



## Public Health in Berrien County

Most people, when they think of health care, think of their doctor or clinic. Although this is an important aspect of health care, it's not the whole story. Public health addresses the health of the whole population, as compared to medical health care, which focuses on treatment of the individual ailment. According to the Institute of Medicine, the mission of public health is defined as "fulfilling society's interest in assuring conditions in which people can be healthy". Check out this website <http://www.whatispublichealth.org> to learn more about public health and possible careers in this rewarding area.



Public health in Berrien County is administered through the Berrien County Health Department (BCHD). The health department provides several services that you may not even be aware of, and although you may not visit the health department personally, each and every life in Berrien County is affected by the work they do.

There may be ways that the health department can better serve you. BCHD offers many services, many of which are offered at a low or no cost, including the following:

- BCCCP – Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program. BCCCP provides clinical breast exams, mammograms, pelvic exams and pap smears to eligible women 40-64 years of age.
- WISEWOMAN Program – a cholesterol and blood pressure screening and counseling program with incentives to achieve and maintain appropriate weight, and a referral to a medical provider for elevated cholesterol or blood pressure
- Family Planning provides a broad range of medically approved family planning methods, education/counseling on contraception and health, physical examination, testing and referrals for women in need of birth control methods
- HIV services provide linkages for people living with HIV disease and AIDS and help to ensure that persons are enrolled with a primary care provider. Also HIV counseling, testing and referral with follow-up of HIV case reports is included.
- Women, Infants and Children (WIC) services include nutrition education classes, personalized nutrition counseling, breastfeeding education, and coupons for nutritious food to supplement and enhance the diet. Clients include income eligible pregnant and breastfeeding women, women who have recently had a baby, infants and children to 5 years old.

• Hearing and Vision Program provides hearing and vision screenings for pre-school and school aged children throughout Berrien County.

• Drug Court Treatment Program – offenders receive counseling and drug screening. Family counseling and acupuncture is also available.



• Drinking Driver Basic (DDBC) – this is a one-day, six hour class dealing with the effects of alcohol on driving ability and behavior, myths and misinformation and the signs of addiction.

• Smoking Cessation Classes, based on the curriculum of the American Lung Association, offer individuals a step-by-step plan for quitting smoking.

• Health Insurance Enrollment Assistance – A medical social worker can help you navigate the insurance system and offer assistance in applying for various county and state medical programs.

All this is only a handful of the many programs and services the health department offers. For more information on available services, visit the BCHD website at [www.BCHDMI.org](http://www.BCHDMI.org) or call the health department at 926-7121.

### Berrien County Health

**Department:**  
Preventing Disease,  
Prolonging Life and  
Protecting the  
Health of the  
Community.



### Building Family and Community

In September, the Berrien County Health Department will focus on topics that build family and community. Articles will include information on We Can! And America on the Move, Nurse Family Partnership, Substance Abuse Prevention, and general information about the Health Department. For more information about any of these topics, **please call the health department at 926-7121.**

### The Berrien County Health Department has three main Service Areas:

Clinical and Community Health Services which includes public health and clinical nursing, communicable disease, the Nurse Family Partnership program, hearing and vision screenings, and infant mortality reduction programs. This area also provides immunizations and flu shots.

Environmental Health Services provides the food service inspections. Environmental health specialists visit all the restaurants and food establishments in Berrien County to ensure that the food is safe for you to eat. In addition, Environmental Health is responsible for inspecting private water and sewage systems, and the quality of the water in the lakes and pools.

Substance Abuse Treatment and Prevention Services incorporates education and teaching about drug and alcohol abuse with treatment for those who are addicted or getting over their addiction. Tobacco prevention and the Smoke Free Berrien regulation are also done within this service area.

**For more information call the health department at 926-7121.**

*Special thanks to Theresa Green for her help with this article!*

### The Berrien County Health Department has five locations to serve you:

Benton Harbor		Niles		Three Oaks
769 Pipestone	M-139 Office	School Based	1205 N. Front St.	21 N. Elm
P.O. Box 706	2106 S. M-139	870 Colfax Ave	684-2800	756-2008
926-7121	927-5623	925-4500		

Or visit us on the web at [www.bchdmi.org](http://www.bchdmi.org)

This page is sponsored by the Berrien County Health Department

