



*Rappahannock Area
Health District*

News Release

1320 Central Park Blvd, Ste 300, Fredericksburg, VA 22401

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 26, 2024

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RAPPAHANNOCK AREA HEALTH DISTRICT RECOGNIZED THROUGH NATIONAL “PROJECT PUBLIC HEALTH READY” RECOGNITION PROGRAM

(Fredericksburg, VA)– The Rappahannock Area Health District (RAHD) has been recognized by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) for its ability to plan for, respond to, and recover from public health emergencies. RAHD demonstrated these capabilities by meeting the comprehensive preparedness benchmarks required by Project Public Health Ready (PPHR), a unique partnership between NACCHO and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). RAHD joins a cohort of more than 550 local health departments across the country that have been distinguished for excellence in preparedness through PPHR, either individually or as part of a region.

“This honor is exceedingly well-deserved because it reflects tremendous effort, dedication and cooperation on the part of our team,” said Dr. Olugbenga Obasanjo, RAHD district director. “Whether we are facing severe weather, a pandemic, or other emergency situations, we recognize the importance of being ready to respond and protect the health of our community.”

PPHR recognition confirms that RAHD has a thorough and coordinated emergency response plan in place and that staff have the training to protect the health of the community during an emergency. Local health departments recognized by PPHR undergo a rigorous evaluation by peer review to assess their ability to meet a set of national standards for public health preparedness. These standards align with federal government requirements and other national best practices.

PPHR recognition also requires health departments to collaborate with their state, local, and community partners to develop plans that account for all the constituents in their jurisdictions. RAHD regularly partners with emergency managers, schools, and hospitals in Fredericksburg and the counties of Caroline, King George, Spotsylvania, and Stafford to meet this requirement. RAHD’s capacity to carry out these activities is augmented through the support of the Medical Reserve Corps volunteer force. The health district currently has 738 registered volunteers.

“Public health preparedness planning, response, and recovery begins at the local level. Local health departments play an essential role in creating healthy, resilient communities that can respond to and recover from disasters.” said Lori T. Freeman, NACCHO chief executive officer. “NACCHO commends the Rappahannock Area Health District for being a model of public health emergency preparedness.”

NACCHO, the voice of the nearly 3,000 local health departments across the country, provides resources to help local health department leaders develop public health policies and programs

to ensure that communities have access to vital programs and services that people need to keep them protected from disease and disaster. Its mission is to be a leader, partner, catalyst, and voice for local health departments to ensure the conditions that promote health and equity, combat disease, and improve the quality and length of all lives.

For more information about the Rappahannock Area Health District, visit www.vdh.virginia.gov/rappahannock. For more information on Project Public Health Ready, including recognized sites, project tools, and resources, visit <http://www.naccho.org/PPHR>.

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