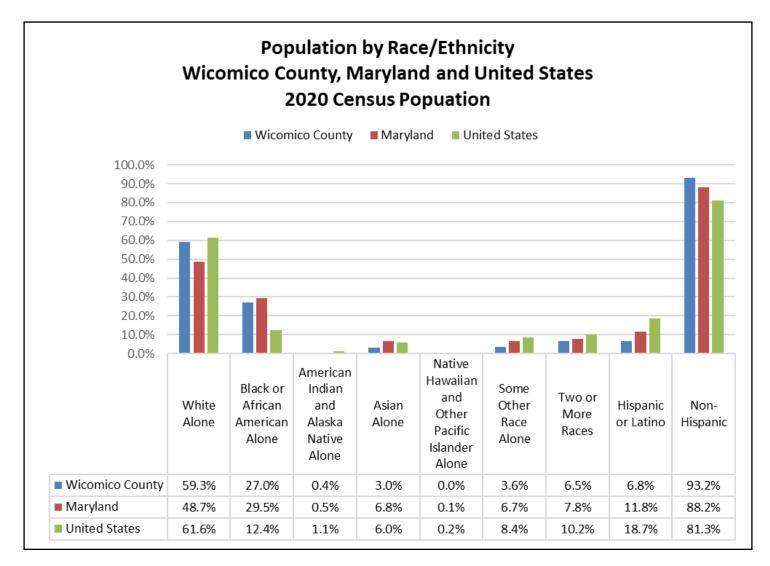
John Psota Acting County Executive





## **DEMOGRAPHICS**

Wicomico County, Maryland & United States  Based on 2020 Census & 2019 Census Estimates*					
Wicomico Maryland United States County					
Population	103,588	6,177,224	331,449,281		
Median Household Income	\$56,956*	\$84,805*	\$67,521		
Persons in Poverty	16%	9%	11.4%		







## Wicomico County Health Department 2017-2022 Strategic Plan: Fiscal Year 2021 Reporting

This document will report progress made during fiscal year 2021 (FY21) for Wicomico County Health Department's (WiCHD's) 2017-2022 Strategic Plan. The five year plan focuses on five priority areas:

**Priority I:** Improve community health and wellness by focusing on priority areas identified with the Local Health Improvement Coalition; chronic disease and behavioral health; also addressing access to care.

**Priority 2:** Provide, maintain, develop and ensure quality public health services.



**Priority 3:** Adopt business practices that will assist in reducing administrative costs and increase revenues by improving operational efficiencies.

**Priority 4:** Build and grow partnerships that will facilitate improved communication and expand public health wellness and awareness.

**Priority 5:** Recruit and retain a competent and diverse workforce.

Notable achievements for each priority area will be presented. Additionally, FY21 program accomplishments for programs not included in the priority areas will be reported at the end of this report. You will notice throughout the document, that progress for many health department programs continue to be impacted by COVID-19.

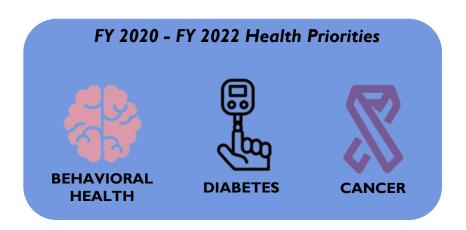




Priority Area 1: Improve community health and wellness by focusing on priority areas identified with the Local Health Improvement Coalition: chronic disease and behavioral health. Increasing access to care will also be addressed.

#### **Wicomico Local Health Improvement Coalition (LHIC)**

The Wicomico LHIC, coordinated by WiCHD, is a group of jurisdictional-level stakeholders charged with providing input and guidance on the identified health priorities for Wicomico County. Health priorities are updated every three years when our Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) is completed. The identified health priorities are then addressed in our Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). The CHNA will be updated in spring of 2022.



Two LHIC subcommittees provided input and guidance to develop and implement improvement strategies in these priority areas. Live Healthy Wicomico is the chronic disease subcommittee that addressed diabetes and cancer; and the Behavioral Health Work Group, led by the Wicomico Local Behavioral Health Authority, addressed mental health and addiction. When feasible, Access to Care was also addressed within these priority areas.



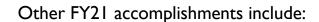


### Wicomico Opioid Intervention Team (OIT)

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) received a three-year "Overdose Data to Action (OD2A)" grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). MDH awarded local health departments grant funding through the OD2A program to support strategies and activities that build state and local capacity to prevent morbidity and mortality associated with opioid overdoses. Wicomico OIT partnered with BEACON (the Business, Economic and Community Outreach Network) of the Franklin P. Perdue School of Business at Salisbury University to create a strategic plan for reducing overdose in our community.



Given the limitations of the pandemic, the OIT and OD2A focused on spreading information about substance use disorder related resources. Over 76,000 impressions were made via Facebook, over 76,000 impressions were made via geofencing campaigns, and over 15,000 flyers were mailed out. Resource flyers were translated to Spanish and Haitian Creole to help reach non-English speaking residents.





- 4 Regrounding Our Response trainings on harm reduction provided to 98 area professionals, including one training provided by the world-class motivational speaker, Tony Horton;
- 14 Virtual Narcan Trainings provided;
- 60 Medication Disposal Bags distributed; and
- Continuing the Wicomico Goes Purple campaign, providing education via the Opioid Intervention Team Educational Trailer, which is a mock teenage bedroom set up to show possible red flags for substance use.







### **Community Outreach and Addictions Team (COAT)**

COAT hires peer support workers, individuals who have been successfully in the recovery process, to help others struggling with addiction, with the goal of linking individuals to treatment services. This program has proven to be an invaluable resource to the community.

FY 2021 COAT Data Evaluation Measures					
	Unduplicated # Serve				
Wicomico County Residents	323	76.72%			
Non-Residents	98	23.28%			
Total	421	100.00%			

FY 2021 COAT Data Evaluation Measures										
# Served Unduplicated # 6 Month 6 Month Follow Up Duplicated #										
1,561	176	41.81%	236	56.06%	234	56	45	80.36%	171	261

<sup>\*</sup> Data is not comparable to previous years due to changes in data collection and data operationalization that began January 2020.

\*\*This measure assesses progress of individuals served in the prior fiscal year. Data collection began January 2020. Six months of data will be reported in the FY21 report.





#### Wicomico Behavioral Health Program

FY21
Assessments
Completed:
Addictions: 406
Mental Health: 140

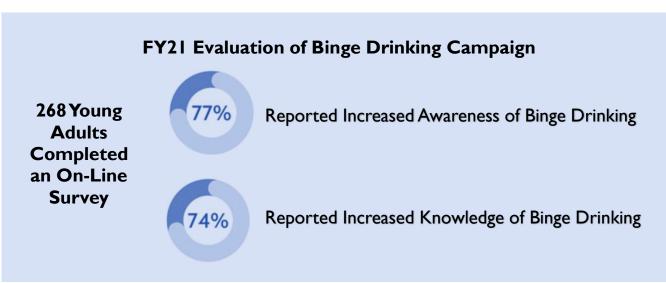
In order to continue to serve the community during the pandemic, the Behavioral Health Program adapted their services from in-person to telehealth. This included transitioning from walk-in assessments to scheduled assessment appointments. This allowed clients to schedule around work and give more access. In addition, the availability of audio only and video sessions allowed the program to meet the clients needs without the need for transportation, child care or time off work.

#### **Strengthening Families (SF)**

SF adapted its program to a virtual format during FY21, serving 10 families. SF is an evidence-based prevention program designed to help parents and children/youth within late primary school/early high school develop happier family relationships, improve mental health



outcomes, and help decrease youth alcohol and drug use, violence, and delinquent behavior. Of the 10 families, 5 completed a booster session and 5 completed the seven session program.









### **Opioid Misuse Prevention Program (OMPP)**

1,481 pounds of prescription medication was collected from 10 drop-off box locations in Wicomico County

### **Psychiatric Rehabilitation Program (PRP)**

PRP provides rehabilitation and support for individuals with a behavioral health diagnosis to develop and enhance their community and independent living skills. During FY21, services were provided through telehealth up until the last month of the fiscal year. 78 individuals were served (25 adults and 53 children).

Intervention Area	% Showing Progress
Academics	72%
Socialization	81%
Self-Control	83%
Daily Living Activities	63%

### Mental Health Targeted Case Management (TCM)

TCM services assist individuals with serious mental illness and/or co-occurring substance abuse disorders to gain access to the full range of mental health services, as well as to additional needed services, including substance abuse treatment, medical, employment, social, financial assistance, counseling, educational, housing, and other support services. During FY21, TCM served 78 adults.

### Tobacco Program

Despite pandemic-related limitations, the program held smoking cessation classes virtually and over-the-phone with over 50 participants.







#### **Harm Reduction Center**

The program provided 770 new syringes and equipment at the Center. Their voucher program that allows individuals to get new supplies from local pharmacies, provided 3,160 new syringes.



#### **State Care Coordination (SSC)**

SSC served 77 unduplicated individuals coming out of addiction inpatient services.

### Wicomico Local Behavioral Health Authority (LBHA)

The Wicomico LBHA plans, manages, and monitors a full array of treatment and rehabilitation services for persons with mental illness and/or persons with substance related disorders through the Public Behavioral Health System.

5,881
Wicomico County
residents received
mental health services\*



3,195
Wicomico County
residents received
substance use services\*

\*Estimated number provided by Maryland Behavioral Health Administration.

### FY21 LBHA accomplishments:

- 302 individuals received Professional Development Trainings.
- 304 individuals Narcan Trained virtually and in person.
- 720 Narcan Kits distributed
- 100 individuals assisted with financial assistance to access housing, utilities, vital records, transportation or health care.
- Developed the *Tri-County Resource Guide* and distributed over 900 guides to the community.
- Coordinated 4 Crisis Interventions Stress Management Responses, reaching 75 individuals.







Breast and Cervical Cancer Program (BCCP) and Cigarette Restitution Fund Cancer Prevention, Education, Screening and Treatment Program (CPEST)

Both programs assist individuals obtain screening exams for breast cancer, cervical cancer and colorectal cancer. During FY21, despite staff having divided responsibilities due to assisting with COVID-19 efforts, the programs were successful in providing outreach at over 70 events and serving more than 300 individuals. FY21 screenings included: 269 Mammograms, 78 Pap Tests, and 25 Colonoscopies.

#### **Village Dental Center**

The program completes oral cancer screenings on all patients. The program also provides diet counseling and BMI screenings. During FY21, 124 patients were referred to a primary care doctor to address weight and diet.



#### **Efforts to Address Diabetes**

In FY21, the Maryland Community Health Resources Commission (CHRC) awarded funding to each jurisdiction in Maryland to support the activities of local health improvement



coalitions and to build capacity in local communities to help implement the recommendations of the Maryland Diabetes Action Plan developed by the Maryland Department of Health.

Funding carries over to FY22 and will be used for mini grants for diabetic supplies, an assessment to help improve

Wicomico Health's Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP), the creation of a local diabetes resource guide, and the implementation of DPP using feedback from the assessment.





#### **SCALE** (Sustainable Change and Lifestyle Enhancement)

SCALE is a 12 week evidenced-based weight loss, nutrition, and physical activity program for women ages 18 - 55 years, and their children ages 7 - 17 years.

FY 2021 Sustainable Change and Lifestyle Enhancement (SCALE)  Data Evaluation Measures	Program
# of adults enrolled in SCALE program	8
% of adults with weight loss of at least 5% of their baseline body weight	95%
% knowledge change	100%
% reporting improved health status	50%
# of adults diagnosed as overweight or obese	7
# of adults diagnosed as overweight or obese with improved BMI or weight loss	7
# of adults with an increase in healthy lifestyle choices.	100%

Notes: Groups were held virtually due to COVID-19. Virtual meetings were challenging. In December 2020, Wicomico's health educator position became vacant. Beginning in January 2021, Somerset County Health Department provided classes in both Somerset and Wicomico counties.



#### **WalkWicomico**

Due to the continuing pandemic, the Walk@Lunch event in October 2020 was canceled. However, WalkWicomico partnered with the walking coalitions in Somerset County and Worcester County for a month-long virtual Lower Shore Walking Tour. Residents were encouraged to register for the tour to receive a map of local parks and trails. All participants were asked to take a

photo of themselves being active and submit them for an entry to win a grand prize. The more photos entered, the greater the chance of winning. During FY21, WalkWicomico continued to promote walking and healthy living through their website and Facebook.





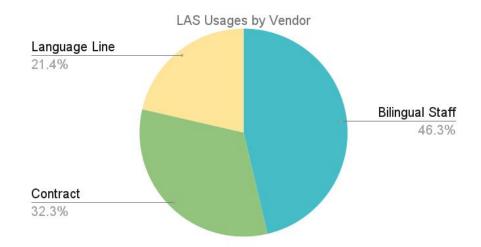
#### **Language Access Services**



Language Access Services (LAS) at WiCHD increases access to services for Limited English Proficient (LEP) populations within our community. LAS include interpreter services from contracted interpreters (in-person), Language Line (telephonic interpretation) and bilingual WiCHD staff members. LAS also include translation services where vital documents are translated into the most

common languages served. In Wicomico County, the top 3 languages are English, Spanish and Haitian Creole.

Although the number of LEP clients served increased by 115.62%, the overall LAS cost decreased 41.28% - from \$46,458 in FY20 to \$27,281 in FY21. This could be a result of the increased usage of bilingual staff members versus paid contract interpreters.







## Priority Area 2: Ensure quality public health services.

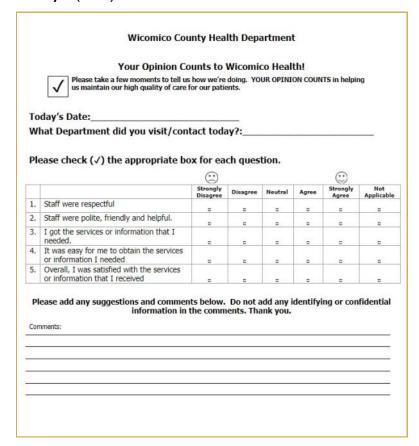
#### **Quality Council Perseveres**

Although regular business practices were limited, the Quality Council (QC) continued to educate staff about the importance of quality improvement and to expand our customer input focus through updated customer satisfaction surveys (CSS).

The QC collaborated with Personnel to develop and implement a half-day onboarding session to introduce new employees to the agency. Going forward, Onboarding sessions will occur at least three times per year.

Keeping with the planned training schedule, I58 WiCHD staff members participated in a self-guided virtual quality improvement refresher course.

In June 2021, the QC finalized the new customer satisfaction survey (CSS) and launched it to staff and on the agency's website. The CSS will allow WiCHD to identify areas of need or improvement its services. Additionally, the CSS is available



The new and improved CSS

in Spanish, Haitian Creole, Korean, and Portuguese which will open up customer feedback from the Limited English Proficient populations.

In FY21, the QC received one staff-submitted QI idea ticket. However, the ticket was not accepted because it did not meet the parameters of a QI project.





#### **Accreditation Activities**

During FY21, WiCHD worked on reaccreditation activities for the Public Health Accreditation Board.WiCHD continues efforts to improve areas identified as opportunities for improvement.

In FY21, **Behavioral Health** was reaccredited by CARF (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities) for another three years. The Methadone Program was also reviewed by the Maryland Department of Health, Behavioral Health Administration, and received a successful compliance review.





## Working with Community Partners to Provide Quality Services

Recognizing that input from community partners is invaluable, WiCHD participates in and/or coordinates countless efforts that focus on identifying and addressing gaps. A few examples of these efforts include the following:

- Local Overdose Fatality Review Team aims to decrease overdose deaths
- <u>Drug Free Wicomico</u> builds capacity with data availability and usage, as part of the Strategic Prevention Framework
- <u>Sexually Transmitted Infection Task Force</u> meets regularly with stakeholders to reduce county STI rates
- <u>Fetal and Infant Mortality Review Team</u> assesses, monitors and works to improve service systems and community resources for women, infants and families
- Lower Shore Vulnerable Populations Task Force group of organizations, service providers, businesses, and volunteers, that formed initially in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to address social determinants of health





Priority Area 3: Adopt business practices that will assist in reducing administrative costs and increase revenues by improving operational efficiencies.



Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, typical business practices continued to adapt to COVID limitations and many staff members continued in their Emergency Preparedness and Incident Command roles. Despite the limitations and a continuing pandemic response, WiCHD continued with its ongoing performance improvement initiatives.

#### **Ongoing Performance Improvement Initiatives**

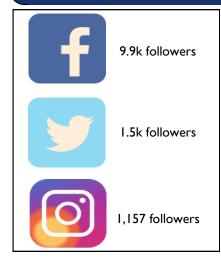
- Budget reports distributed monthly for review, followed by quarterly virtual meetings
  with management staff to analyze current and future expenditures, and to plan for the
  following fiscal year's budget.
- Examined methods to increase collections and to increase effectiveness of telehealth visits.
- Tracked and monitored productivity of Fee for Service (FFS) staff.
- Continued offering training on administrative policies and processes to staff onboarding, who have fiscal duties in their position description.







Priority Area 4: Build and grow partnerships that will facilitate improved communication and expand public health and wellness awareness.



## Public Communication to Expand Public Health and Wellness Awareness

As the pandemic persisted, WiCHD continued using social media and the agency's website to push information out to the public. Social engagements remained high throughout the year, especially on Facebook: 313k reactions to 3.5k posts.

### **Stakeholder/Community Input Obtained in Planning Process**

Throughout FY21, several WiCHD programs gathered input during their planning process. Below are just a few of many examples.

- The Tobacco Coalition held meetings with community partners to address group needs and concerns, and ultimately identified clearer coalition objectives.
- The Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs (ATOD) program surveyed parents and young adults about underage/binge drinking in order assess the affect of their campaign and to tweak the future campaign strategy.





## Priority Area 5: Recruit and retain a competent and diverse workforce.

### **Teleworking Continues for Most Staff**

Due to the pandemic, the majority of the agency's staff continued to telework during the fiscal year.

#### **Workforce Development Plan**

The Plan continues to be updated. Plans include forming a Workforce Development Committee and training staff in the Council on Linkages Core Competencies.

#### **Staff Training Plans**

Opportunities for training through the State of Maryland are provided to all staff. Supervisors are required to look at training needs during the End Cycle Performance Review and to list training that should be completed by the next review. Staff can access the State Training site - The Hub, to not only take mandatory training but to find other beneficial training to expand their knowledge.

#### **Staff Performance Reviews**

All staff evaluations were completed on time and entered into the State Personnel System.

### **Onboarding**

Two onboarding sessions were completed with new staff. The sessions were adapted to a virtual format due to the pandemic. The half-day session provides an overview of the agency.

EMPLOYEE DEMOGRAPHICS*					
EMPLOYEE TYPE					
Regular	171	83.00%			
Contractual	35	17.00%			
Total	206	100%			
GENDER					
Female	172	83.50%			
Male	34	16.50%			
Total	206	100%			
RACE	•				
Asian	2	0.97%			
Black	75	36.41%			
White	116	56.31%			
Other	I	0.49%			
Unknown	12	5.82%			
Total	206	100%			
AGE					
18-24	5	2.42%			
25-34	28	13.60%			
35-44	55	26.70%			
45-54	56	27.18%			
55-64	48	23.30%			
65+	14	6.80%			
Total	206	100%			





**Program Accomplishments:** this section of the report will present FY21 accomplishments for programs not included in the identified priority areas.

The **Minority Youth Outreach Program (MYOP)** held their annual conference virtually. This year's theme was Implicit Bias and overall, 100 individuals participated.



The Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs Prevention (ATOD) program held their annual Awards ceremony virtually - a first for the program. The ceremony recognized local law enforcement officers, liquor licensees, community programs, and youth for their efforts in decreasing alcohol, tobacco and other drug use in Wicomico County. At least 50 people attended this event.

**Environmental Health** is responsible for the enforcement of regulations related to safe food, water and a safe environment. During FY21, staff worked closely with the Attorney General's office on several compliance issue cases and was successful in achieving satisfactory results. Staff also worked on improving their processes to improve turnaround times to issue permits, inspections and other general applications. They also improved access to the Limited English Proficiency population by translating rabies information to Spanish and translating Food Plan Reviews into Chinese.

During FY21, **Vital Records** implemented the ability for customers to order and pay for birth certificates on-line.



**MA Transportation** serviced 5,098 wheelchair clients, 2,714 stretcher patients, and 19,992 ambulatory clients.







#### The Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

**Program** continued to provide services during the pandemic via phone. Staff delivered breast pumps to the hospital to mothers in need. Additionally, new WIC foods were added to make shopping easier and to help encourage participants to stay on WIC.



The **Administration Department** was given many roles in Incident Command during the COVID-19 pandemic, including the responsibility of receiving, awarding and monitoring the Coronavirus Relief Funds for Wicomico County totaling \$18,078,972.



Administration initiated all the Memorandums Of Understand (MOUs), monitored the expenses and completed all reports due to the State. The MOUs included the following:

- MOU with Wicomico-Salisbury Economic Development to award Cares Act funds to small businesses in Wicomico County for over \$9 million.
- MOUs with all 13 Fire Departments in the county to purchase equipment and personal protective equipment (PPE) totaling over \$4.5 million
- MOUs with TidalHealth Peninsula Regional and local Nursing Homes to provide additional PPE
- MOU with Wicomico Parks and Recreation to provide day care coverage for parents who were essential workers during the pandemic.
- MOU with Wicomico County to pay for safety upgrades in County buildings, PPE and COVID-19 Test Kits

**Administration** was also tasked with receiving National Stockpile PPE for Wicomico County, and was responsible for storing, tracking and inventorying all PPE. WiCHD filled 340 PPE orders from many Wicomico County medical facilities as well as Salisbury University.



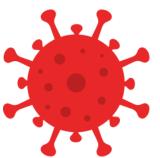




## FIGHTING THE PANDEMIC



Throughout the pandemic, WiCHD has stepped up to battle COVID-19 at the local level. Across the agency, staff members adapted to the new norm and took on additional duties to protect the community from COVID-19.



## FY2 1 Accomplishments:



Our COVID-19 Call Center answered 28,223 calls.







Incident Command responded to 432 COVID-19 related complaints from the Governor's Tip Line and worked to enforce the Governor's Executive Order.



WiCHD held 251 vaccination clinics, vaccinating 28,024 people.







## WICOMICO HEALTH IN THE COMMUNITY









