



ROANOKE CITY
and ALLEGHANY
HEALTH DISTRICTS



ANNUAL REPORT

2024

MESSAGE FROM THE HEALTH DIRECTOR

Dear Residents of the Roanoke City and Alleghany Health Districts,

I am pleased to share the 2024 Roanoke City and Alleghany Health Districts' (RCAHD) Annual Report. Our goal for this report is to provide community members with an overview of our programs and services as we continually strive to improve how we serve our communities.

As we reflect on the year, we have so much to be proud of!

- In 2024, our clinical team managed eight cases of active tuberculosis; case-managed almost 100 cases of elevated blood lead levels in children; assisted over 300 newcomers; provided almost 900 long-term care screenings; conducted over 900 home visits to pregnant women and babies; provided more than 1300 services related to sexually transmitted diseases and more than 2400 family planning services; and administered over 7100 immunizations.
- In 2024, our Early Intervention team assessed 350 infants and toddlers at-risk for, or suspected of having developmental delays and provided service coordination for 359 infants and toddlers.
- In 2024, our preparedness team received "Project Public Health Preparedness" recognition and participated in numerous exercises across our districts to ensure that we are optimally prepared for any public health threat. Medical Reserve Corps volunteers donated time worth over \$41,000 to support the work of the Roanoke City Health Department.
- In 2024, our Environmental Health team conducted over 2000 food inspections; issued over 100 permits for fairs/festivals/ summer camps and campgrounds; conducted over 130 pool inspections; provided over 150 services for temporary lodging (e.g., hotels) establishments; conducted almost 900 rabies investigations which resulted in testing 130 animals, 18 of which were identified as having rabies; and processed over 160 well applications and almost 250 sewage applications.
- In 2024, our Epidemiology team investigated over 620 reportable conditions and noted a local increase in pertussis (whooping cough) and campylobacter (a foodborne illness).
- In 2024, our Population Health team distributed over 400 car seats and 200 portable cribs in partnership with our nursing team; supported community health assessments in the Alleghany Highlands and Roanoke Valley; lead a team to improve walkability near the new Melrose Plaza; conducted many activities to improve community engagement; and trained over 800 people in overdose awareness and distributed over 900 doses of naloxone; 1700 fentanyl test strips, 1000 xylazine test strips.
- In 2024, our frontline teams issued more than 2500 birth records and 25,000 death records.
- In 2024, our Women, Infants & Children (WIC) program provided critical services to almost 8000 residents.

As always, I am thankful for dedicated RCAHD employees who continue to come to work every day, ready and willing to promote health and to prevent disease. It is a privilege for us to be able to work together to directly improve the health of the communities we serve.

In health,



Cynthia B. Morrow, MD, MPH

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section	Page
<u>Message from Health Director</u>	1
<u>Ten Essential Public Health Services</u>	3
<u>RCAHD Service Area</u>	4
<u>Organizational Chart</u>	5
<u>Administration</u>	6
<u>Clinic & Family Services</u>	8
<u>Emergency Preparedness & Response</u>	12
<u>Environmental Health</u>	15
<u>Epidemiology</u>	19
<u>Population Health</u>	23
<u>Vital Records</u>	28
<u>Women, Infants & Children Program</u>	29

Editorial and Design:

Editor: Christie Wills

Layout & Design: Shannon Bowles

Photos: Christie Wills, Adobe Stock Photos

THE 10 ESSENTIAL PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

Representing two of the 35 local districts of the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), RCAHD has the shared mission to protect the health and promote the well-being of all people in Virginia.

We do this by applying the framework of the 10 Essential Public Health Services, keeping equity at the center of all that we do.

To protect and promote the health of all people in all communities

The 10 Essential Public Health Services provide a framework for public health to protect and promote the health of all people in all communities. To achieve optimal health for all, the Essential Public Health Services actively promote policies, systems, and services that enable good health and seek to remove obstacles and systemic and structural barriers, such as poverty, racism, gender discrimination, and other forms of oppression that have resulted in health inequities. Everyone should have a fair and just opportunity to achieve good health and well-being.



-deBeaumont Foundation, 2022



2024 RCAHD Staff Development Day

RCAHD SERVICE AREA

The mission of the Virginia Department of Health is to protect the health and promote the well-being of all people in Virginia. The agency's vision statement is "Become the healthiest state in the nation."



ROANOKE CITY
and ALLEGHANY
HEALTH DISTRICTS

Your Partner in Community Wellness



The Roanoke City and Alleghany Health Districts (RCAHD) are two local health districts operating with a single administrative structure within the Virginia Department of Health. The Alleghany Health District includes Covington, Salem, and the counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, and Roanoke. The Roanoke City Health District includes only the City of Roanoke.

LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT CONTACT INFORMATION

Alleghany County / Clifton Forge

322 Jefferson Street • Clifton Forge, VA 24422
(540) 962-2173

Botetourt County

21 Academy Street • Fincastle, VA 24090
(540) 666-4275

Roanoke City

1502 Williamson Road • Roanoke, VA 24012
(540) 283-5050

Salem

105 East Calhoun Street • Salem, VA 24153
(540) 387-5530

Alleghany County / Covington

321 East Beech Street • Covington, VA 24426
(540) 962-2173

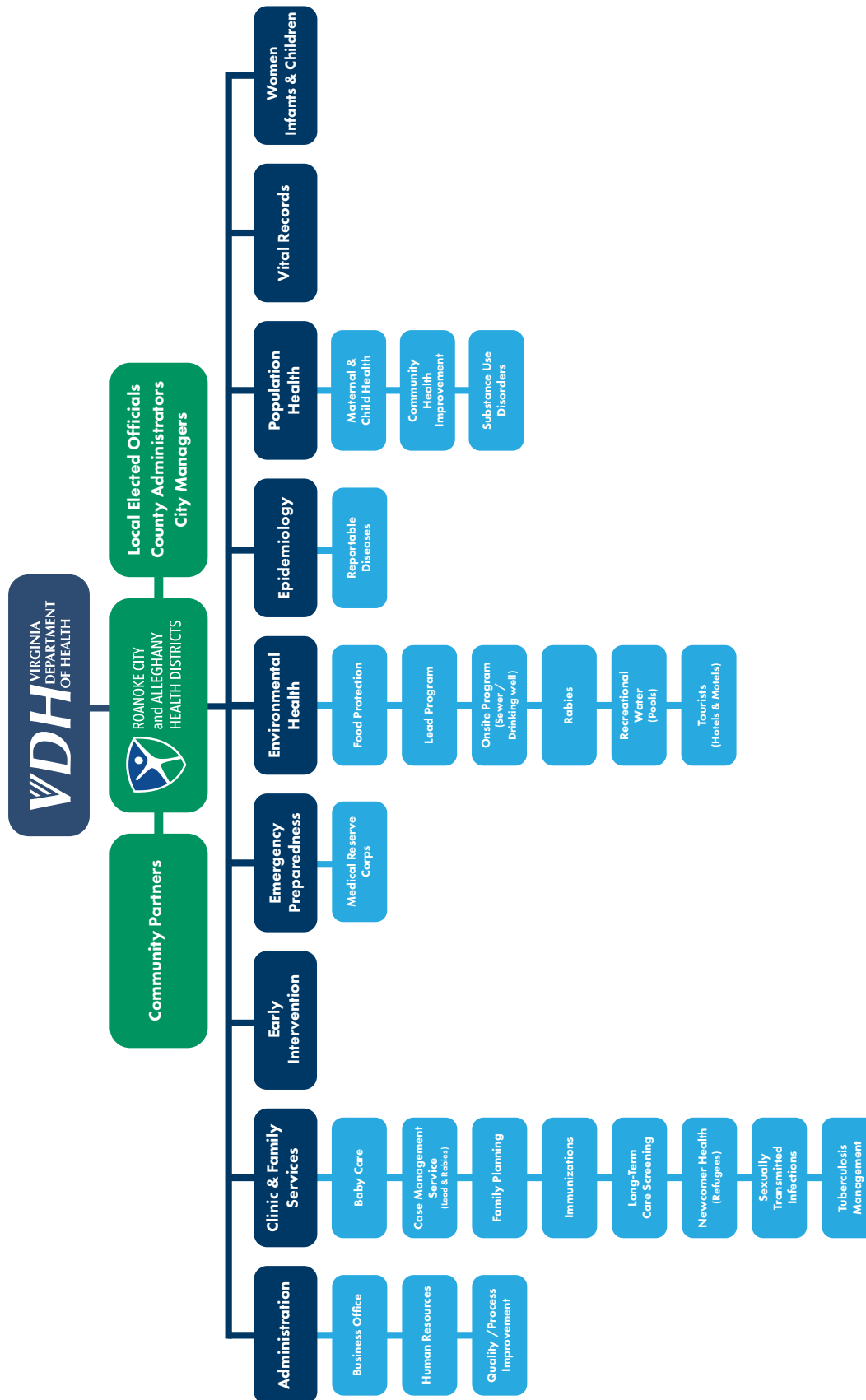
Craig County

161 Main Street • New Castle, VA 24121
(540) 864-5136

Roanoke County

227 South Pollard Street • Vinton, VA 24179
(540) 857-7800

VDH ORGANIZATION CHART



ADMINISTRATION

The mission of the Administration Division is to provide the support and services necessary for the successful implementation of district programs and services and to provide transparency to our stakeholders.

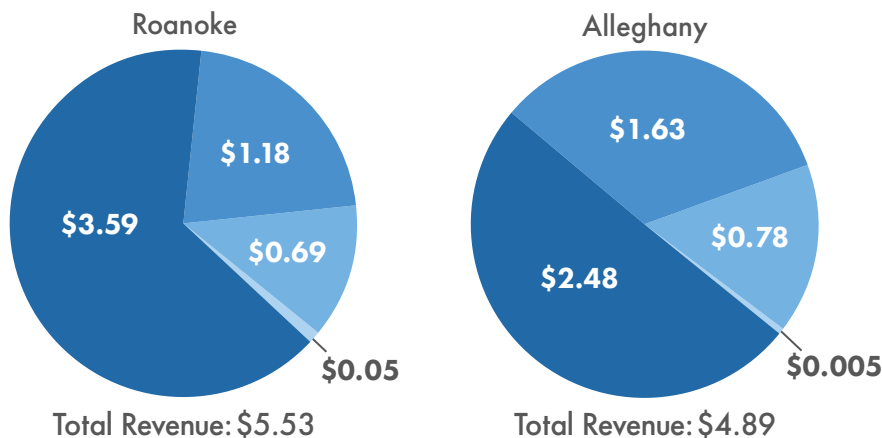
HIGHLIGHTS

- The RCAHD administrative team continues to ensure the effective allocation of limited resources to maximize public health outcomes. This includes budget management, resource allocation, and workforce planning.
- As recovery from the pandemic has continued, support from federal COVID-19-related grants declined by more than 50% compared to 2023 totals.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

RCAHD receives funding through a variety of sources divided into the “cooperative budget” and the “non-cooperative budget.” The cooperative budget includes state general funds that are matched by local funds, as mandated by the Code of Virginia, and revenue from other sources such as services and fees. The non-cooperative budget includes federal and other grants. (The 2024 VDH fiscal year is from June 2023-June 2024. Amounts listed in millions.)

RCAHD COOPERATIVE REVENUE

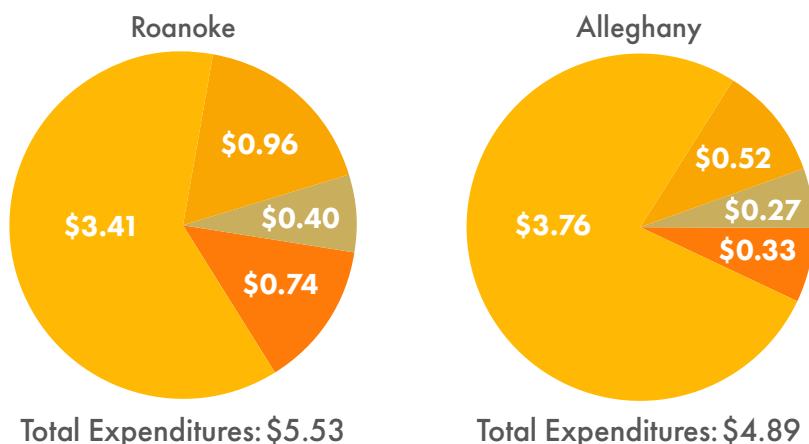


**TOTAL RCAHD
COOPERATIVE REVENUE**
\$10.4 MILLION

Key:

- State Funds
- Local Match Funds
- Revenue from Fees
- 100% Local Funds

RCAHD COOPERATIVE EXPENDITURES



**TOTAL RCAHD
COOPERATIVE EXPENDITURES**
\$10.4 MILLION

Key:

- Personnel Services
- Contractual Services
- Supplies and Materials
- Continuous Charges

GRANT DETAILS

RCAHD continued to implement federal grand funding to assist with increased community recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic. Federal grants included American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for community engagement and workforce development.

Ongoing Grants	Roanoke	Alleghany	Total
Early Intervention	\$670,141	N/A	\$670,141
Emergency Preparedness	\$106,849	\$109,109	\$215,958
Family Planning	\$53,765	\$37,991	\$91,756
Immunization	\$64,057	\$68,610	\$132,666
Maternal & Child Health	\$39,201	\$32,353	\$71,554
STI / HIV (all related grants)	\$210,856	\$226,448	\$437,304
WIC (all related grants)	\$876,135	\$524,884	\$1,401,019
Miscellaneous	\$10,005	\$5,500	\$15,505
Total	\$2,031,008	\$1,004,894	\$3,035,903

One-Time Grants	Roanoke	Alleghany	Total
Public Health Workforce	\$138,157	\$387,406	\$525,563
COVID-19 (all related grants)	\$606,554	\$1,385,526	\$1,992,080
Epidemiology Laboratory Capacity	\$1,014,960	\$1,014,960	\$2,029,920
ARPA Community Engagement	\$512,338	\$550,147	\$1,062,485
Culturally Linguistically Appropriate Services	N/A	\$96,824	\$96,824
Community Health Epidemiologists	\$60,000	\$87,000	\$147,000
Total	\$2,232,009	\$3,521,863	\$5,853,872



CLINIC & FAMILY SERVICES

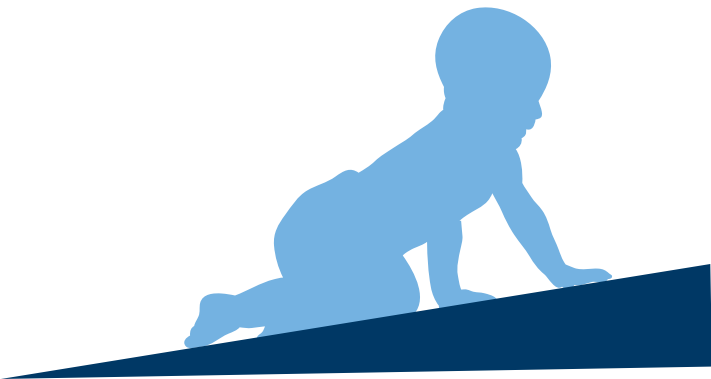
The mission of the Clinic & Family Services Division is to provide a range of services to support health promotion, disease prevention, and community health and wellness across the entire lifespan through collaboration with community partners.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Services for tuberculosis prevention and management increased more than 10% in 2024.
- Compared to 2023 numbers, demand for immunizations at RCAHD locations decreased by 10%.

BABY CARE SERVICES

The Baby Care program improves pregnancy and birth outcomes by providing registered nurse home visits to high-risk pregnant women and infants up to age 24 months. Coordinating with community partner providers such as Child Health Investment Partnership and Healthy Families Roanoke, the program provides intensive case management, coordination of care, prenatal care, and birthing and parenting education.



2024	Alleghany/ Covington	Botetourt	Craig	Roanoke City	Roanoke County	Salem
Baby Care Visits	§	310	0*	0*	64	3

* Roanoke City and Craig residents receive home visitation services from other community partners.

FAMILY PLANNING

The Family Planning program provides education and access to methods of birth control and related reproductive health services to improve health outcomes. A broad range of services are available, including effective family planning birth control methods, physical exams, infertility education, counseling, STI prevention, and family planning education for adults and teens.

2024	Alleghany/ Covington	Botetourt	Craig	Roanoke City	Roanoke County	Salem
Family Planning Visits	§	44	50	1,519	147	229

IMMUNIZATIONS

The Immunization program helps to decrease vaccine-preventable diseases. Vaccines are provided to adults and children following the guidelines set forth by the Advisory Committee in Immunization Practice. On-site and off-site immunization clinics provide vaccination opportunities for flu, pneumonia, tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis, and all other adult and childhood vaccines.

2024	Alleghany/ Covington	Botetourt	Craig	Roanoke City	Roanoke County	Salem	Total
Office Visit Immunizations	684	559	244	3,620	878	1,162	7,147

§ Alleghany/ Covington data incomplete due to reporting issues

LEAD CASE MANAGEMENT

When a child is diagnosed with an elevated blood lead level, a public health nurse and an environmental health specialist respond to provide case management and, when indicated, a home assessment for the family. The goal is to identify and control the source of lead in the environment and ensure that children at risk for lead exposure are identified, tested, and connected to additional services. A public health nurse provides ongoing case management to educate the child's parents or caregivers on the child's nutritional needs and work with the child's healthcare provider to monitor blood lead levels until they reach an acceptable range.

2024	Alleghany/ Covington	Botetourt	Craig	Roanoke City	Roanoke County	Salem	Total
Lead Cases	5	2	0	80	5	5	97

LONG-TERM CARE PRE-ADMISSION SCREENINGS:

This program provides Medicaid or Medicaid-eligible clients timely screening assessments for nursing home placement or health-related services in the home or community. Screenings are targeted to older adults, people with disabilities, and children needing a long-term placement waiver or home-based care. In partnership with the Department of Social Services, a nurse and social worker determine whether clients meet Medicaid's eligibility criteria for either: 1- functional capacity: the degree of assistance needed to complete activities of daily living (bathing, toileting, dressing) or 2- medical or nursing need (wound care).

2024	Alleghany/ Covington	Botetourt	Craig	Roanoke City	Roanoke County	Salem	Total
Pre-Admission Screenings	91	64	19	411	163	145	893

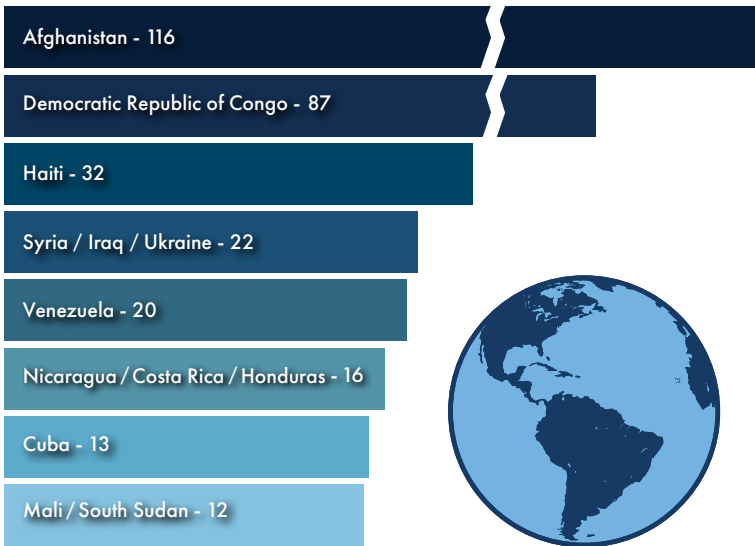


NEWCOMER HEALTH PROGRAM

The Newcomer Health program provides certain clinical services for newcomers sponsored by Commonwealth Catholic Charities (CCC), a local refugee resettlement agency. Within 45 days of arrival in the United States, newcomers sponsored by CCC receive all necessary immunizations, health and mental health screenings, and any needed referrals. The RCAHD clinical team also provides family planning services and encourages newcomer families to establish a local medical home.

318 Total Clients

Number of Clients by Country of Origin



SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS (STI)

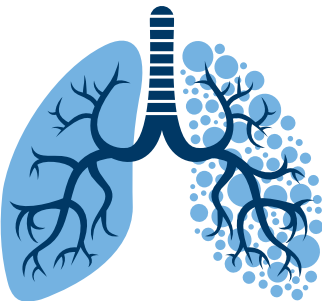
The Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) program aims to prevent the spread of STIs through education, outreach and clinical services. STI clinics offer counseling, testing, treatment, and partner referral services for patients at risk of or currently experiencing STIs.

2024	Alleghany/ Covington	Botetourt	Craig	Roanoke City	Roanoke County	Salem	Total
Client Encounters	62	13	1	901	178	182	1,337

TUBERCULOSIS (TB) MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The Tuberculosis (TB) Management program aims to prevent, control and eliminate tuberculosis in the community. The program offers confidential TB risk assessment screenings and testing and provides case management, including the provision of medication and care coordination. The TB team also assists with the identification and testing of contacts for individuals with active TB, transportation for appointments, and home visits to deliver medication to perform Directly Observed Therapy (DOT).

TB services up
↑ 10%
over 2023 totals



8 Active TB cases in 2024

2024	Alleghany/ Covington	Botetourt	Craig	Roanoke City	Roanoke County	Salem	Total
Tuberculosis Services Rendered	224	137	26	1,247	154	198	1,986

EARLY INTERVENTION

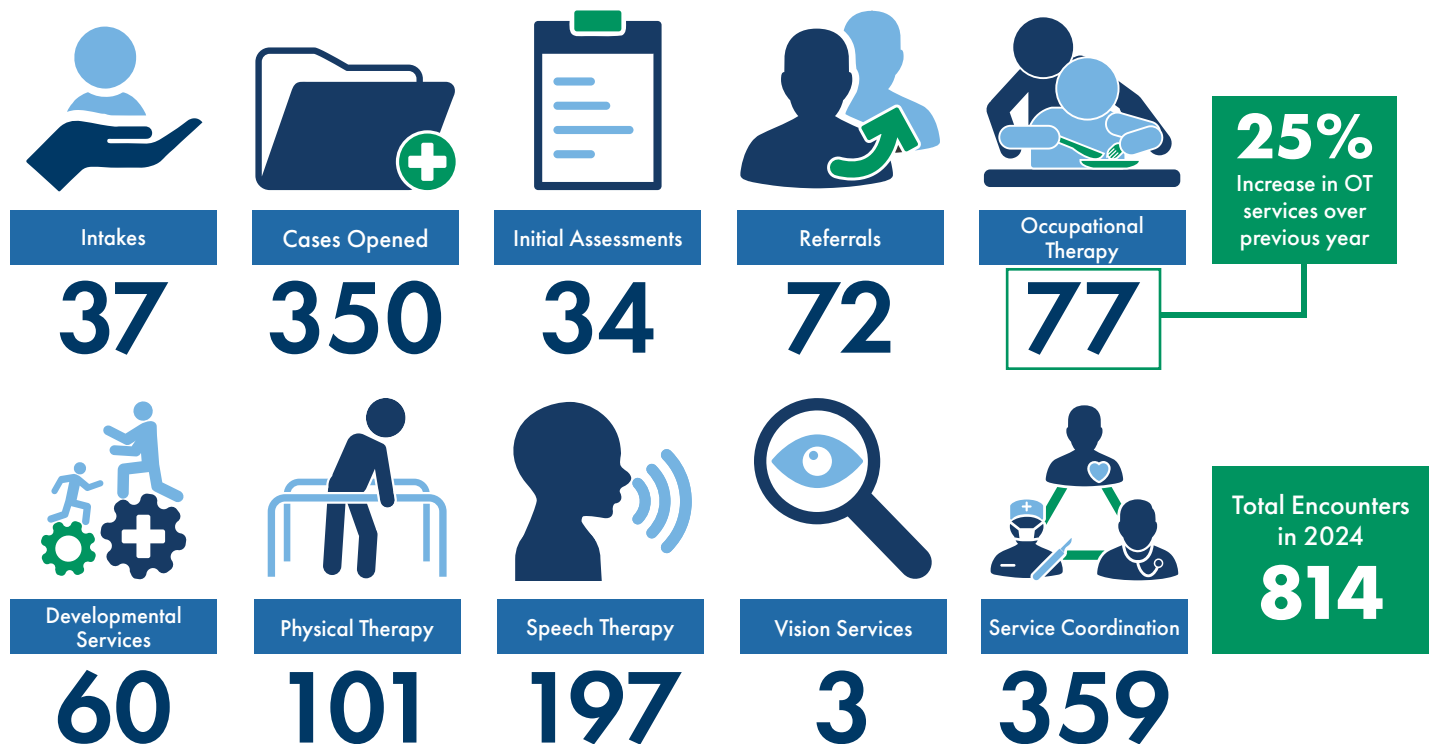
The Early Intervention program provides assessment and services for infants and toddlers from birth through age three who are not developing as expected or who may have a delayed or atypical development, or a medical condition that may delay normal development. Early Intervention provides services to increase the child's participation in family and community activities. It also provides parent and caregiver support to help their children learn during everyday activities. The program serves residents of Botetourt County, Craig County, Roanoke City and County, and Salem.

HIGHLIGHT

- Increase of +10% in total Early Intervention cases opened over previous year.

In 2024, Early Intervention staff and their contracted community partners began fully utilizing electronic case record management to meet required state mandates. The ability to access case information by Early Intervention providers allows a more efficient workflow for services. The program aims to be completely paperless by mid-year 2025.

Early Intervention averages per month for 2024:



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: MRC VOLUNTEER LAURA HILL



We are grateful that in 2024, MRC volunteer **Laura Hill** of Salem stepped in to provide hundreds of hours of service to Early Intervention to organize and archive 3 years of charts. Laura also supported the program by reviewing Medicaid eligibility and organizing a system to prepare documents for filing. Laura's work significantly improved our ability to serve our clients.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

The mission of the Office of Emergency Preparedness and Response (EP&R) is to protect the residents of RCAHD through all-hazards planning and response.

HIGHLIGHT

- Following a two-year process, RCAHD was formally recognized by Project Public Health Ready (PPHR) for its emergency-preparedness and training plans.

2024 RCAHD EP&R ACTIVITIES ACCOMPLISHED INCLUDED:

- RCAHD was recognized as Project Public Health Ready (PPHR) compliant, a designation administered by the National Association of City and County Health Officials (NACCHO). In Virginia, health districts are required to participate in this comprehensive review process of emergency-preparedness and training plans every five years.
- EP&R staff provided direct logistical support for 18 outreach and vaccination community events, including mobile vaccine clinics, STI Test & Go clinics and a large-scale mobile flu clinic in September.
- To support other agencies' occasional needs for public messaging and support, EP&R staff supported five requests for emergency resources, such as electronic message boards, light trees, traffic cones, a utility task vehicle, and staff planning assistance.
- Using the Incident Command System matrix, preparedness staff coordinated ICS 300 training to RCAHD management and additional participants from partnering agencies.
- EP&R and Communications staff assisted in the planning and served as controllers and evaluators for the Roanoke/Montgomery Regional Airport full-scale exercise involving a simulated plane crash with casualties.
- With colleagues in other agencies, EP&R staff participated in multiple meetings and tabletop exercises for preparedness, including with local emergency services responders and the Red Cross.

Provided Direct Logistical Support for



18 Outreach and Vaccination
Community Events



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS: FULL-SCALE EXERCISE HELD AT ROANOKE AIRPORT



Area evaluators provided feedback to first responders at a full-scale drill held by the Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport at Countryside Park.

To strengthen our ability to serve the community, local public health districts staff and volunteers prepare to withstand and recover from all kinds of emergencies. On September 19, RCAHD emergency response and communications staff joined Medical Reserve Corps volunteers and other Roanoke Valley agencies and first responders to practice reacting to a simulated emergency at the Roanoke regional airport. Dozens of MRC volunteers played roles as victims and relatives to create a realistic practice situation. After the live exercise, communications staff of participating agencies held a joint mock press conference at the airport to practice sharing urgent information in an emergency setting. These exercises help strengthen our ability to protect the community.



Medical Reserve Corps volunteers arrived early to receive realistic makeup (known as "moulage") simulating extensive traumatic injuries.



After the exercise, local public information officers (PIOs) set up a mock press conference at the airport.

MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS

In 2024, the Roanoke Alleghany Medical Reserve Corps continued to offer increased administrative support to local health department offices, providing over 1200 total hours of volunteer service.

Highlights of 2024 MRC included:

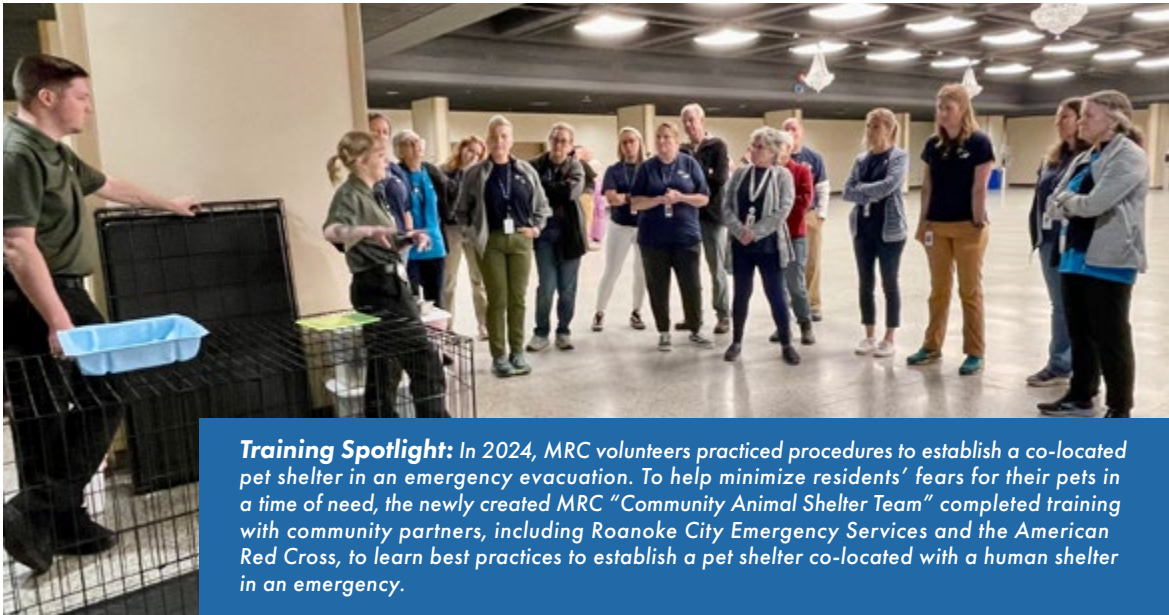
PROGRAM CAPACITY



VOLUNTEER IMPACT



FOCUS



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

The mission of the Environmental Health Division is to work with our community partners to protect and improve the overall health of our residents through the assurance of a safe environment.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The number of confirmed cases of rabies in animals (18) increased in 2024, above the average 12 cases in a typical year. Most cases involved skunks. Total rabies case investigations likewise increased more than 15%, from 754 in 2023 to 877 in 2024.
- RCAHD implemented a new Quality Assurance program, a first among VDH Environmental Health (EH) divisions. This program measures how well food inspectors meet the uniformity and specificity of the food code and monitors feedback from restaurant operators on how we can improve service to the community.
- The RCAHD EH team won the 2024 “Innovation in Environmental Health” award from the VDH Office of Environmental Health Services for finding new ways to improve processes and increase staff efficiency.

FOOD PROTECTION

The Food Protection program inspects and permits food service establishments including restaurants, mobile food units (food trucks) and public food service such as hospitals, schools and child/adult care facilities. Our inspectors also assist in the investigation of potential foodborne illness outbreaks. Reviews are conducted on construction plans for new or remodeled food service establishments:

2024 Permits	Roanoke City	Roanoke County	Salem	Botetourt	Craig	Covington	Alleghany	Total
Food Permits	487	210	135	93	15	28	38	1,006

2024 Food Inspections	Roanoke City	Roanoke County	Salem	Botetourt	Craig	Covington	Alleghany	Total
Mandatory	865	370	204	195	23	57	89	1,803
Follow Up	36	15	17	2	1	0	1	72
Complaint	25	9	9	1	0	4	1	49
Other	76	17	13	8	1	6	3	124
Total	1,002	411	243	206	25	67	94	2,048



RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

The Recreational Facilities program provides health and safety inspections at regulated public facilities including public swimming pools, children's summer camps, campgrounds and fairs/festivals.

2024 Permits	Roanoke City	Roanoke County	Salem	Botetourt	Craig	Covington	Alleghany	Total
Fairs/Festivals	35	14	13	17	4	4	4	91
Summer Camps	0	3	0	2	1	0	0	6
Campgrounds	1	0	0	7	2	0	2	12

2024 Recreation Inspections	Roanoke City	Roanoke County	Salem	Botetourt	Craig	Covington	Alleghany	Total
Pool Inspections	39	64	22	4	0	0	2	131
Summer Camps	0	3	0	2	2	0	0	7
Campgrounds	2	2	0	7	2	0	2	15



LODGING

The Lodging program provides annual health and safety inspections along with complaint investigations of regulated public facilities including hotels, motels, bed & breakfasts, and migrant farm worker housing. Reviews are conducted on construction plans for new or remodeled facilities.

2024	Roanoke City	Roanoke County	Salem	Botetourt	Craig	Covington	Alleghany	Total
Permits	19	16	13	8	2	2	7	67
Inspections	34	19	16	8	2	2	8	89
Complaints	6	3	0	0	0	0	0	9



ANIMAL DISEASE PREVENTION (RABIES)

The Animal Disease Prevention (rabies) program addresses concerns of rabies and its potential spread to the human population. The program investigates reports of possible exposure to rabies, submits animal specimens to the Virginia Division of Consolidated Laboratory Services for rabies testing, and follows up on both animal and human exposure, including posting public notices to ensure protection for all.

2024	Roanoke City	Roanoke County	Salem	Botetourt	Craig	Covington	Alleghany	Other**	Total
Rabies Investigations	324	164	92	154	33	25	53	10	877
Human Victim Exposures	311	153	70	121	28	24	50	30	787
Animal Victim Exposures	23	10	24	42	10	1	3	1	114

2024 Source Animal Types	Roanoke City	Roanoke County	Salem	Botetourt	Craig	Covington	Alleghany	Other**	Total
Domestic¹ Animals	279	128	21	121	17	24	48	70	708
Bat²	24	18	3	5	0	0	1	1	52
High Risk³ Wildlife	20	16	24	26	9	0	4	4	103
Low Risk⁴ Wildlife	1	2	1	0	0	1	0	3	8
Livestock	0	0	0	1	5	0	0	1	7
Unknown	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1

Definitions provided by the Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control (NASPHV).

1. Domestic Animals are defined as pet dogs and cats.
2. Bats (scientific order Chiroptera) pose the highest risk for rabies.
3. High Risk Wildlife includes mammals in the scientific order Carnivora, such as raccoons, skunks, foxes, opossums, groundhogs and beavers.
4. Low Risk Wildlife includes small rodents such as squirrels or mice, and lagomorphs (rabbits).

**These rabies incidents occurred outside of our districts, however the victims or the source animals (domestic) resided in our jurisdictions.

2024 Source Animal Testing	Domestic Animals	Bats	High Risk				Low Risk	Total
			Skunk	Raccoon	Fox	Other*		
# Tested	60	22 (1)	17 (2)	12	3	4	12 (2)	130 (5)
# Positive	2	0	12	2	1	1	0	18

(Numbers in parentheses reflect those specimens that were determined to be unsatisfactory for testing.) *Includes livestock: sheep and cattle

WATER & WASTEWATER

The Water and Wastewater program provides surveillance, inspection and regulatory oversight of private wells, onsite sewage systems and sewage handlers. System designs are submitted by the private sector for RCAHD staff review. Most private wells and onsite sewage systems are in the more rural areas of our districts.

2024	Roanoke City	Roanoke County	Salem	Botetourt	Craig	Covington	Alleghany	Total
Well Applications	2	52	2	59	26	0	20	161
Well Permits Issued	2	35	2	35	18	0	13	105
Well Inspections	0	24	0	38	11	0	11	84
Sewage Applications	8	73	3	108	38	0	18	248
Sewage Applications Denied	0	5	1	0	0	0	0	6
Sewage Construction Permits Issued	7	56	0	73	27	0	10	173
Sewage Operation Permits Issued	2	38	0	55	13	0	8	116
Sewage Inspections	0	3	0	15	11	0	5	34
Sewage Complaint Inspections	8	10	1	11	2	0	5	37
Sewage Handler Permits Issued	5	1	22	2	0	0	1	31
Sewage Handler Inspections	5	1	21	2	0	0	1	30



EPIDEMIOLOGY

The mission of the RCAHD Epidemiology Division is to monitor and investigate reportable and emerging communicable diseases, investigate outbreaks, and provide guidance and recommendations to stop the further spread of communicable diseases for the wellbeing of our communities.

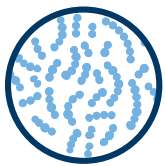
HIGHLIGHTS

In 2024, the Epidemiology (Epi) team responded to the following priority issues:

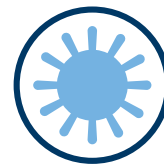
- Cases of several foodborne illnesses increased over typical numbers seen locally each year. Cases of *Campylobacter* (64) and *Salmonella* (41) doubled in 2024, compared to 2023 totals.
- Pertussis (whooping cough) significantly increased in 2024, both locally and across the country. The Epi team investigated 32 local pertussis cases, including one jurisdictional-level outbreak. By comparison, the Epi team typically investigates 3-4 cases of pertussis each year.
- Several priority issues identified in 2023 saw improvement in 2024, including decreases in the number of reported cases of:



↓ **Lyme disease**
(63% decrease)



↓ **Invasive group A streptococcus (iGAS)**
(39% decrease)



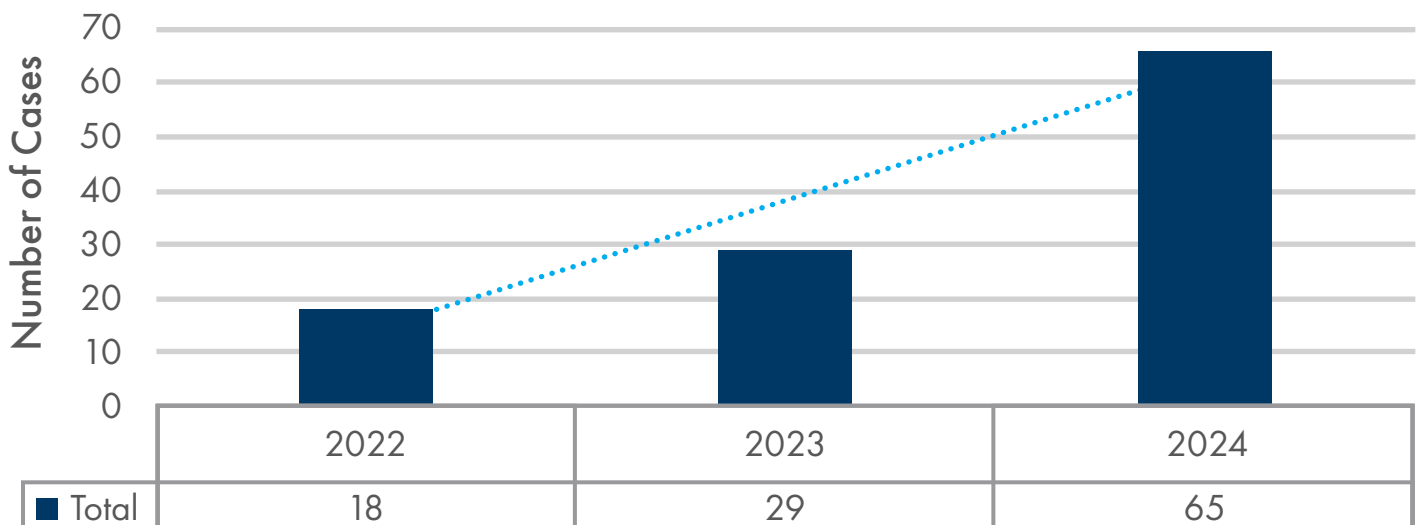
↓ **COVID-19**
(19% decrease)

FOODBORNE DISEASE CASE INVESTIGATIONS

Campylobacter

In 2024, the Epi team investigated increasing numbers of *Campylobacter* cases, a foodborne illness. Most cases occurred in those aged 60-69 (12 cases), with peak activity between July through September. While no single reason has been identified for the increase, exposures were among those keeping backyard flocks and other animal exposures, and from undercooked food, particularly ground beef. Following steps for home kitchen food safety also aids prevention.

RCAHD Campylobacter Cases, 2022-2024



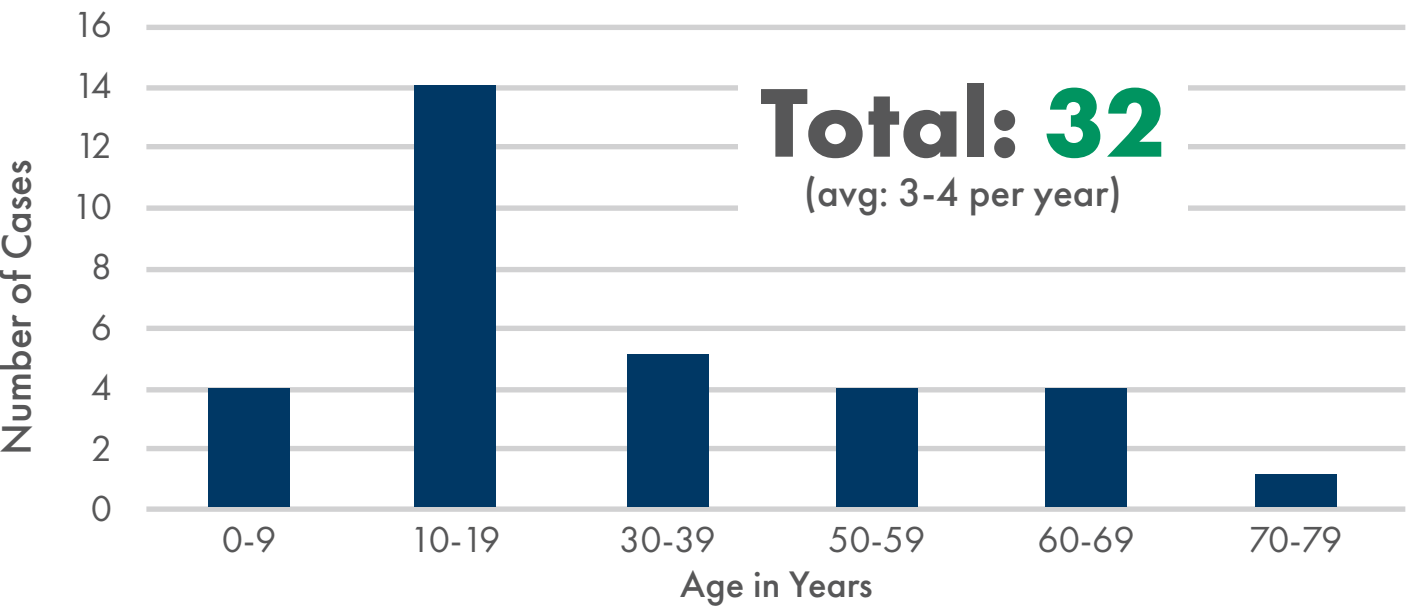
Salmonella

More than twice as many *Salmonella* cases were reported in 2024 (41), as compared to 2023 (20). Most cases occurred in Roanoke County and Salem (14). Possible exposures included various animal and reptile exposures, a multistate cluster linked to cucumbers, travel-related cases, and recreational water activities (swimming).

PERTUSSIS INVESTIGATIONS

Across the country, cases of pertussis (whooping cough) increased significantly in 2024. RCAHD likewise saw an eight-fold increase (32 cases in 2024), as compared to the typical 3–4 cases reported per year. Most cases (72%) occurred in Roanoke County residents. RCAHD investigated and managed one pertussis outbreak that began in October in Roanoke County pre-K–12 schools. The largest number of cases were among those aged 10–19 years (14 cases).

RCAHD Pertussis Cases by Age, 2024





2024 RCAHD REPORTABLE COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

To optimally protect the public's health, healthcare professionals and laboratories are required to report over 70 diseases and conditions in Virginia. Excluding COVID-19, RCAHD investigated over 600 incidences of reportable diseases and conditions, a 10% decrease compared to 2023 investigations (690 cases).

Condition	Alleghany	Roanoke City	Total
Anaplasma phagocytophilum infection	*	*	*
Arsenic	*	0	*
Campylobacteriosis	50	15	65
Candida auris, clinical	*	*	*
Candida auris, colonization/screening	0	*	*
Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)	5,079	2,688	7,767
CP-CRE (E. coli, Enterobacter and Klebsiella spp)	0	*	*
CPO, Clinical	11	*	13
CPO-non-Enterobacteriaceae	*	*	7
CPO, Screening	0	*	*
Cryptosporidiosis	6	*	9
Cyclosporiasis	0	*	*
Dengue	0	*	*
E. coli infection, shiga toxin-producing	13	5	18
Ehrlichia chaffeensis infection	*	9	12
Giardiasis	*	*	5
H. influenzae, invasive	5	*	6
Hepatitis A, acute	*	0	*
Hepatitis B, acute	*	*	5
Hepatitis B, chronic	24	20	44
Hepatitis C, acute	*	*	*
Hepatitis C, chronic	91	127	218
Latent TB infection	*	*	*









Condition	Alleghany	Roanoke City	Total
Latent Tuberculosis Infection (2020 TBLISS)	7	14	21
Legionellosis	*	*	5
Listeriosis	*	0	*
Lyme disease	29	*	33
Meningococcal disease (Neisseria meningitidis)	*	0	*
Pertussis	19	13	32
Salmonella Typhi	*	0	*
Salmonellosis (non-Typhi, non-Paratyphi)	25	14	39
Shigellosis	*	*	*
Spotted Fever Rickettsiosis (including RMSF)	*	*	*
Streptococcus, Group A, invasive	12	23	35
Trichinosis	0	*	*
Tuberculosis (2020 RVCT)	0	7	7
Tularemia	0	*	*
Unusual occurrence of public health concern (CD)	*	*	*
Unusual occurrence of public health concern (TOX)	*	0	*
Varicella (Chickenpox)	0	7	7
Vibriosis, non-cholera	*	0	*
Yersiniosis	*	0	*
Total (excluding COVID-19)	329	293	622
Grand Total	5,408	2,981	8,389

* Values between 1-4 are suppressed

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS (STIs)

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) data are collected to inform efforts to reduce transmission and improve sexual and reproductive health for residents. The primary goal is to prevent and treat infections before they develop into disease. Left untreated, they may cause serious long-term health consequences including infertility and vision loss. Although the rates of STIs remain a concern in our community, RCAHD is encouraged to see an overall decrease in local cases of reportable STIs in 2024.

New Cases of STIs By RCAHD Health District, 2022-2024

Chlamydia	2022	2023	2024	2022-2024 Trend Line
Alleghany	447	447	299	
Roanoke	812	929	893	
Gonorrhea	2022	2023	2024	2022-2024 Trend Line
Alleghany	153	110	109	
Roanoke	481	329	347	
HIV	2022	2023	2024	2022-2024 Trend Line
Alleghany	6	6	4	
Roanoke	12	15	14	
Early Syphilis	2022	2023	2024	2022-2024 Trend Line
Alleghany	17	13	4	
Roanoke	28	31	27	

Note: The Alleghany Health District includes Covington, Salem, and the counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, and Roanoke. The Roanoke Health District includes only the City of Roanoke.



POPULATION HEALTH

The mission of the RCAHD Population Health division is to work with partners to improve health strategies to allow RCAHD residents to achieve optimal health.

HIGHLIGHT

- Community partners worked together to complete and publish the Roanoke Valley Community Health Assessment in 2024. More than 520 residents provided input for this survey which will be used to inform decisions for health priorities for the next three years. The Alleghany Highlands CHA assessment report is expected to be finalized in early 2025.
- Rates of overdoses and deaths connected to substance use disorder improved at both national and local levels in 2024. There is growing evidence that community harm reduction efforts are contributing to this improvement, such as greater availability of naloxone, a medication that reverses most opioid overdoses.

MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH

RCAHD protects children’s lives by ensuring that families have resources to keep their children safe.

Car Seat and Safe Sleep Programs:

RCAHD helps to protect children’s lives by ensuring that families have resources to help keep their children safe. These resources include car seats that comply with state laws for safely transporting infants and children in vehicles and free portable cribs for income-eligible families. Following several years of double-digit increases, demand in 2024 for these programs remained stable in comparison to 2023 numbers.

2024	Alleghany/ Covington	Botetourt	Craig	Roanoke City	Roanoke County	Salem	Total
Car Seat Distribution & Education	57	22	11	274	26	44	434
Portable Cribs Provided	26	14	7	116	12	37	212



Adolescent Reproductive Health:

- RCAHD hosted a second annual Adolescent Reproductive Health summit with 69 participants from local partner agencies. The event was organized by the SHARE Collaborative (Sexual Health & Reproductive Education), a local network of individuals from organizations that work with teens. The summit included presentations on adolescent mental health, how providers can dismantle the stigma teens feel about their health concerns, and an exploration of recent adolescent health data such as state and local rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
- The SHARE Collaborative met monthly to promote unbiased, comprehensive sexual and reproductive health education for adolescents, caregivers, and communities across our service region. Staff also worked with community-based organization educators who provide adolescent reproductive health within school-settings to assess gaps in care and identify future opportunities.



The SHARE Collaborative, pictured in Vinton at the May 2024 Adolescent Reproductive Health Summit, includes representatives from Roanoke City Schools, Goodwill, RCAHD, Children's Trust, Partnership for Community Wellness, local mental health providers and more.

COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT

Using surveys collecting input from community residents and focus groups, RCAHD and other community partners supported Community Health Assessment (CHA) processes for the greater Roanoke Valley and the Alleghany Highlands. In 2024, the Roanoke Valley Community CHA was completed and published, in partnership with Carilion Clinic and Healthy Roanoke Valley. The Alleghany Highlands CHA assessment report is expected to be finalized in early 2025. In 2025, the Healthy Roanoke Valley and Live Well Alleghany Highlands community coalitions will build on the issues identified in the CHA reports by developing a response plan and improvement strategies.

Healthy Roanoke Valley CHA Priorities

Chronic Disease
Mental Health & Substance Use
Injury/ Violence Prevention

Live Well Alleghany Highlands CHA Priorities

Chronic Disease
Mental Health & Substance Use

Read more in the CHA resource guides:



Roanoke Valley Community
Health Assessment 2024



Live Well Alleghany
Highlands Resource Guide

HEALTHY BEHAVIORS - WALKABILITY

To address walkability safety in a heavily traveled neighborhood, RCAHD staff led a team of local partners (Roanoke Alleghany Regional Planning Commission, Carilion Clinic, and the City of Roanoke) to study pedestrian access to Northwest Roanoke's new Melrose Plaza. Concerns about this heavily used corridor placed it in the top 1% statewide for pedestrian crash risk factors.

An 18-month collaborative project concluded in 2024 with the following key improvements for community safety and beautification for the 5,000 residents in walking distance:

- Increased public transportation accessibility with an ADA-accessible bus stop on Salem Turnpike
- High-visibility crosswalks at Salem Turnpike and 24th Street NW
- A flashing beacon at pedestrian crossings and high-visibility bollards
- A street mural designed with the input of adult and child residents of the Lansdowne neighborhood and greater Northwest Roanoke City area

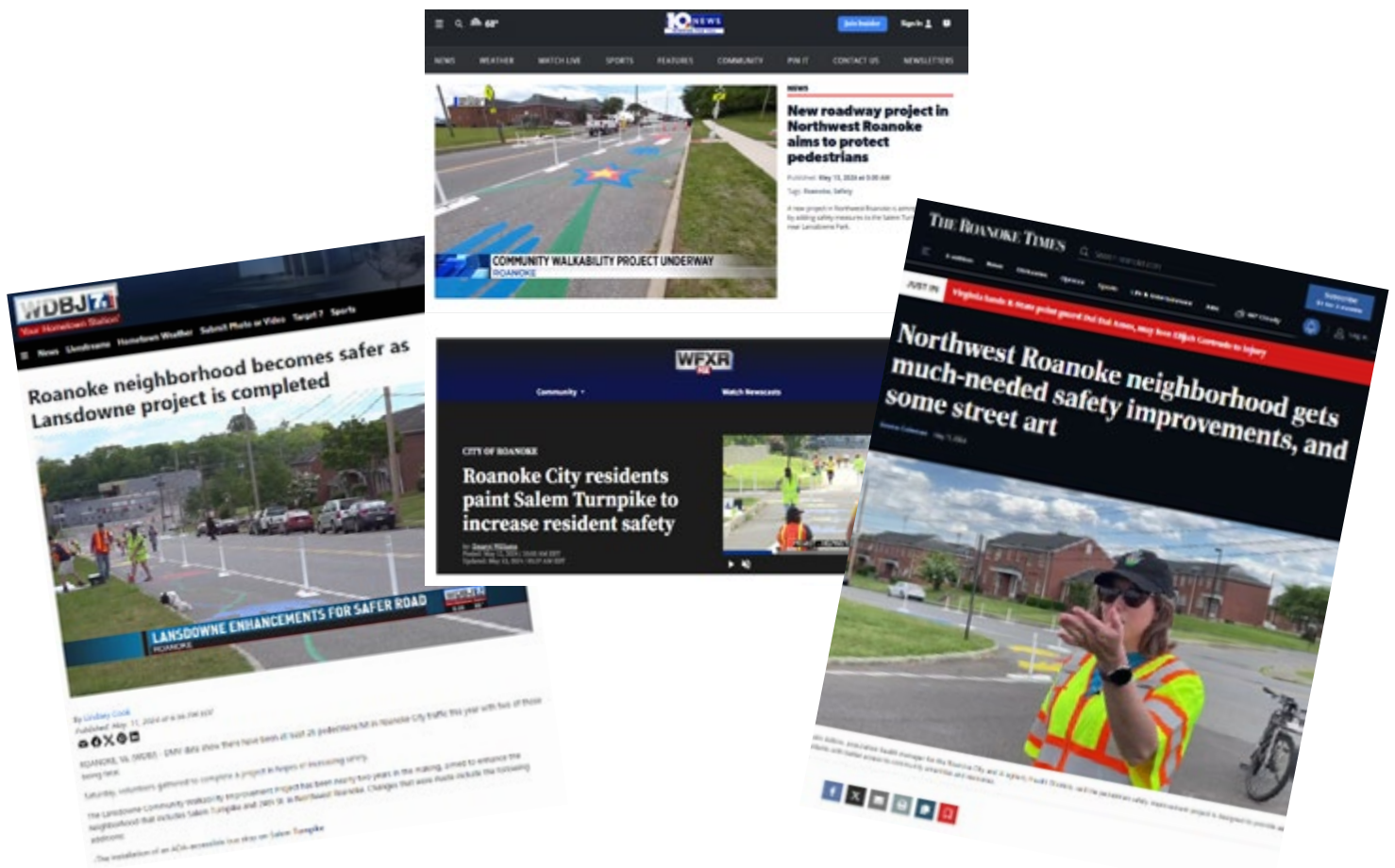
The local coalition was supported by the Virginia Department of Health's Virginia Walkability Action Institute and was provided technical support by Equitable Cities, Inc.



VDH Virginia Walkability
Action Institute



Equitable Cities, Inc



ARPA ENGAGEMENT

To enhance our bi-directional communication, American Rescue Plan Act Targeted Community Outreach funds were used to support active listening and collaboration with our communities. Using input gathered from engagement events with diverse populations, highlights of the priority areas include:

- Systematized data-driven decision-making as a core element in resource allocation.
- Creation of a staff engagement plan that ensures employees feel valued and respected, promoting a sense of pride among RCAHD team members and enabling long-term engagement and trust-building with community members.
- Strengthened alliances to support engagement across all organizations that work with underserved populations to quickly identify emerging community concerns, break down silos, eliminate duplication of care, and streamline funding.
- Increased language access services to improve client engagement and workplace efficiency.



5,394

Residents engaged through ARPA outreach



416

Community members joined listening sessions and focus groups



350

People participated in outreach and training



106

Clients connected with community resources

SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER (SUD) RESPONSE

In 2024, RCAHD continued to provide overdose education; to increase availability of naloxone (Narcan) and harm reduction test strips to the public; and to partner with harm reduction and peer recovery programs for outreach to this population. RCAHD staff presented a second annual “Peaks and Valleys: Trends in Substance Use Disorder” data summit to professionals working with individuals who experience substance use disorder. We are active partners of local prevention coalitions such as the Collective Response, the Healthy Roanoke Valley Mental Well-Being workgroup, Connection 2 Care, and the EMS Community Risk Reduction workgroup.

In September, several community partners joined us for the second annual Save-A-Life Day East in SE Roanoke, one of 650 events held across 35 states in the largest single day of naloxone distribution to date. Over 175 doses of naloxone and 200 harm reduction test strips were distributed. In addition, STI testing, free flu vaccines, hygiene kits, safer use supplies, Medicaid enrollment support, and meals for 120 community members were provided.

Recent SUD Data Showing Improvement

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) made headlines in September 2024 announcing a remarkable 10% drop in overdose deaths across the United States. This decline in deaths has both national and local experts cautiously optimistic about progress for people experiencing substance use disorder.

Like many places, our area witnessed a steep increase in overdose deaths during the pandemic. In late 2024, we were pleased that announce that death rates in Roanoke City and Salem in the previous year had dropped by 20-35% compared to the year prior. (Overdose death rates in the Alleghany Highlands and the counties of Botetourt, Craig, and Roanoke have remained stable in recent years.)

Overdose Fatalities in Roanoke City & Salem



ER Visits for Nonfatal Overdoses in the Roanoke Valley



We are also encouraged that the most recent numbers available reflect a 10% drop in the rate of emergency department visits for nonfatal overdoses in the wider Roanoke Valley. This is an important improvement as our area's rates have been two times as high for emergency overdose visits compared to the rest of Virginia for more than ten years.

Harm Reduction Efforts:

2024	Naloxone (Narcan)	Fentanyl Test Strips	Xylazine Test Strips	People Trained in Overdose Awareness (REVIVE)
Monthly Average	75	143	90	68
Total	911	1,717	1,086	817

SPOTLIGHT ON HEART HEALTH

Major risk factors for heart disease include high blood pressure (known as "hypertension"), diabetes, smoking, older age, poor nutrition, physical inactivity, and family history. Research has shown that having a healthy lifestyle is important to help improve outcomes for those with hypertension and high cholesterol.

According to VDH's Chronic Disease Data Dashboard, Roanoke City residents fare worse on average than most Virginia residents for several conditions, including:

- ↑ Hypertension rates: 41.3% in Roanoke City (VA average: 34.4%)
- ↑ Stroke rates: 4.6% in Roanoke City (VA average: 3.4%)
- ↑ Heart disease rates: 5.4% in Roanoke City (VA average: 3.5%)

In fact, some of the highest rates of hypertension anywhere in the state have been found in several Northwest Roanoke neighborhoods (53%+).

To respond to heart disease needs in the community, a group of Roanoke residents formed the Roanoke Healthy Hearts Learning Collaborative to address heart health disparities. The program provides:

- Peer support
- Screening and referrals
- A Healthy Heart Ambassador blood pressure self-monitoring program



VDH staff and Healthy Hearts Learning Collaborative members include (l to r): Monna Burwell, Amazetta Anderson, Marion Ware, Tim Wade, Cheryl Mosely, Michele King, Jackie Wiggins, the Rev. Carroll Carter, Brenda Petty, and Dee Hanna.

VITAL RECORDS

The mission of the RCAHD Vital Records program is to assure access to essential documents, including birth and death certificates.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Staff at the Roanoke City office fulfilled an additional 1000 vital records document requests over 2023 numbers.
- In 2024, the Vinton (Roanoke County) office began offering limited vital records services to residents.

2024 VITAL RECORDS REQUESTS BY SITE

Certified copies of birth, death, marriage, and divorce certificates can be obtained from the Virginia Department Health (as long as the event occurred in Virginia).

2024	Alleghany / Covington	Botetourt	Craig	Roanoke City	Salem	Total
Birth Certificates	177	96	53	1,975	290	2,591
Death Certificates	2,421	1,396	303	13,085	7,863	25,068
Death Verifications	7	2	2	47	34	92
Divorce Certificates	-	2	1	11	2	16
Marriage Licenses	17	9	7	41	20	94

IN PERSON

- Applications can be made at most RCAHD local health department offices between 8am - 4 pm.
- Please bring a valid ID.

ONLINE

- Online applications are accepted through the VDH website at <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/vital-records/>

BY MAIL

- Print a vital record application at home and mail it to: Division of Vital Records, PO Box 1000, Richmond, VA 23218-1000.
- Enclose a check or money order for \$12.00 for each requested copy.



WOMEN, INFANTS & CHILDREN (WIC) PROGRAM

The mission of the RCAHD Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) is to improve the health of low income pregnant, post-partum, or breastfeeding through better nutrition and access to health care. WIC provides nutrition education, breastfeeding support, access to healthy foods and referrals to other needed health-related services.

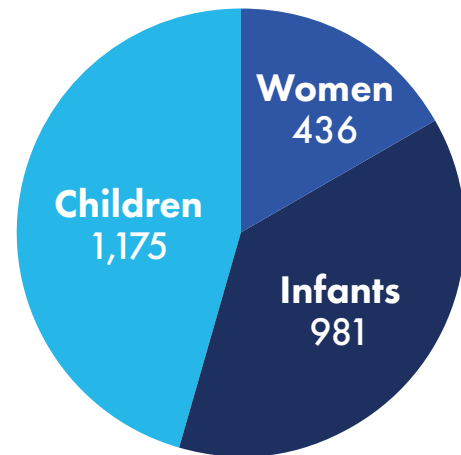
HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2024, the WIC program nationwide celebrated its 50th anniversary.
- In September, the Roanoke City Health District's WIC team won a statewide award for achieving the greatest increase in WIC clients who are fully breastfeeding their children.

AVERAGE NUMBER OF WIC SERVICES PROVIDED PER MONTH

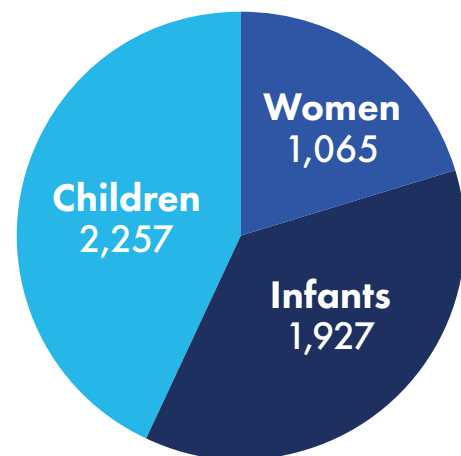
Alleghany Health District	Women	Infants	Children	Total
Alleghany/Covington Health Department	66	71	190	327
Botetourt Health Department	36	36	128	201
Craig Health Department	10	9	39	58
Roanoke County/Vinton Health Department	69	72	216	357
Alleghany/Clifton Forge Health Department	28	29	68	125
Salem Health Department	127	150	355	632
Roanoke Health District	Women	Infants	Children	Total
Belmont WIC Clinic	160	202	444	806
Roanoke City Health Department	437	449	1,071	1,958
First Church of the Brethren WIC (location closed 07/2024)	144	156	264	563

2024 Total Served - Alleghany District*



Total: 2,592

2024 Total Served - Roanoke City District*



Total: 5,249

*Federal Fiscal Year Oct 2023-Sept 2024

