



ORANGE COUNTY  
HEALTH DEPARTMENT

# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT



**Community Health Services**



**Dental Health**



**Environmental Health**



**Finance and Administrative  
Services**



**Personal Health Services**

(919) 245-2400

[www.orangecountync.gov/Health](http://www.orangecountync.gov/Health)



The Orange County Health Department has five divisions. Community Health, Dental Health, Environmental Health, Finance and Administrative Services, and Personal Health Services.

In this report, you will find service data updates from the last 3 years, highlights from the new Community Health Assessment, and an updated mission statement adopted by the Board of Health.

If you would like to stay up to date with what the Health Department is doing to create a healthy Orange County, sign up for its newsletter here: [www.orangecountync.gov/HealthNews](http://www.orangecountync.gov/HealthNews)

## Board of Health

### Board of Health

The Board of Health is the primary policy-making and adjudicatory body for the Health Department. Mandated by state law, the board is composed of professionals representing specified health related fields in addition to several at-large members. In 2023, the Board

- Adopted a new vision statement for the department and revised its existing mission statement. Both voice a stronger commitment to health equity.
- VISION Create the conditions for everyone in Orange County to experience the highest attainable standard of health.
- MISSION Promote and protect health, enhance quality of life, and preserve the environment for everyone in Orange County.
- Submitted a resolution to the North Carolina legislature encouraging adoption of T21 (Tobacco 21), the federal law passed in 2019. The resolution

is consistent with the Board’s position that North Carolina must do more to protect youth from vaping and nicotine addictions.

- Welcomed a new board member: Davia Nickelson, DDS, as its Dental Representative.



Davia Nickelson, DDS

Additionally, board member Alison Stuebe, MD, professor of obstetrics and gynecology at the UNC School of Medicine and Quintana Stewart, health department director were named principal co-investigators on a study named “Thriving Hearts: Healing-Centered, Integrated, Community Maternity Care.” Funded by the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI), an independent, nonprofit organization based in Washington, D.C., the 5-year \$21-million study seeks to reduce hypertensive disorders of pregnancy (HDP) and improve maternal outcomes across 10 North Carolina counties.

## Community Health Services

Staff who work in the following program areas connect Orange County residents with valuable community resources and health information.

### FAMILY HOME VISITING

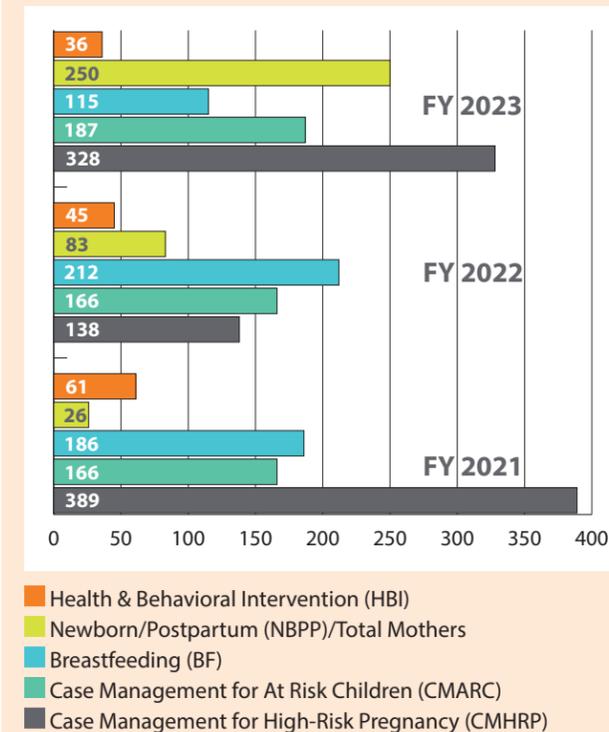
This state-funded set of programs serves families with children ages 0-5 and expectant mothers – most of whom are Medicaid recipients – as they

seek to address basic medical/mental health care needs, link with service providers, and become self-sufficient.

Medicaid Transformation remains a major concern. Staff help families make the transition and work with health plan managers to ensure program standards are met.

## Community Health Services

### Annual Visits by Maternal Health and Family Home Visiting Programs



### FAMILY SUCCESS ALLIANCE (FSA)

FSA is a county-funded program serving families with children ages 0-18 that may lack access to medical/mental health care as well as to housing and food.

#### Welcomed 137 New Families

- The Connections program provided 20 families with short-term support and information and referral services.
- Family Navigators supplied 117 families with case-management level services. 46 of those families worked with Connections staff for additional information and referral services.

#### Attended 15 Community Engagement Events

- FSA co-hosted Orange County Schools’ Family Expo and Global Showcase and an immigration information session with Beckie Moriello, a nationally recognized immigration specialist with Raleigh Immigration Law Firm, and



- Attended 13 resource fairs sponsored by community partners.

### Hillsborough’s Gateway Community

- FSA partnered with New Hope Elementary to offer afterschool tutoring 3 afternoons/week throughout the school year, and
- Collaborated with Orange County Department of Social Services and local law enforcement to host 2 on-site community celebrations and a field trip with 35 residents to Lazy 5 Ranch, a zoo in Rowan County.

### FORMERLY INCARCERATED TRANSITION (FIT) PROGRAM

Community Health Workers connect formerly incarcerated people who have chronic illnesses to health care and other community resources. State and local funds support the FIT Program.

#### Welcomed 29 New Clients

- 12 clients needed help finding a place to live.
- 10 wanted treatment for mental health and/or opioid or substance use disorders, and
- 7 clients needed transportation assistance to food banks or to aid in their job search.

#### Program Staff Attended

- 4 information events at Orange County Prison.
- 2 outreach events in conjunction with the Family Success Alliance and 1 event with the Orange County Local Reentry Council, and
- The American Consortium of Criminal Justice Health Conference

## Community Health Services

### Received Additional Funding

Orange County is 1 of 3 North Carolina counties that will be able to expand service needs for people released from incarceration and suffer from serious mental illness. Read more about the \$5.5 million investment from [NC Department of Health and Human Services](#).

### HEALTH PROMOTION AND EDUCATION SERVICES (HPES)

HPES gathers vital data to help the Health Department set its strategic direction. It also assists with departmental communications, community outreach, event planning, and provides health education and communication technical assistance to community partners.

### Healthy Carolinians of Orange County (HCOC)

HCOC is a network of agencies and citizens partnering to promote health and wellness in Orange County.

### Community Health Assessment (CHA)

Using surveys, door-to-door outreach, and collaboration with community partners, program staff updates the state-mandated CHA every 4 years.

Available in English, Spanish, Mandarin, Karen, and Burmese, the 2023 survey yielded 582 responses from community members. 80 community members participated in 10 listening sessions hosted by HCOC staff. And 223 residents casted votes in a county wide poll to select the 3 priority areas for the 2023 CHA:

- Access to Care – affordable, convenient, welcoming services
- Behavioral Health – mental health and substance abuse awareness and treatment
- Connections to Community Support – increase knowledge of local resources

Find out more about the CHA priority areas and read the [full report](#).

### Trainings to Promote Health and Equity

HCOC staff partnered with Alliance Health to host a Mental Health First Aid Training for adults and a similar session for youth. Attendance was around 20 for each event. Staff also hosted the Racial Equity Institute's "Groundwater" training for 29 Health Department staff members.

### Tobacco Prevention and Control

The Health Department offers group and individual tobacco cessation sessions for adults. Staff partner with outside community agencies to provide those services off-site, and conduct prevention work with adolescents, their parents, and educators.

### Tobacco Cessation

Staff provided 397 Nicotine Replacement Products to over 38 individuals participating in individual tobacco cessation sessions or group classes, and to approximately 40 community members interested in quitting on their own. (Of the 38 community members participating in individual counseling, over 13 had a cessation period of 3 months or longer.)

Staff collaborated with UNC Horizons and Freedom House to offer free group classes to over 115 individuals.

### Vaping Prevention

Staff was involved with multiple efforts related to vaping prevention, including:

- Delivering 3 in-school presentations to youth and hosting 2 webinars for teachers, staff, and educators.
- Recording 1 interview and 3 Public Service Announcements for local radio.
- Training 16 high-schoolers to serve as peer-to-peer youth educators.
- Hosting a webinar for parents on how to talk to their adolescent about vaping.



## Dental Health

Residents of Orange County receive high quality exams, x-rays, fillings, root canals, extractions, and cleanings at clinics in Hillsborough and Chapel Hill.

### MOBILE DENTAL CLINIC

In 2023, dental staff continued to operate the Mobile Dental Clinic 2 days a week in Chapel Hill, seeing patients for exams, x-rays, fillings, root canals, and extractions, and added adult cleanings 1 day a month. In FY 23, the mobile clinic saw 402 patients.

### HYGIENISTS RETURN

Patients were excited to have the return of our hygiene department post-Covid! In the summer of 2023, the dental clinic hired 3 new part-time hygienists. These hygienists became certified in giving local anesthesia, which is necessary for completing deep cleanings. Now, we can offer routine or deep cleaning to patients at our Hillsborough and Mobile Dental clinics rather than referring out for this service.

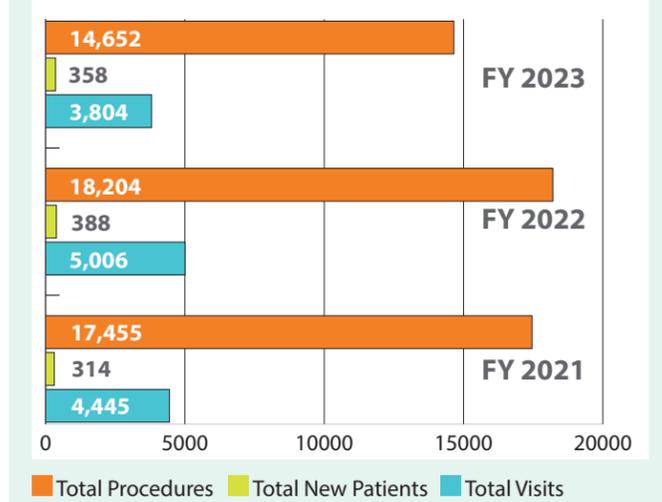


From June-December 2023, we did 945 cleanings. We also were able to employ contract hygienists in the summer and we were able to schedule all existing and new patients for cleanings.

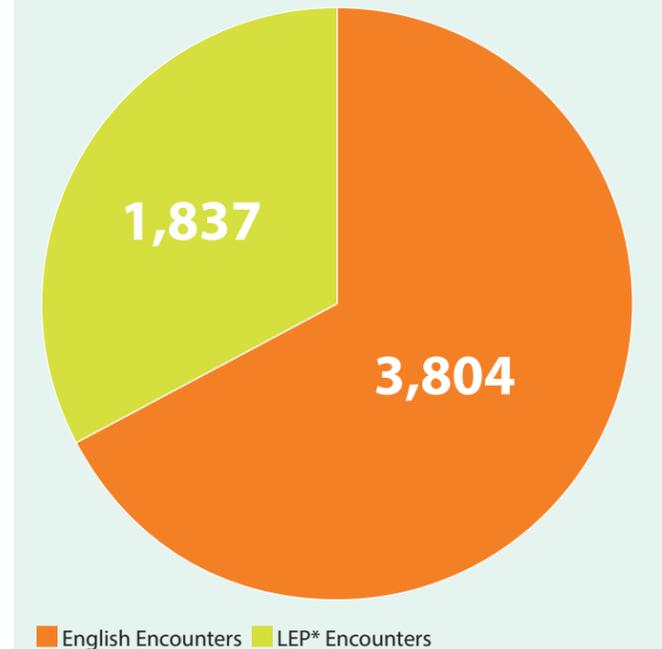
### REDUCING CARBON FOOTPRINT

Due to infection protocols, dental offices are notorious for waste. To reduce its carbon footprint, the dental division used a \$2,500 grant from Delta Dental Smiles for Kids to purchase isolation devices that could be sanitized and reused up to 100 times, and toothbrushes, flossers, and take-home bags from recycled or biodegradable materials. The new products are as effective as the older ones and more environmentally friendly.

### Dental Health Services



### Dental Encounters: 5,641



\*Limited English Proficiency

## Environmental Health

### IMPROVEMENTS TO GENERAL INSPECTIONS

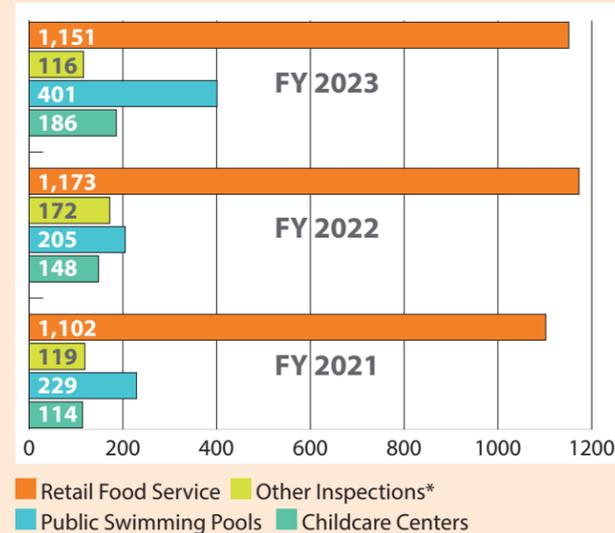
During 2023, Environmental Health increased its involvement in the FDA Voluntary Retail Program Standards by obtaining grant funding to emphasize outcomes.

Staff ensured required additional compliance from establishments with critical violations and evaluated the interval of which the electronic copy has been sent to the establishment after an inspection. DHHS added education visits to the staff's assignments for food service establishments with higher risk factors during this report period.

Staff accomplished 44 plan reviews and pre-permitting inspections for new food service establishments. Other efforts include 493 consultative contacts including verification visits and quality assurance activities. Staff investigated 58 complaints. No foodborne illnesses were reported.

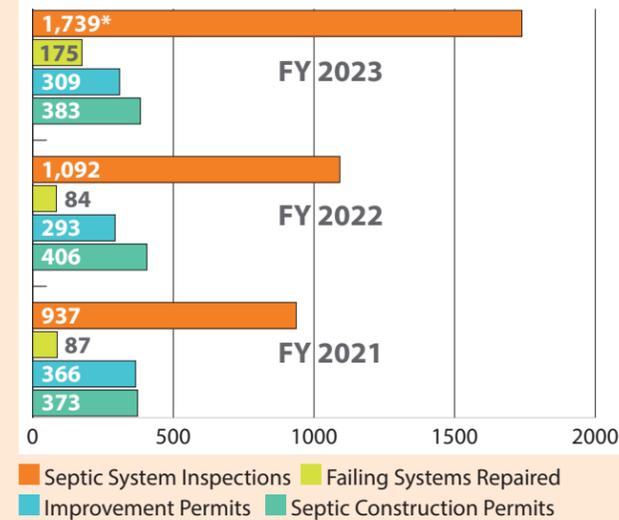


### Retail Food, Lodging & Institution Inspections



\*Examples of **Other Inspections** would be adult care facilities, food trucks and lodging establishments.

### Onsite Water Protection Service

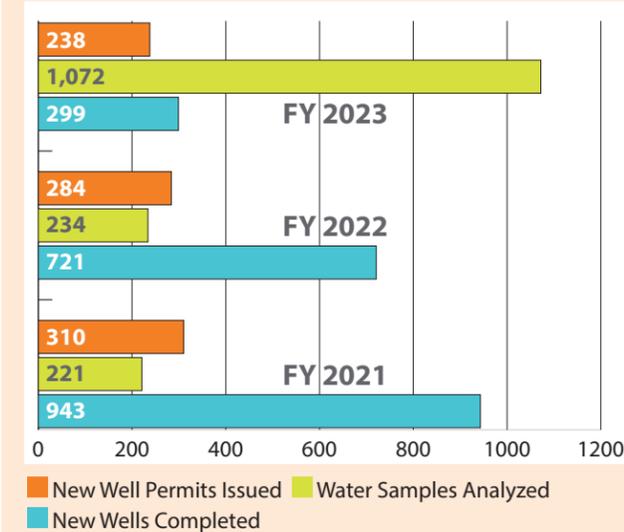


\*This number increase reflects a greater environmental health equity through documentation updates for existing septic system inspections and system sites.



## Environmental Health

### Wells



### EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY WATER SAMPLE RESEARCH

The Environmental Health partnered with ECU to provide case-control data. They researched the water sampling-request behavior of well owners in southeastern NC. This partnership added demands to the water sample workflows during the summer of 2023, and the Division received recognition as being the largest contributing partner in the study. This study continues as an Environmental Health equity project.

### HEALTHY HOMES AND CHILDREN'S ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Staff assessed and investigated the homes of eight families, with children or pregnant mothers, with confirmed elevated blood lead levels, one child-occupied facility (day care center) with identified lead hazards, and 28 referrals to prevent built environment health hazards (a social determinant of health). The staff actively contribute to the NC Healthy Homes Taskforce.

## Finance and Administrative Services

The Financial and Administrative Services (FAS) Division is made up of several teams covering Departmental Finance, Medical Clinic Front Desk and Financial Staff, Billing, Informatics, EPIC Community Connect, Language Services, Compliance, Vital Records/Purchasing/Accounts Payable and Accounts Receivable. Several FAS team members liaise with other County departments and teams. FAS is very diverse and is integral to the Health Department's ability to serve all patients with care and success.

### COVID-19 FUNDS

In fiscal year 2023, the Finance and Administrative services managed over \$1.9 million in COVID funding. This was on par with funding from last fiscal year.

### LANGUAGE SERVICE EXPENSES

The Health Department provides effective bilingual/interpretation services free of charge to our clients

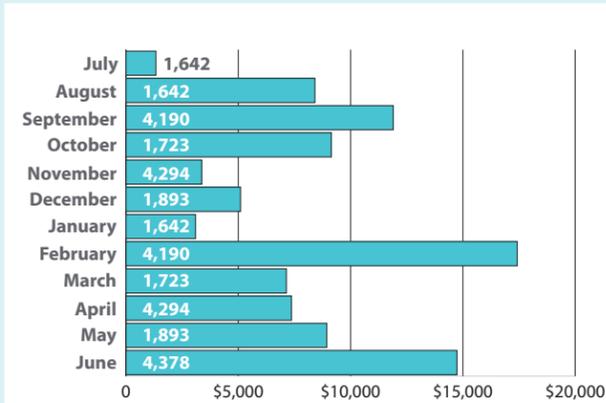


with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). The division employs contract interpreters/translators, and language service agencies to meet the need for bilingual and interpretation resources. On the next page is an overview of services that were provided, identifying high trends of needs (over \$10K of service) occurring in September, January, February, March and June.

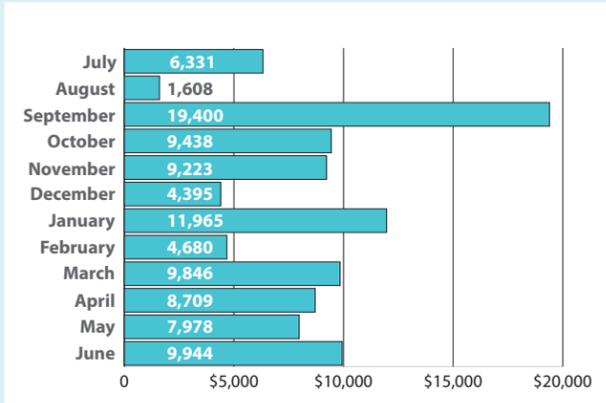


## Finance and Administrative Services

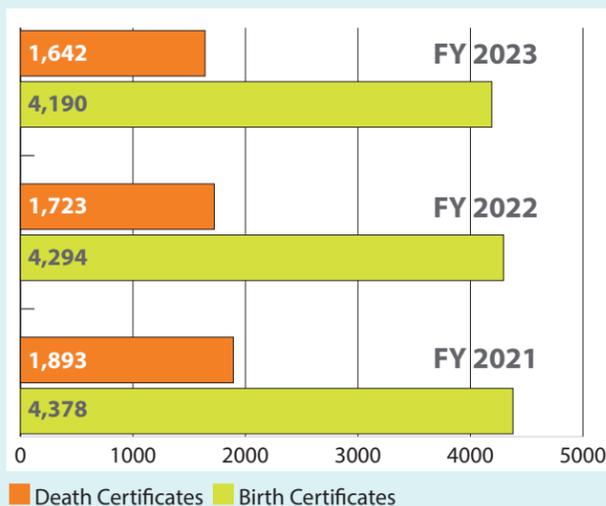
### FY 22-23 Total Funds spent on contracted language services: \$97,952



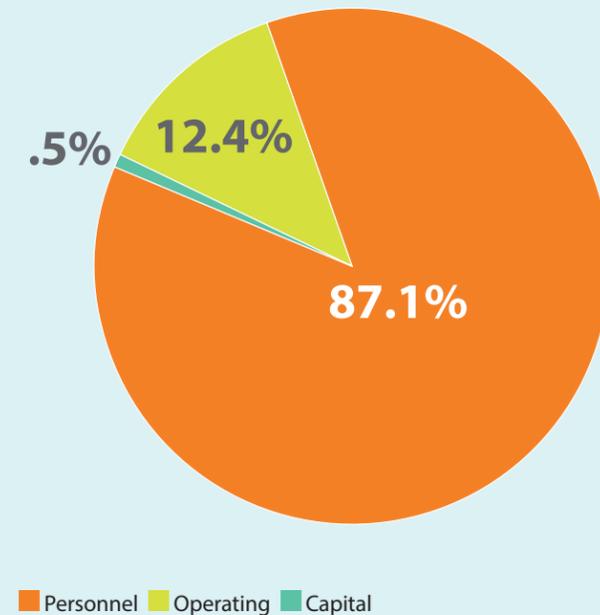
### FY 21-22 Total Funds spent on contracted language services: \$103,121



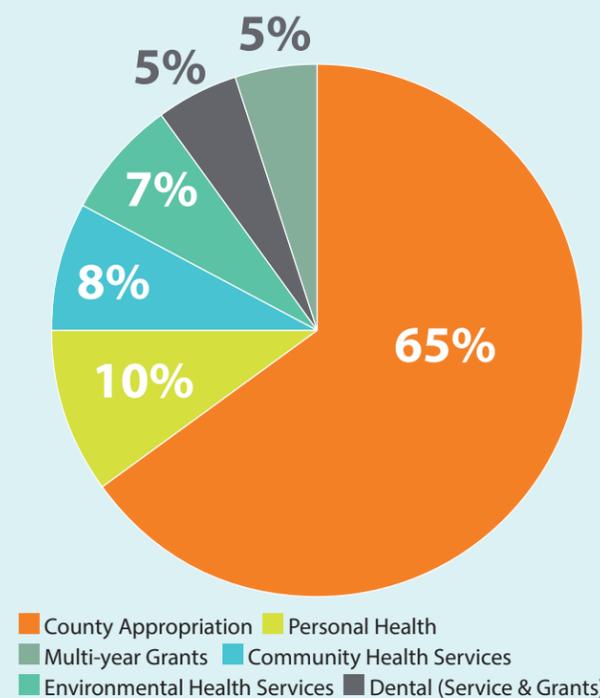
### Vital Records Requests Filled



### Expenses FY 2023: \$10,184,286



### Revenue FY 2023: \$10,184,286



## Personal Health Services

The Personal Health Services division offers the following services child health, maternal health, family planning, breast and cervical cancer screening, testing and counseling for Sexually Transmitted Infections, refugee health, immunizations, communicable disease prevention and control, medical nutrition therapy, diabetes education and support, and primary care.

### PERSONAL HEALTH SERVICES

#### HPV Vaccinations

Personal Health Services was awarded funds from the UNC Human papillomavirus (HPV) Clinic Financial Incentive Project to provide vaccinations to uninsured persons ineligible for the state-supplied HPV vaccine. With the additional funding, the clinic increased vaccination rates for children ages 6 to 12.

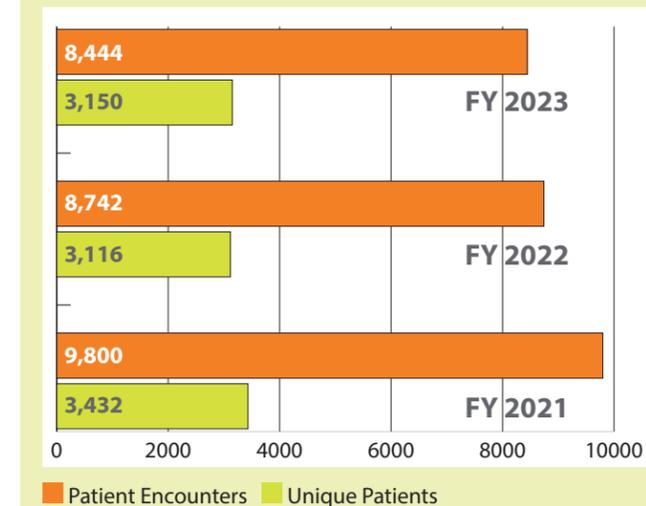
#### Maternal Health

The clinic began participating in the UNC Family Medicine ACHIEVE study which is intended to enhance maternal healthcare for individuals experiencing hypertensive disorders of pregnancy in North Carolina.

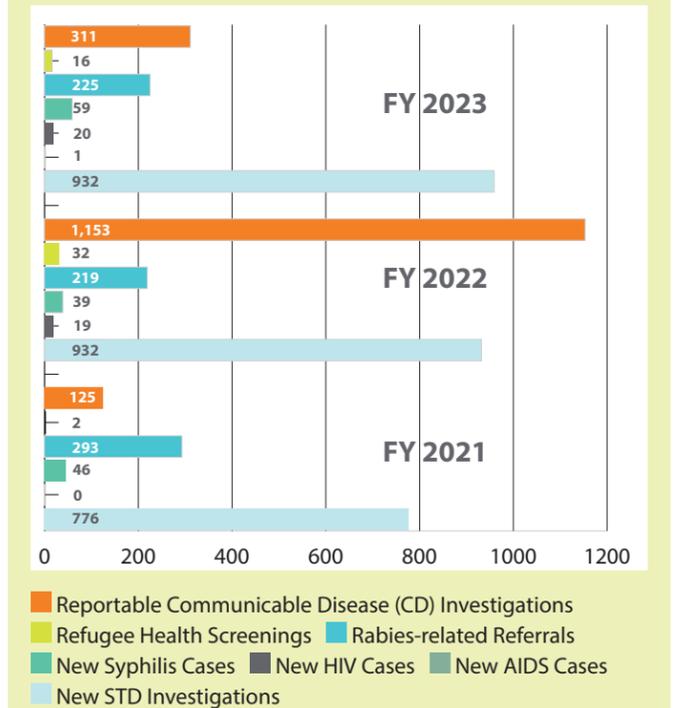
#### Chapel Hill Clinic

The medical clinic at Southern Human Services Center reopened in July 2023 after prolonged closure secondary to COVID-19.

#### Medical Clinic

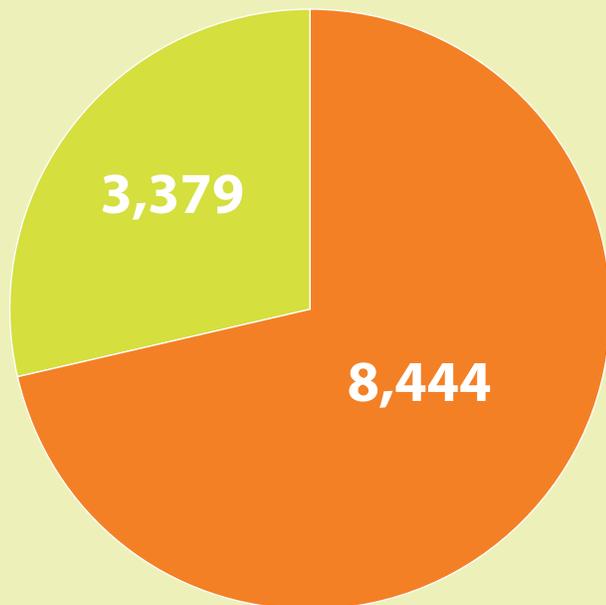


### Communicable Disease



## Personal Health Services

### Medical Encounters



English Encounters LEP Encounters



portion sizes, initiating blood glucose monitoring, checking feet, and exercising more consistently. 93% of participants said they would NOT have made the changes if they were not enrolled in the program.

## NUTRITION SERVICES

### Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT)

Nutrition staff provided 573 MNT appointments for community members. Of 383 referrals made to MNT by the Health Department and external providers, 65.3% were seen for an appointment.

### Diabetes Self-Management Education

In FY 23-24, staff received 27 new referrals and enrolled 18 new participants in the program. This brings enrollment to 542 participants over the lifetime of the program. Of those enrolled in FY23-24, 83% completed Classes 1 & 2, and 94% of eligible participants were seen for 3-month follow-ups. Of those who have completed all education components, 73% have shown improved A1C levels, and 87% reported conducting self-foot exams.

Topic areas where participants reported making the most behavior changes since starting the program included Nutrition (79%), Physical Activity (36%), and Monitoring Their Diabetes (29%). Some specific changes were monitoring carbohydrate foods and

### CDC Diabetes Prevention Program

For the 6th consecutive year, we maintained the CDC's Full Plus status for effectively delivering a quality, evidenced-based diabetes prevention program. (Full Plus is the highest level of recognition given to organizations that deliver the National Diabetes Prevention Program.)

The cohort ending in October 2023 resulted in a total average weight loss of 4.4%, with 67% of the participants meeting the 5% goal, and reaching an average of 213 physical activity minutes weekly, with 100% of participants meeting the 150-minute goal.

### Participants' Comments

*The knowledge shared has been super helpful. The regular meetings with people experiencing the same struggles have been inspirational.*

*I am so happy I participated. I've made changes that are sustainable and I'm excited to see how they will benefit me in the long haul.*