**West Nile Virus**

During 2002-2003, the Ottawa County Health Department (OCHD) engaged in its first ever comprehensive plan to prevent West Nile Virus (WNV). Considerable resources were devoted to the effort to control mosquito breeding, enhance disease surveillance and educate the county. Surveillance consisted of trapping and testing mosquitoes for WNV, monitoring and testing dead birds for WNV, and monitoring both human and equine cases of WNV.

Control of mosquitoes can be expensive and ineffective. For this reason, the OCHD chose breeding site reduction by collecting scrap tires, a method of control that was cost effective and environmentally safe. The program collected over 12,000 scrap tires that were recycled into usable products for the community.

**Education**

Primary education consisted of informing health care providers, city officials and media about the facts of West Nile Virus. Community outreach also included distributing over 20,000 educational coloring pages to families, 8,000 English brochures and 1,575 Spanish brochures. In addition, staff participated in 9 media interviews and 27 presentations.

**West Michigan Alive Obesity Taskforce**

Based on a comprehensive health status assessment completed in 2002, a collaboration of over forty local organizations joined forces to assess and implement community resources, programs and services addressing childhood obesity. The Health Department, along with Holland Pediatrics, Holland Community Hospital, Hope College, The Holland Community Hospital Foundation, and Western Michigan University began planning two pilot projects to help overweight children and their families decrease the health risks of being overweight. These projects, to be implemented in 2003-2004, will include nutritional, exercise, and behavioral components aimed at educating families.

**Mission Statement**

The Ottawa County Health Department is committed to providing environmental protection, health promotion, disease prevention and assuring quality health services to Ottawa County residents.
Field Services
Environmental Health Services is responsible for the oversight of many programs that provide a safe and healthy environment for residents. Without adequate coordination and cooperation between agencies, the management of public health issues is problematic. Our beaches, for example, are monitored on a regular basis.

Epidemiology
Epidemiology is charged with describing, quantifying and predicting causal mechanisms for health phenomena in Ottawa County. Activities are geared toward evaluating the effectiveness of health programs and services in support of enhanced disease prevention, control, recommendations, and program development to address public health issues. Major areas of focus include communicable disease surveillance, implementation of control measures and public health program evaluation.

Family Services
The purpose of family services is to ensure the delivery of a healthy, full-term baby, and to provide education and support during the child’s first year. Professional staff provide various services for both Spanish and English speaking clients. A team consisting of social workers, nurses and a registered dietitian can assist with:

- Ensure prenatal care
- Assess infant growth and development
- Assist with healthy and safe feeding techniques
- Educate parents about illness and care
- Teach breast feeding skills
- Teach and promote good nutrition
- Measure infant food intake and weight gain

Hearing and Vision Screening
In order to identify children who need further evaluation, a variety of screening techniques provide screening to children at birth through age 3. In some cases, new equipment was acquired that allows accurate testing of infants and very young children. Over 3,000 children in Ottawa County received screening last year.

Field Planning
The Family Planning Program not only offers birth control options to its clients, but also provides gynecological examinations, laboratory tests, counseling and education. The program supports healthy and responsible decisions about reproductive health. During 2002-2003, the program saw a 14% increase from 1999-2000.

Field Health
Reproductive health, communicable disease, and teen pregnancy prevention education health services have worked together to develop the peer education program. This program affects adolescents, knowledge, and behaviors in middle and high school youth. As a result, adolescents are less likely to engage in risky sexual activity. The Ottawa County Health Department carefully select and train young people to present accurate information, yet empowering the peer educator to use his or her own style. The program has increased as well. This increase is consistent with a steady rise in the number of people who are obtaining confidential STD and HIV testing, treatment, education and referrals to adult and teen populations. The most recent data shows that three out of four young people report having had sex with multiple partners. This trend has a tremendous positive impact on both the peer educator and the learners. In every year, peer educators presented to a great student body in the County.

Food Service
The Food Service program has experienced considerable growth and change over the past year. During 2002-2003, maintenance conducted pre-operational plan reviews and approved 49 new restaurants to open in Ottawa County. In order to manage the increased demands in the Food Service program, a supervisory and new sanitation training manual for those not trained through increased educational initiatives has become a priority. Food safety issues mean more than preventing food borne illness. Today, sanitarians also track the effects of foodborne illness and provide recommendations for the prevention of outbreaks through the food supply.

Peer Education
The program supports healthy and responsible decisions about reproductive health. During 2002-2003, the program saw a 14% increase from 1999-2000.

Public Health Preparedness
New in the year 2002-2003, was the establishment of a Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program. Extraordinary circumstances can occur that may require the department to exercise authority for emergency response to public health disease. These could include major epidemics, actual or suspected pandemics to biological, chemical or radiological hazards, and natural disasters. Public health preparedness training is a proper response to an emergency to maintain and improve quality of life. Sanitarians are trained and approved by the Food Service program for all food standards and approved 49

Public Relations and Marketing
In a society with a heavy reliance on mass media and crowded message environment, public health needs to sell itself. The reality of strategic public relations and marketing became evident in 2000-2001. As the strategic plan was completed and carried out, the Ottawa County Health Department intends to stand out as a leader in preventing disease, and promoting and protecting public health.

STD/HIV/AIDS
The Sexually Transmitted Disease Program provides comprehensive services to Ottawa County residents. Services include treatment, counseling and referrals to adult and teenage populations. The program is supported by state funds and seeks to increase the base funding from Ottawa County. It is an attempt to increase the base funding from Ottawa County. The program was discontinued in 2003 as the service became redundant.

Swimming Beach Water Quality Sampling
Each year in the month of July beaches are sampled weekly during the months of June through August. The samples are bottled E.Coli which occasionally appears in swimming water at unsafe levels. During the Summer of 2002, five beaches were closed to the public for several days due to unsafe levels of E.Coli. Public health sanitarians were notified of samples for Winnipeg beaches. These tests were new performed to participate directly in investigations and outbreak control measures in the event of an outbreak. Educating health care providers, enhancing communication capability, and developing; mass vaccination and medication distribution plans were primary activities during this initial year.

The Family Planning Department currently has 14 staff members. In an effort to manage the increased demand in the Family Planning Program, a supervisory and new sanitation training manual for those not trained through increased educational initiatives has become a priority. Food safety issues mean more than preventing food borne illness. Today, sanitarians also track the effects of foodborne illness and provide recommendations for the prevention of outbreaks through the food supply.

Well Child Program
The Well Child Program at Ottawa County Health Department was discontinued in 2000. In Ottawa County, many children do not receive regular health care, especially those who are on Medicaid. It was not a mandated program and therefore no state dollars supported it. Finally, defining well child care lead to the ultimate decision to phase out this program.

Needs of the community are continually assessed by the Health Department and programs evolve, change and are occasionally discontinued based on these evaluations. The following programs served the community well, but were phased out after 2000-2003.

Well Child Program
The Well Child Program at Ottawa County Health Department was discontinued in 2000. In Ottawa County, many children do not receive regular health care, especially those who are on Medicaid. It was not a mandated program and therefore no state dollars supported it. Finally, defining well child care lead to the ultimate decision to phase out this program.

Adult Health Program
Adult Health Services is a program that visited adult clients in their homes for health care evaluation and follow-up. In the past year, new equipment was acquired that allows accurate testing of infants and very young children. Over 3,000 children in Ottawa County received screening last year.