ANNUAL REPORT

Celebrating 70 years of public health
The year held many achievements and successes, some shared herein through the voices that truly matter – the individuals who use San Juan Basin Public Health (SJBPH) services. In 2017, we reflected on our history, as the agency approached its 70-year anniversary. What amazed us as we reviewed SJBPH’s history were the parallels in the services that the agency provided over the decades with those provided today. The agency has consistently adapted to the public health needs of the day and shifted the services it provides accordingly.

The examination of parallels between past and current day services provided by SJBPH reveals an agency that has been both responsive to the public health needs of local residents as well as forward-thinking in its focus on prevention. The programs and services provided by SJBPH reflect both the traditional public health needs such as immunizations and restaurant inspections, as well as those in response to the modern-day health challenges such as positive youth development and suicide prevention programs, both areas of priority for SJBPH in 2017.

The agency’s current-day mission is to protect human and environmental health and inspire well-being in the communities we serve. Interestingly, this could have served as the mission at the agency’s inception 70 years ago, and more than likely will be able to appropriately represent the work of the agency in decades to come. Much of the focus of public health work has withstood the test of time; to help all individuals reach their highest potential of health.

I invite you to learn more about our agency and how you can reach your highest potential of health by visiting our website at sjbpublichealth.org.

To another 70 years,
In 1947, state law reorganizes the State Health Department and authorizes local public health efforts; San Juan Basin Health Unit was formed to serve Archuleta, Dolores, La Plata, Montezuma, and San Juan counties.

An early priority of the agency was food safety. The first food handler’s class was offered to restaurant employees in June 1947 and safety codes for Durango restaurants were established in November 1947. In the following year, 92 restaurants, 30 dairy barns, and eight milk processing plants were inspected.

San Juan Basin Health Unit’s first year budget was proposed at $50,100, with around eight part-time staff hired. Most staff positions were home health nurses, as well as one sanitarian who conducted restaurant, dairy barn, and milk processing plant inspections.

Over 1,000 vaccine injections given to local schoolchildren in 1947 for diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, and smallpox. Polio and influenza were common and feared diseases.

By 1948, San Juan Basin Health Unit was advocating for a public central water filtration plant and sewage disposal for Durango. Plans were not set for a treatment plant in the city of Durango until 1955.

Testing at the end of the 1947-48 school year reveals that one in three local high school students test positive for tuberculosis (TB).

Due to the advancement of public health and medical efforts to treat and control the spread of TB, SJBPH has monitored only two cases of active TB in the last ten years - one in Archuleta County and one in La Plata County. SJBPH also monitors and treats individuals who have a non-active form of TB, preventing future infection and outbreaks. In 2017, the agency monitored an active TB case, a hantavirus case, and other communicable disease cases as part of its efforts to protect public health.

SJBPH now serves Archuleta and La Plata counties, with services provided to other counties regionally on a contractual basis. The agency serves over 68,000 residents and covers an area over 3,000 square miles in two county-based office locations.

SJBPH no longer inspects dairy barns or milk processing plants, but over 260 retail food inspections were conducted by the agency in 2017. SJBPH also held five food handling and safety classes for local restaurant employees, and inspected the health safety of childcare centers in Archuleta, La Plata, and San Juan counties.

SJBPH’s current annual budget is $5,504,683. The agency provides over 30 public health programs, and employs over 70 full- and part-time staff in two office locations in Durango and Pagosa Springs. A recent study found that for every dollar spent for public health interventions, the return on investment (ROI) was $14, demonstrating that local and national public health interventions are highly cost-saving.

Thankfully, many of the diseases experienced by schoolchildren in earlier decades have largely been eliminated through effective vaccination programs. Maintaining high vaccination levels is key to keeping children and adults healthy. SJBPH provided over 1,900 vaccines to children and adults in 2017.

While SJBPH does not monitor municipal water or waste systems, the agency is the regulatory authority for on-site wastewater treatment system (OWTS or septic) permitting and inspections in Archuleta, La Plata, and San Juan counties. Additionally, SJBPH provides water bacteriology testing for La Plata County residents. SJBPH’s Surface and Drinking Water program provides surveillance of ground water and surface water conditions in La Plata and San Juan counties.
Program Updates

In any year we may respond to the needs of our clients by adding, discontinuing, and/or revamping the programs we offer in the interest of providing the most relevant and needed public health services. In 2017, the following changes were made:

- What was formerly known as Health, Policy, and Systems (HPS) is now Thriving Youth Programs (TYP). TYP’s focus is on increasing the overall health and well-being of local youth. TYP programs focus on tobacco and substance use prevention, suicide prevention, increasing social connectedness, empowerment, and youth connectedness to their community. TYP started off 2017 with building key leader and stakeholder support for its Communities That Care (CTC) process to ensure our local leaders and providers are knowledgeable and supportive around upstream strategies used to prevent youth problem behaviors.

- TYP also saw the development of the State Innovation Model (SIM) Suicide Prevention Collaborative which uses the Collective Impact model to bring together local initiatives, agencies, and community members to engage in a unified effort to reduce suicide mortality rates across Archuleta, La Plata, and San Juan counties. SJBPH initiated this community-based suicide prevention effort in May 2017 with a Suicide Prevention Community Summit in Durango, and over 700 community members attended. From this, SJBPH launched a Collective Impact initiative with a wide range of cross-sector traditional and non-traditional partners. A number of workgroups were convened and short-term strategies were implemented to decrease mental illness stigma and to increase suicide awareness and intervention.

- SJBPH received funding from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) to provide radon education workshops, in conjunction with Colorado State University Extension Office, for home and business owners interested in reducing their exposure to radon. Radon testing kits were provided. Additionally, SJBPH is launching a radon awareness campaign for regional distribution.

- SJBPH launched its every-five-year Community Health Assessment in 2017, which will result in a Public Health Improvement Plan to be released in 2018.

SJBPH ADAPTS TO THE NEEDS OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

Suicide Prevention Collaborative

We believe in supporting all individuals to thrive and live with a sense of well-being through school, family, community, faith, and beyond. Together we are striving to prevent mental health challenges, bring awareness to the issue of suicide, and connect those who are struggling to helpful resources.

For every suicide completion in Colorado, there are 25 attempts.

**REVENUES**
- Intergovernmental: 67.24% $3,775,704
- Fees for services: 16.47% $924,728
- Other: 12.17% $683,422
- Grants: 4.06% $228,229
- Interest income: 0.05% $2,847

Total revenues $5,614,930

**EXPENDITURES**
- Salaries and benefits: 71.76% $3,912,871
- Operating: 19.2% $1,047,069
- Contract services: 4.03% $219,973
- Travel: 3.11% $169,758
- Capital outlay: 1.89% $103,059

Total expenditures $5,452,730

Net change in fund balance $162,200

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**Service Area**

SJBPH is a local public health agency in southwest Colorado, serving all residents of Archuleta and La Plata counties.

In 2017, Archuleta County’s population was **13,315** and La Plata County’s population was **55,589** for a total base of **68,904** residents.

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**Board of Health**

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