

Nelson County lake photo taken by BRHD employee Cindy Thompson in October 2024

Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2024

Blue Ridge Health District

Virginia Department of Health





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Who We Are:

The Blue Ridge Health District (BRHD) is one of 35 health districts under the Virginia Department of Health (VDH). We are comprised of five health departments and one community-based clinic that serve the counties of Albemarle, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa, and Nelson, along with the city of Charlottesville. Our local health departments provide public health services to over 250,000 residents.

Our Mission:

To protect and promote the health and well-being of all Virginians.

Our Vision:

Working together for healthy, equitable communities.

BRHD Locations

Charlottesville/Albemarle Health Department

1138 Rose Hill Drive
Charlottesville, VA 22903
434-972-6200

Greene County Health Department

50 Stanard Street
Stanardsville, VA 22973
434-985-2262

Nelson County Health Department

4038 Thomas Nelson Highway
Arrington, VA 22922
434-263-8315

Fluvanna County Health Department

132 Main Street
Palmyra, VA 22963
434-591-1960

Louisa County Health Department

101 Woolfolk Ave
Suite 202- Clinical
Suite 203- Environmental Health
Louisa, VA 23093
540-967-3703

Yancey Community Center

7625 Porters Road
Esmont, VA 22937
434-270-3216



Letter From the Director

As I reflect on my time thus far as Director of the Blue Ridge Health District, I am filled with enthusiasm and optimism for the journey ahead. I have been a part of the Blue Ridge Health District for over 10 years and proudly stepped into the role of District Director at the end of December 2023. Though there have been challenges, I am eager for the possibilities in front of us.

Leading the District during this transformative time towards Public Health 3.0 is a privilege. Together, we are committed to improving the health and well-being of everyone who lives in and visits the Blue Ridge Health District. We have a number of vacancies that we are working diligently to fill and sustain. Our recent employee engagement initiatives, such as the Employee Onboarding Program and revitalized internal Strategic Plan, are just the beginning of our efforts to ensure that our staff feels a sense of belonging and are equipped to deliver exceptional service. These programs not only foster collaboration and understanding among our teams, but also empower us to respond more effectively to the needs of our diverse community.

I am confident that, together, we will continue to make strides in enhancing community, building partnerships, and providing the highest quality of service to those we serve. Thank you for your ongoing dedication and support as we embark on this important journey together. Please enjoy this Annual Report to reflect on all of the Blue Ridge Health District's accomplishments in fiscal year 2024.

In health,



Ryan L. McKay, MPA

Director, Blue Ridge Health District
Virginia Department of Health

MAPP2Health Report:

Community Health Improvement Plan

The 2022-2025 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) is entering its final year of the MAPP2Health cycle, with notable progress in FY24. Here are highlights from two key areas: transportation and digital access + skills.

In transportation, BRHD collaborated with the Charlottesville Area Alliance's (CAA) Transportation Workgroup to improve transit and pedestrian access for older adults and people with disabilities. Projects included an AARP-hosted Walkability Audit and the launch of PATH, a mobility management program helping older adults find transportation options.

Under the leadership of CHIP convener Albemarle County Broadband Office, digital equity initiatives gained momentum by establishing a Regional Digital Equity Coalition and submitting strategic state funding applications aimed at improving connectivity and skills support. UVA Health's Telemedicine team spearheaded two innovative telehealth pilots in Southern Albemarle: a dedicated telehealth hub for community telehealth access and a device distribution program designed to expand at-home telehealth options and improve access to health information.

The new Community Health Assessment (CHA) cycle launched in January 2024. This initiative brings together the Core Group of BRHD, Sentara Martha Jefferson Hospital, and UVA Health, as well as a 16-member Steering Committee dedicated to advising the Core Group and addressing community health needs. The CHA will continue throughout FY25, culminating in a comprehensive report scheduled for publication in September 2025.

Follow the CHA at <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/blue-ridge/communitysurvey/>.

2023-2025

Community Health Improvement Plan

Plan de mejora de la salud comunitaria



Transportation • Healthcare Workforce

Digital Access + Skills • Mental + Behavioral Health

Transporte • Personal de atención médica

Acceso digital + Alfabetización • Salud mental + conductual

2022
MAPP2Health

ALBEMARLE • CHARLOTTESVILLE
FLUVANNA • GREENE • LOUISA • NELSON



Clinical Services

Pre-admission screenings are required for people entering nursing homes to ensure those individuals and nursing home services are right for each other. This year, pre-admission screenings increased by 85 as a result more clients needing additional services to facilitate daily living. We increased the numbers of our staff performing these screenings in order to meet the new demands. One client's son sent an email to share how much they respected and appreciated this program and to thank the specific BRHD employee who conducted the screening for being so knowledgeable and caring about the client's well-being.

Pre-Admission Screenings



Albemarle	123
Charlottesville	221
Fluvanna	143
Greene	74
Louisa	140
Nelson	38
Total	739

Immunization Visits



Albemarle / Charlottesville	5,471
Fluvanna	851
Greene	973
Louisa	585
Nelson	245
Total Visits	8,125
Total Clients	2,534

In collaboration with BRHD's Communications Team and Community Health Workers, outreach efforts increased, helping community members access immunization clinics. The number of immunization visits in FY24 increased by 3,000 compared to FY23. Not only that, but the number of individual clients served increased by over 700! We also built upon existing relationships with local schools to identify needs for back-to-school vaccines and hosted specific clinics for those students, faculty, staff, and neighborhoods.

Tuberculosis Screenings & Visits



Albemarle / Charlottesville	368
Fluvanna	85
Greene	90
Louisa	178
Nelson	8
Total	729


Family Planning Visits



Albemarle / Charlottesville	1,574
Fluvanna	250
Greene	448
Louisa	429
Nelson	341
Total Visits	3,042
Total Clients	296


Environmental Health

The Environmental Health Division includes many programs at BRHD, such as food safety and service inspections which helped 124 new food service facilities open! The division also manages sewage disposal, well permits, temporary event and vendor permits, rabies control, vital records, and much more. The team often collaborates with the BRHD Epidemiology Division to investigate food-related illnesses and outbreaks.




Food Service Establishment Inspections	
Albemarle	403
Charlottesville	406
Fluvanna	29
Greene	76
Louisa	118
Nelson	44
Total	1,076


This year, a highlight of the Environmental Health Division was welcoming colleagues from Texas, North Carolina, and Illinois as part of the Retail Program Standards mentorship initiative. This initiative facilitates the exchange of insights and experiences on preventing foodborne illness within our districts. We were honored to be invited to present at the annual Retail Program Standards Summit, where we shared our successes and contributed to the broader dialogue on food safety standards.



Sewage Disposal System Applications	
Albemarle	596
Charlottesville	39
Fluvanna	126
Greene	171
Louisa	448
Nelson	113
Total	1,493



Rabies Exposures Investigated	
Albemarle	376
Charlottesville	62
Fluvanna	12
Greene	57
Louisa	73
Nelson	52
Total	632



Vital Records Issued (incl. duplicate copies)	
Albemarle / Charlottesville	12,923
Fluvanna	2,063
Greene	1,117
Louisa	1,689
Nelson	1,082
Total	18,874



Temporary Event Vendors Permitted	
Albemarle	31
Charlottesville	26
Fluvanna	15
Greene	8
Louisa	13
Nelson	26
Total	119

Emergency Preparedness & Response

We spent a significant portion of the past year working on Project Public Health Ready (PPHR) Re-Certification which we officially received on July 1, 2024. PPHR recognition confirms that BRHD 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.



PPHR is a criteria-based training and recognition program created by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to help local health departments develop core public health emergency preparedness competencies. This intensive 18-month program provides local health departments with the structure to build training and preparedness capacity using a continuous quality improvement model.

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. We are thrilled to have received our PPHR Certification again and look forward to continuing our emergency preparedness and response efforts.

Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Volunteers

Hours Volunteered by MRC	
Albemarle	234.75
Charlottesville	1,030.75
Fluvanna	215.25
Greene	43
Louisa	52.5
Nelson	45.5
Online Education	576.75
Total	2,198.5

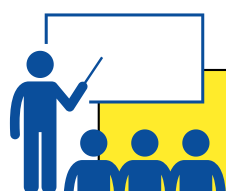
Our MRC volunteers have a lot to celebrate this year! One of our biggest accomplishments was coordinating and collaborating with Charlottesville Airport to conduct their Triennial Full Scale Emergency Response Exercise. We deployed 22 volunteers to be actors of the plane crash training exercise. Participants dressed with realistic injuries and employed their best acting skills, and the airport was able to have a successful exercise with the help from MRC.



Population Health

Outreach Network

The Blue Ridge Health District Outreach Network was formally launched on October 18, 2023. After being identified as a need by the 2022 Community Health Assessment (CHA), the Outreach Network was developed as a part of the 2023-2025 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). Our mission is to create and operate a network providing training, collaboration, and networking opportunities to the District's community health workers (CHWs) and those in similar outreach positions. Our initial goal was to refer 30 CHWs or similar workers to trainings via the Network in 2024. We exceeded that goal within the first quarter with 73 people referred. We continue to grow in membership and in the types of trainings provided.



Trainings & Networking Events Hosted

Total	23
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Monthly Newsletter Subscribers

Total	334
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Community Health Workers

This past year, our Community Health Workers (CHWs) have made significant strides in connecting diverse community members with essential services related to the social determinants of health. Community partnerships played a vital role in our CHW success. Through office hours, active participation in local events, and strong ties with trusted neighborhood leaders, our CHWs built trust and strengthened relationships within the community, enabling us to provide targeted support.

Additionally, BRHD partnered with UVA Cancer Center's Every Women's Life Program, allowing us to connect individuals with life saving breast health services through digital referrals using the Unite Us platform. Another key highlight was the increased distribution of car seats and cribs, ensuring safe transportation and safe sleep environments for infants.

Office Hours Hosted

Total	554
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Community Events Attended

Total	113
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Population Health

Maternal Child Health (MCH)

While there are plenty of English materials explaining safe sleep practices, the same can't be said for Dari or Pashto – two of the most spoken languages among our Afghan communities. To address this disparity, we partnered with the Communications Team to create a one-page handout specific to Dari & Pashto speakers. The handout covers safe sleep practices and harmful habits to avoid (like smoking near baby) during an infant's first year of life.



Free Portable Crib Distributed



Total	192
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Our main priority during the development process was to ensure the content was both applicable and culturally sensitive. By working alongside native speakers, we made sure the phrasing was appropriate and easy to understand. We specifically took into account that some cultural practices, like co-sleeping, would need special consideration to avoid coming off as stigmatizing or insensitive. On the visual side, we took care to select culturally relevant graphics that accurately reflect the population. This collaborative effort between teams allowed us to tailor our message and better serve our District's Afghan refugee families.



Free Car & Booster Seats Distributed

Albemarle / Charlottesville	180
Fluvanna	27
Greene	22
Louisa	63
Nelson	27
Total	319

Communications



Graphics & Flyers Created

Total	600+
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Materials Translated into non-English languages



Total	265
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Social Media Posts on Facebook, Instagram, & X



Total	1,495
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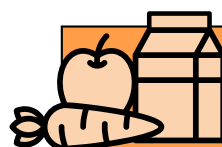
Newsletters Published



Total	26
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Women, Infants, & Children (WIC)

To address extended appointment wait times, enhance processing efficiency, and better serve the local population, the Blue Ridge WIC program introduced a temporary walk-in clinic. From March to May 2024, families were able to access WIC services without a scheduled appointment every Wednesday from 12:00 to 2:00 PM. This initiative enabled us to accommodate another 90 clients, including several mothers with young infants, who would otherwise have faced prolonged delays for an appointment.



Average Monthly Client Caseload

Albemarle / Charlottesville	1,710
Fluvanna	216
Greene	331
Louisa	503
Nelson	254
Total	3,014



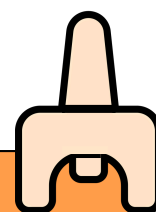
Harm Reduction

Fentanyl, Xylazine, & Benzodiazepine Testing Strips Distributed



Albemarle	31
Charlottesville	201
Fluvanna	4
Greene	0
Louisa	16
Nelson	18
Total	270

Boxes of Naloxone Nasal Spray Distributed



Albemarle / Charlottesville	298
Fluvanna	12
Greene	10
Louisa	102
Nelson	2
Total	424

Sexual Health Services

Sexually transmitted Infections (STIs) continue to significantly contribute to the disease burden in BRHD. Chlamydia has the highest prevalence, accounting for 70% of the cases investigated. This was followed by gonorrhea with 24% of cases investigated, which represents a continued upward trend for both infections. Several of these instances were “dual infections,” meaning the person had both infections detected. HIV and syphilis, which are also increasing, accounted for a combined 6% of cases investigated.



Sexual Health Visits	
Albemarle / Charlottesville	3,243
Fluvanna	37
Greene	23
Louisa	87
Nelson	0
Total Visits	3,390
Total Clients	298

Rapid HIV + Hep C Tests Provided



Total	115
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Condoms Distributed



Total	47,536
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Epidemiology

During the last fiscal year, gastrointestinal events accounted for 28% of all reported incidents. Tick-borne illness investigations accounted for another 15% of cases, with Lyme disease occurring most frequently. Nine percent of the cases investigated were invasive bacterial infections, which are bacteria that invade parts of the body that are normally free of germs, including the bloodstream, muscles, and fat.

Throughout the fiscal year, COVID-19 emergency department visits declined. However, congregate settings continued to experience COVID-19 outbreaks. Cases were often mild or asymptomatic and there were minimal hospitalizations and associated deaths. Of the 52 reported outbreaks, 34 occurred in long-term care settings. Schools accounted for the other 17 events.



Reported Disease Cases Investigated

Albemarle	377
Charlottesville	241
Fluvanna	72
Greene	28
Louisa	65
Nelson	39
Total	822

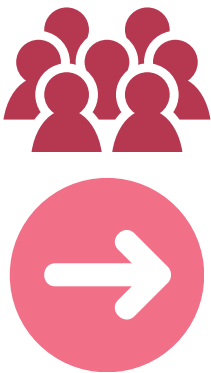
Human Resources and Workforce Development



In February of 2024, we launched our brand-new Employee Onboarding Program. Once a quarter, all new employees get together to talk about their experiences at BRHD, learn about the District and the services we offer, and have face time with District leadership. This program has allowed new employees to better understand the communities we serve and resulted in increased cross-department collaboration, allowing for smoother referrals between divisions. The program has become a model for other localities and several VDH Central Office staff have attended to see if it should be expanded to the agency on whole.

We also launched our new training request and approval process. In FY24, 10 employees attended 8 external trainings using the process, allowing BRHD staff to better serve the community. Another training success story is the acceptance and completion of the Commonwealth Management Institute by one of our District Management Team Members. Our Director of Population Health attended this weeklong training and brought back best practices for managing staff, increasing engagement, and relationship building that she has shared with other leaders throughout the District. This will result in a more engaged workforce as our supervisors learn crucial skills for maintaining stability and consistency.

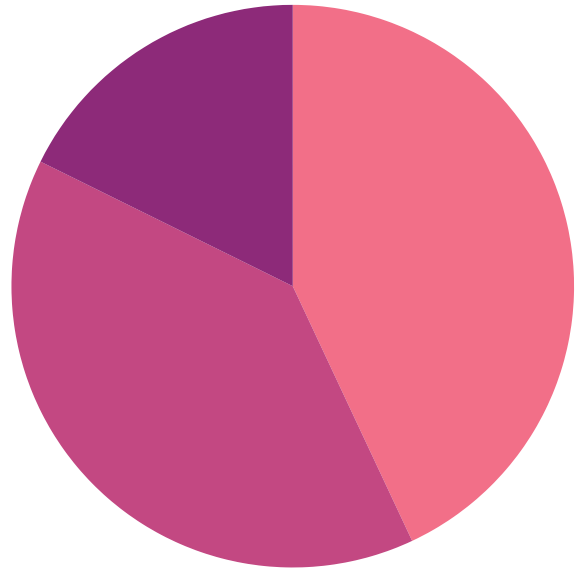
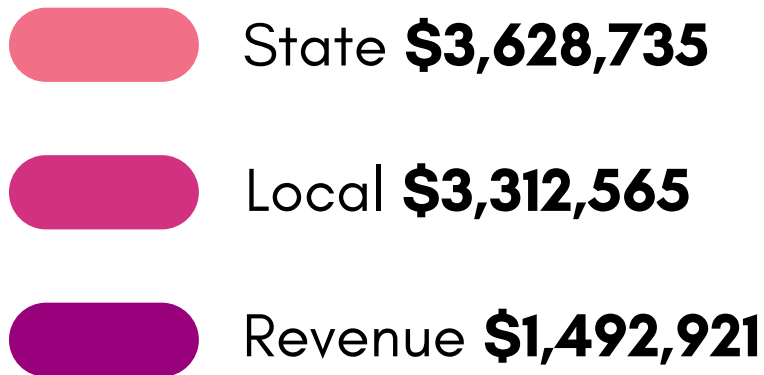
July 2023	
Full-Time	70
Wage	3
Contract	35
Total	108



June 2024	
Full-Time	70
Wage	4
Contract	40
Total	114

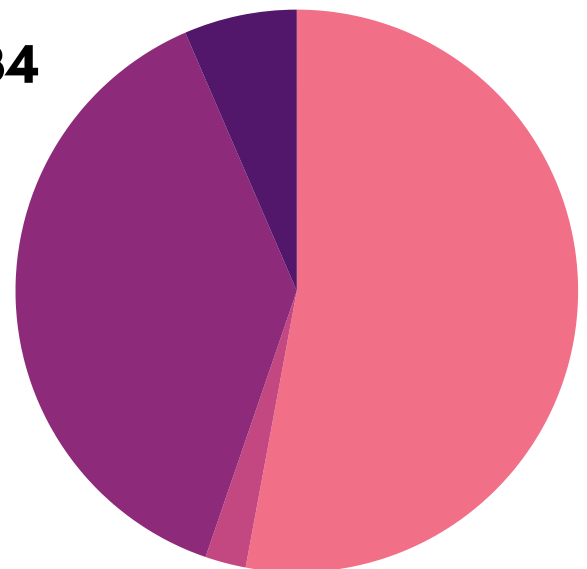
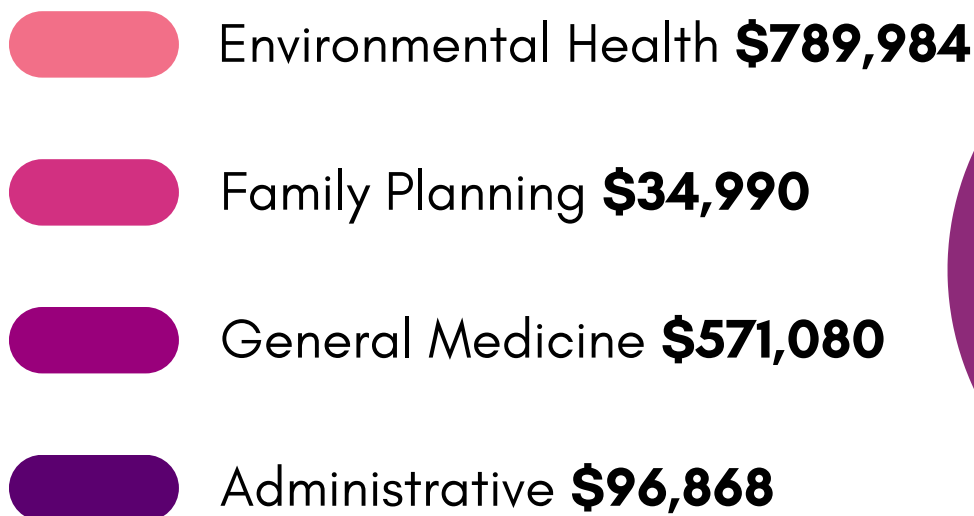
Fiscal Information

Funding:



\$8,434,221 Total

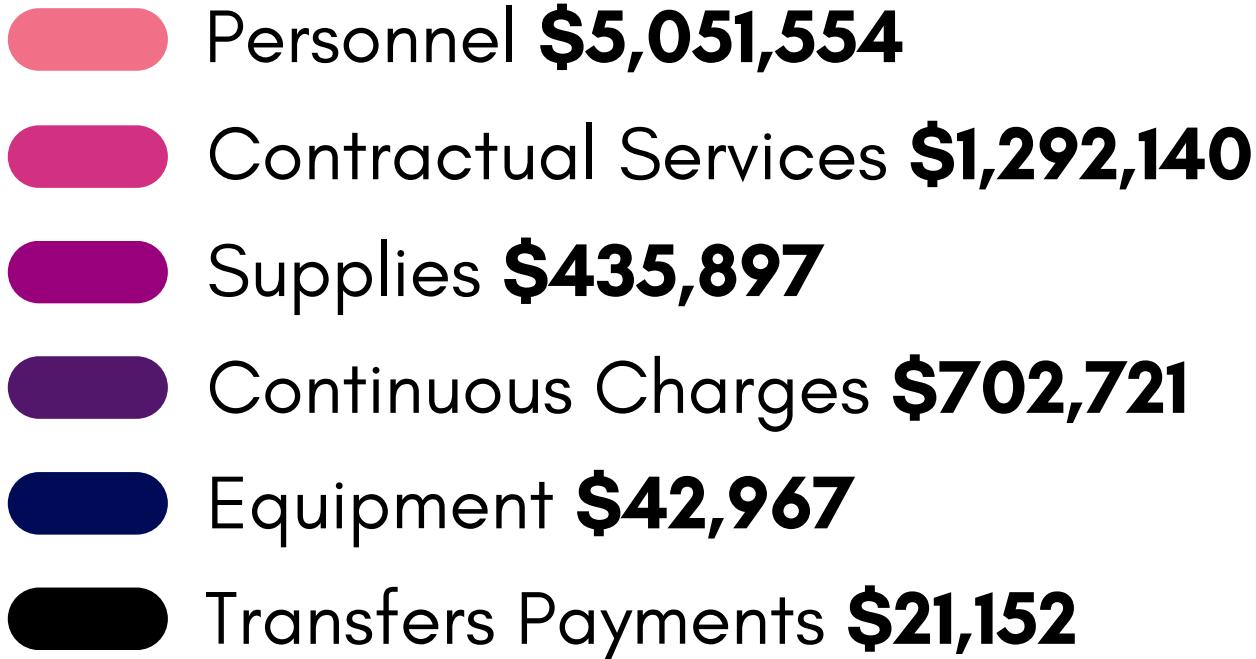
Revenue:



\$1,492,922 Total

Fiscal Information

Expenses:



\$7,546,431

Total

