

FISCAL YEAR

2023

ANNUAL REPORT



Cambridge
Public Health
Department

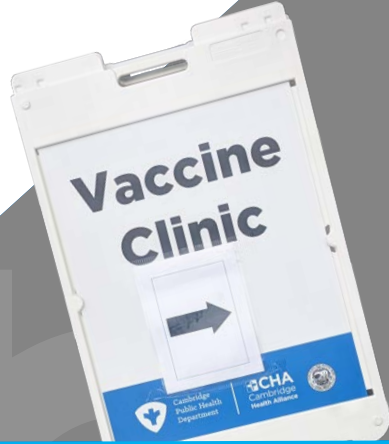


Table of Contents

Chief Public Health Officer Message .	1
Public Health Commissioner Message ...	2
Who We Are	3
Cambridge Pandemic Response FY23	4
Our Work	7
Community Health Improvement Plan.....	17
Financial Overview	18
Thank You to Our Partners	19
Acknowledgments	20

MESSAGE

Chief Public Health Officer



HELLO, CAMBRIDGE COMMUNITY.

On May 11, 2023, the COVID-19 public health emergency declaration, in effect at the state and federal levels since 2020, was lifted. We commemorated the day with a ceremony at the City's COVID memorial at Cambridge Cemetery. Joined by the City Manager, the Mayor, and many of our first responder colleagues, we reflected on our collective losses. It was a somber event, but one also marked with tremendous gratitude for the creativity, resolve, and partnership that the pandemic spurred. We at the health department are committed to fostering the many relationships that were created or strengthened over the course of this public health crisis.

Although COVID has receded as the widespread threat it once was, it is likely here to stay. As in past years, we offered COVID vaccines along with flu shots at our community clinics and continue to remind the public about the importance of prevention measures. COVID has become one more public health challenge for us to tackle on an ongoing basis; our clinical team will continue to provide leadership in protecting against its effects.

We were very pleased this year to return to our robust in-person public health programming. CPHD staff were fully back in the schools providing school nursing and educating students about oral health. Staff promoted healthy living and active living, literacy, and mental health programs across the community and offered on-site overdose prevention training.

Our collaborations with other City departments remain critical. CPHD worked closely with Public Works (DPW) and the schools, for example, to develop systems for alerting the public to possible health threats related to water contamination and air quality. We continued preparedness work with the City's first responders and providers serving unhoused residents. Regionally, we worked with Chelsea, Revere, and Winthrop to provide residents with health-related support, broadening the focus from COVID to more over-arching public health needs.

In a push back against the isolation wrought by the pandemic, CPHD embarked on a Block Party initiative this spring to bring community members together. This effort evolved into a true city-wide collaboration involving Community Development, Cambridge Arts, DPW, Traffic, Parking & Transportation, and support from the City Council. The popularity of the program signals an interest in connections and relationships that are fundamental to the health of a community. I salute the resiliency of Cambridge residents and look forward to further interaction with all of you as CPHD continues our work in neighborhoods across the City.

Sincerely,

Derrick Neal
Chief Public Health Officer

MESSAGE

Public Health Commissioner



GREETINGS,

FY23 was a busy and productive year for Cambridge Health Alliance (CHA) and the Cambridge Public Health Department (CPHD). While COVID-19 activity was lower than in the previous few years, its threat remained a backdrop to activities in healthcare settings and in the community. There were many additional demands that kept us on our toes and new initiatives that both challenged and energized us.

In summer of 2022:

- The MA Office of Health and Human Services designated CHA as one of 25 Community Behavioral Health Centers, preparing us to expand access to treatment for mental health conditions and substance use.

- Mpox (formerly known as Monkeypox) was declared a global emergency and was detected locally in late summer. CHA was involved in vaccination and treatment, while the health department monitored cases in Cambridge and provided community education.
- CHA launched its Robotic Surgery Program, enabling more minimally invasive procedures to patients.

In the fall, CHA released a Community Health Needs Assessment of our entire service area and launched a new Nurse Advice Center. I was honored to represent CHA at the Children's Behavioral Health Summit in Boston, highlighting our psychiatry resources for children and adolescents. CHA was named the top hospital in MA for Health Equity, a designation which makes me extraordinarily proud.

The new year brought the implementation of our new behavioral health programs. An urgent care walk-in clinic at Cambridge Hospital, 24-hour call center and mobile crisis services position us to meet the growing need for people of all ages. Inpatient psychiatry expansion at Cambridge Hospital made us one of the largest inpatient psychiatry providers in MA. Thirty CHA physicians were recognized in Boston Magazine's Top Doctors lists, including Dr. Lisa

Dobberteen, a CHA pediatrician AND Medical Director for CPHD. My thanks to Dr. Dobberteen for her ongoing commitment to patient care and public health.

CHA was honored as part of the Health Equity Compact in May, and shortly thereafter CHA made Newsweek's list of "America's Best Maternity Hospitals." Not surprisingly, when the Joint Commission arrived to evaluate CHA's compliance with standards, we were prepared.

Like CHA, CPHD operated with one eye toward protecting against COVID-19 and the other toward welcoming new initiatives and re-engaging with the community after the isolating years of the pandemic. With the end of the public health emergency declaration on May 11, 2023, we look to the future with renewed optimism and resolve for caring for patients and protecting the public's health.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Assaad J. Sayah". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Assaad J. Sayah, MD
CEO, Cambridge Health Alliance
Commissioner of Public Health
City of Cambridge

Who We Are

PUBLIC HEALTH IS ABOUT PROTECTING THE HEALTH OF AN ENTIRE POPULATION.

For us, that means all people who live, learn, work, play, or spend time in Cambridge. The Cambridge Public Health Department provides services, analyzes and shares information, implements policies, and enforces regulations in ways that support healthier lives and benefit everyone in our diverse community. We know that better health for everyone begins with challenging beliefs and structures that perpetuate inequality, discrimination, and racism. That's why working with partners to address the social determinants of health and improve access to nutritious foods, language and literacy skills, safe housing, healthcare, and other vital resources is fundamental to our approach. We're committed to protecting the public's health and improving quality of life for everyone in our community.



VISION

The Cambridge Public Health Department is a leading, innovative, and model agency that facilitates optimal health and well-being for all who live, learn, work, and play in Cambridge.

MISSION

The Cambridge Public Health Department improves the quality of life for all who live, learn, work, and play in the city by preventing illness and injury; encouraging healthy behaviors; and ensuring safe and healthy environments.

VALUES

Collaboration
Innovation
Professionalism and Excellence
Social Justice and Equity

Cambridge Pandemic Response FY23

“I’ve worked with CHA and CPHD in the past, but never to the extreme that we all experienced 3 years ago. In January of 2020, I was at a regional table-top with public health to plan for mass vaccinations, which we all thought would never happen. Little did we know that a couple months later we’d be talking nearly every day. To this day my relationships with my public health colleagues remain strong and will last forever. There are also bonds with agencies I’d never worked with before; if there’s one positive that came from the pandemic, it’s that it brought us all together.

Relationships are important in our line of work, and I’m grateful that Cambridge has the leaders it does who welcome and foster collaboration. It’s been a pleasure to work alongside them.”

Captain Jeremy A. Walsh
Cambridge Fire Department



CPHD’s Chief Public Health Officer Derrick Neal, Cambridge Peace Commission Executive Director Brian Corr, Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui, City Manager Yi-An Huang at the City’s COVID-19 memorial.

On May 11, 2023 the COVID-19 public health emergency declarations at the federal and state levels expired. CPHD joined City officials to mark the solemn occasion with an event at the COVID-19 memorial at the Cambridge Cemetery.

With the end of the public health emergency, state and federal data collection requirements were reduced. By spring of 2023, most COVID-19 cases were diagnosed through rapid at-home tests which were not reportable to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH). COVID-19 wastewater data has become the most reliable way to detect COVID activity in the community.

While the lifting of the public health emergency was a symbolic marker, the pandemic is not over. CPHD continues to track and respond to COVID-19 to keep the Cambridge community informed and protected.

Staff Reflections on the Expiration of the Public Health Emergency Declarations

“ May 11, 2023 was a time to reflect on the previous three years of the pandemic and on what lies ahead. We learned so much about this novel virus, what it was capable of doing, and the best ways to protect everyone from it. We were reminded how fortunate we are to live and work in the City of Cambridge, which expended enormous resources to protect its residents. We formed wonderful interagency relationships, all in the interest of working together to combat this virus. Looking ahead, perhaps the only certainty is that COVID-19 will be with us in some form or another. ”

Dr. Lisa Dobberteen, CPHD's Medical Director for School Health and Public Health Programs and CHA Pediatrician

“ I tend to look at things through a scientific lens. Reflecting on the pandemic, I can't help but marvel at how the amazing work on mRNA vaccines over the past 15 years allowed us to be ready to go when we needed it most. But despite the great science, public trust in vaccines and other public health measures in many parts of the country just wasn't there. We need to rebuild that trust so we're prepared for future pandemics. ”

Sam Lipson, CPHD's Senior Director of Environmental Health

“ After shedding some tears, I reflected on the work that the health department accomplished. An important part of our mission was to save lives. We were all tired but we never lost sight of the work at hand. Our connections with City departments and residents are stronger than ever. Cambridge is full of greatness and we are all a part of it! ”

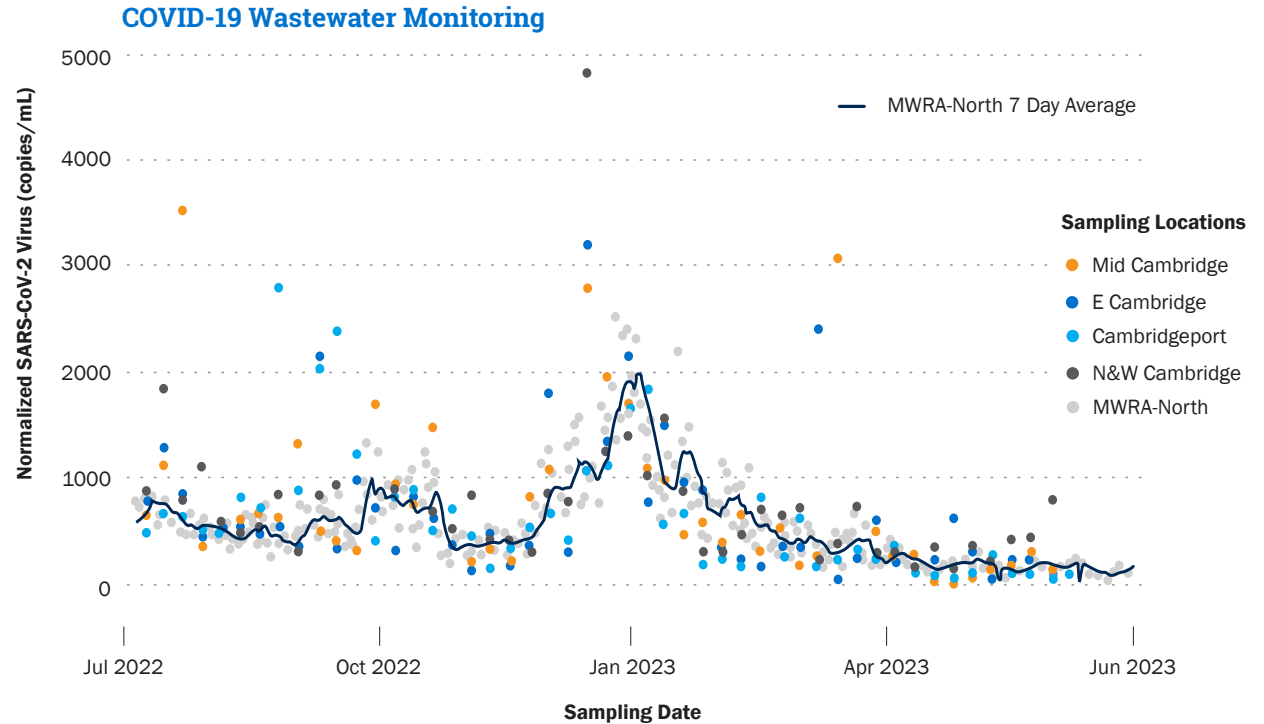
Tracy Rose-Tynes, CPHD's Senior Director of Clinical Services

Cambridge Pandemic Response FY23

“It wasn’t the declaration of the public health emergency that brought us together, it was the actual emergency. The pandemic created a need for departments and programs to come together quickly to work on a common goal. Everyone responded in kind. We were driven by a common purpose.

Today, our relationships with CPHD nursing and epidemiology are stronger than ever. We look forward to our opportunities to work together. Relationships with the City’s Police and Fire Departments and Human Services also remain close. We all know that we can call on one another any time.”

Mark T. McGovern, MSW
Program Director - Cambridge/Somerville
Health Care for the Homeless



The Cambridge Public Health Department (CPHD) continued to monitor and respond to COVID-19 in FY23 (July 1, 2022- June 30, 2023). CPHD staff administered 4,970 COVID-19 and flu vaccines at 36 clinics held throughout the City. CPHD delivered at-home COVID-19 tests as well as high-quality masks to Cambridge residents. In the Cambridge Public Schools, school health staff administered 990 COVID-19 tests to students and staff. CPHD also kept people in Cambridge up-to-date on COVID-19, including vaccine developments and prevention tips, through news articles and social media. CPHD continued to oversee the work of the Cambridge Chelsea Revere and Winthrop Case Investigation Team, which offered support to people with COVID-19 and other communicable diseases and connected people in need to resources.

Our Work

In this section, we provide an overview of the activities and initiatives undertaken by the Cambridge Public Health Department (CPHD) on behalf of the Cambridge community during FY23.

Public Health Nursing

During FY23, Public Health Nursing staff continued their work to prevent and control communicable diseases throughout Cambridge. Nursing staff monitored communicable diseases and foodborne illnesses, organized vaccine clinics, and staffed Cambridge Hospital's Tuberculosis (TB) clinic.

COVID-19-related work involved collaborating with epidemiology staff to monitor and track cases and possible case clusters. For example, when there was a cluster at a Cambridge shelter, the team worked closely with shelter staff to isolate and track

Public Health Nurses prepare vaccines during a clinic at the King Open School.



CPHD staff from across the department at a CPHD vaccine clinic.

cases. The public health nurses also worked with the Cambridge Chelsea Revere and Winthrop Case Investigation Team to answer medical questions and give guidance to residents.

Public health nursing, epidemiology, and administrative staff organized and ran 36 vaccine clinics throughout the fiscal year. These vaccine clinics were offered at large public sites, elderly housing buildings, and shelters and meals programs. In FY23, CPHD staff administered 4,970 COVID-19 and flu vaccines. Public health nurses also provided education around vaccine efficacy and safety to residents who attended the clinics.

Managing TB cases is a major focus of the work of CPHD's public health nurses. The TB clinic operated this year with a hybrid model of telehealth and in-person visits. Public health nurses performed a case management role, managing all aspects of TB care for residents of Cambridge and surrounding communities who have active or suspect TB, including home visits for directly-observed therapy. During FY23 CPHD public health nurses and CHA physicians managed 1,017 visits from patients with latent or active TB. In winter 2023, the public health nurses and epidemiology staff presented a complex TB case of a patient for whom they provided care at the Annual TB Conference: The Union - North American Region in Vancouver, Canada.

Clinical staff investigated 137 communicable disease cases that were not related to COVID-19 or TB. This included monitoring mpox (formerly Monkeypox); there were between 5 and 10 mpox cases reported in Cambridge from May–November 2022. Local boards of health staff are responsible for investigating a variety of reportable communicable diseases, including tick-borne diseases, respiratory illnesses, foodborne illnesses, and others. Diseases are investigated in collaboration with patients, medical providers, and the state in order to prevent further spread. Foodborne illnesses are also investigated in collaboration with the City's Inspectional Services Department.

Epidemiology and Data Services

During FY23, Epidemiology and Data Services staff continued to dedicate significant time and attention to COVID-19 efforts. Staff provided guidance to City staff, Cambridge businesses, and other facilities experiencing clusters of COVID-19. They monitored COVID-19 cases, testing activity, and vaccination numbers to help inform public health priorities. Epidemiology and Data Services staff also coordinated vaccine clinic planning and managed registration and data collection at CPHD's clinics throughout the fiscal year.

Our Work

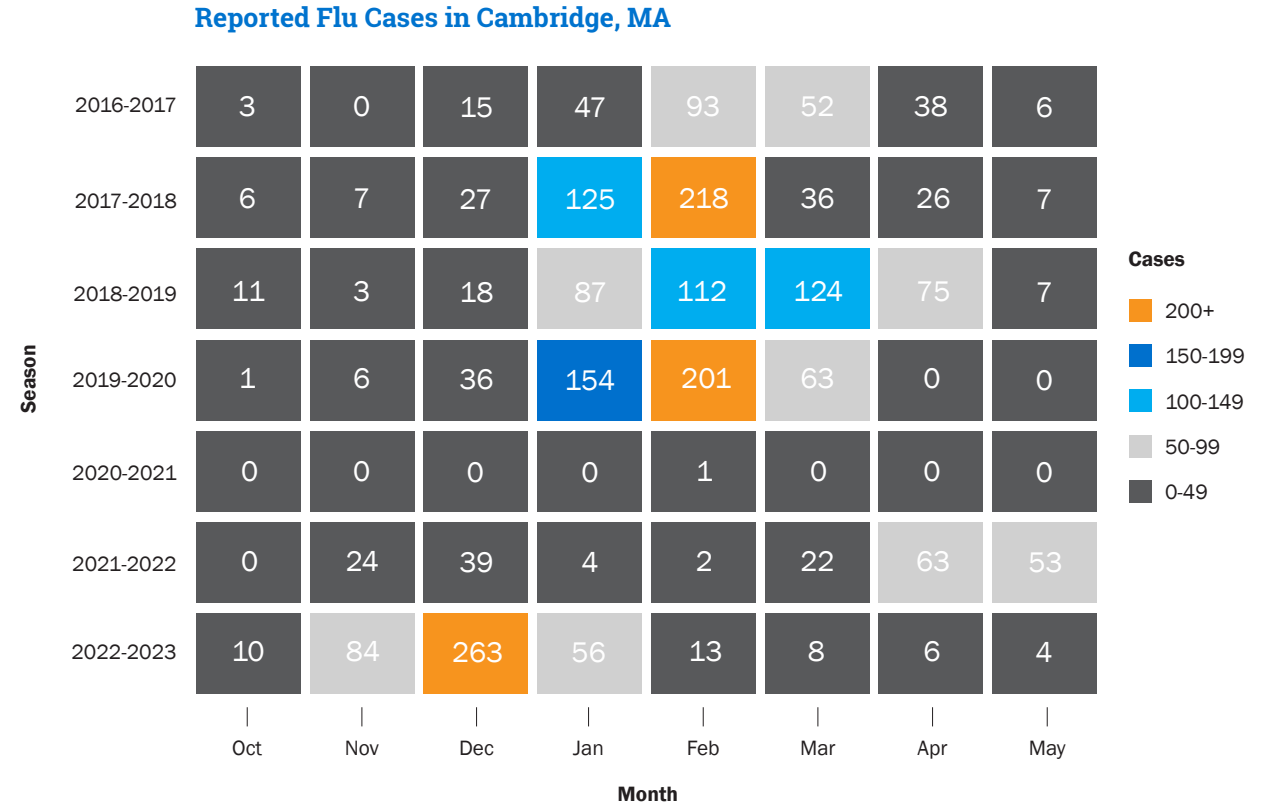
The team monitored data sets daily, enabling updates to the Cambridge COVID-19 Data Center until it was discontinued on May 11, 2023 with the end of the public health emergency. The data were available to the general public and included information by age, gender, and race/ethnicity. The Data Center also presented neighborhood-level information about COVID-19 cases and case rates. As case data became less reliable due to the widespread use of rapid tests that were not reportable, staff relied more on wastewater and hospital data as indicators of COVID-19 activity.

Epidemiology and Data Services staff also monitored other communicable diseases, supported other units with analysis and data projects, and chaired the Data and Evaluation committee to support internal strategy at CPHD.

Epidemiology and Data Services staff continued to manage the staff of the Cambridge Chelsea Revere and Winthrop Case Investigation Team.

Case Investigation and Contact Tracing

The Cambridge Chelsea Revere and Winthrop Case Investigation Team contacted over 5,800 residents across their four municipalities via phone and text to offer support to residents with COVID-19 and other communicable diseases. Staff provided referrals



for treatment, primary care, and a range of other services. Over 20% of the residents contacted were found by the team to have additional needs and were connected to a community or internal resource for such supplies as masks or COVID-19 tests, food delivery, and diapers. The investigation team

coordinated with the Cambridge Community Corps to deliver COVID-19 related supplies to Cambridge cases and worked with other local groups in partnering cities. The Investigation Team was made possible by a grant through DPH and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council.

Our Work

Population Health Initiatives (PHI)

The Division of PHI promotes healthy behaviors in the Cambridge community. The current PHI units are Early Literature, Healthy Eating and Active Living, and Mental and Behavioral Health Promotion. Below are highlights from each PHI unit during FY23.

Early Literacy

The Agenda for Children Literacy Initiative features three programs: Let's Talk!, Cambridge Dads, and Pathways to Family Success. All three programs held in-person and virtual activities that promoted early literacy, parent-child connection, parent and caregiver support and connection to community resources.

A literacy staff member along with a Literacy Ambassador distribute books at a community event.



PHI staff at a visit to the Museum of African American History in Boston.

- Let's Talk! helps children develop early literacy skills by educating and supporting parents and caregivers. Activities include literacy home visits, parent-child playgroups, Born to Read packets sent to newborns, weekly text-a-tip, and a family child care support group. Staff give out children's books at Let's Talk activities and at community events—this year over 9,500 books were distributed! Let's Talk!, along with their partners, hosted Book Bike events and placed eight StoryWalks throughout City parks for the summer. They held workshops for parents, including a new series, "Raising Children with Black Joy." For Family Literacy Month, Let's Talk! and partners held two outdoor book giveaways, which included bilingual books in over 25 languages. They also launched a pilot program, the Let's Talk Book Club, for families with children birth to 3 who live in public housing.
- Cambridge Dads, which supports dads in their role as parents, held events for fathers only as well as for dads and their children. Events included Dad & Kids at the Park, monthly Dad & Kids at the Gym, and Dads BBQ. A highlight was the Fatherhood Buzz, where dads and their kids got haircuts, had dinner, and hung out together. A weekly text is sent to fathers featuring resources, upcoming events or inspirational quotes. Cambridge Dads is a joint program with the Center for Families.
- The Pathways to Family Success program supports low income immigrant families with children in K-3rd grade. Activities this year included family events, parent workshops, field trips, and material and book giveaways.

Our Work

Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL)

The HEAL team continued in FY23 to coordinate and share information with people in Cambridge about available food security resources in the City. HEAL also engaged key stakeholders in the School Wellness Council to renew the focus on the district school wellness policy.

In 2023, CPHD, the Cambridge Economic Opportunity Committee, and Food for Free received a grant from the MA Department of Agricultural Resources to research the potential for food pantries to purchase more local food. This involved interviews with food pantry managers in the Food Pantry Network and an examination of resources and local food availability. The resulting report includes recommendations to offer more choices to food pantries including fresh, local food and building on the training for the Food Pantry Network.

The Cambridge Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Match Coalition, led by the HEAL team, helps SNAP shoppers access fresh, local food by increasing their purchasing power through a match of up to \$15 per visit at participating Cambridge farmers markets. The coalition distributed over \$39,000 in matching funds in FY23, and launched an effort to expand funding sources to add more farmers



A Cambridge Economic Opportunity Committee staff member with a food box for a resident in need.

markets and extend the benefit to more residents. HEAL staff also developed new outreach materials for SNAP shoppers explaining how to use benefits from farmers market incentive programs.

In May 2023, the HEAL team and the Mental and Behavioral Health unit combined efforts and partnered with the Sasaki Foundation to create the Health Promotion Mini-Grants Program. The program awarded \$13,000 to 13 local organizations to develop initiatives that promote healthy eating and/or physical activity.

HEAL, in partnership with the Cambridge Food and Fitness Policy Council and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, launched a physical activity assessment using an

equity lens to identify needs, opportunities, and barriers, and to make recommendations for making physical activity opportunities in Cambridge accessible for all residents. After reviewing and summarizing relevant reports and existing data, the HEAL team conducted interviews with partners and stakeholders to obtain more information about the current status of physical activity in the City.

Staff participated in numerous events in the community, including promoting Bluebikes reduced-price memberships, participating in a Cambridge Public Schools cooking event for families, and giving a farmers markets tour to senior residents.

Our Work



A staff member interacting with residents at a community event.

Mental and Behavioral Health Promotion Unit

The Mental and Behavioral Health Promotion Unit continued its work to provide mental health and substance use prevention support in Cambridge.

The unit worked with the Healthy Eating and Active Living unit, in partnership with the Sasaki Foundation, to provide the Health Promotion Mini-Grants Program. The program awarded \$12,000 in mini-grants to six organizations to support youth mental health and wellness.

The team's staff partnered with the Cambridge Public Library, Cambridge Public Schools, Cambridge Community Center, and the Family Policy Council to host a luncheon for social workers working in Cambridge. Over 80 social workers from around the City gathered to network and share resources.

The unit continued to support a culture of wellness for young people in Cambridge through implementation of the MassCALL3 (Massachusetts Collaborative for Action, Leadership and Learning) Grant. Activities included:

- Hosting several Community Engagement Sessions with high schoolers, middle schoolers, parents/caregivers, and people who work with youth to gather feedback and input on our strategic plan;
- Establishing a working group to provide feedback and guidance on grant work;
- Developing an asset map by asking 65 adults and 42 youths where they go to school, where they work, and where they spend their free time. Staff mapped these community assets to tell a story about the important places in young peoples' lives throughout the City;
- Creating an executive summary on youth substance misuse in Cambridge; and
- Collaborating with CCTV on a youth photo voice project.

In the substance use prevention area, the team continued its work of providing overdose prevention training and education for individuals, businesses, and organizations. In FY23, a total of 32 training sessions were held and 88 boxes of naloxone, also



CPHD and partners collected over 250 pounds of unused medication in FY23.

known as Narcan, were distributed to attendees. The team also provided free fentanyl test strips and 124 boxes of naloxone at six community distribution events. The unit established a Community Naloxone Purchasing Program status with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to receive naloxone nasal spray for free distribution to the Cambridge community. The team also designed campaigns on how to recognize and respond to an opioid overdose for MBTA buses and BlueBike kiosks. Lastly, in collaboration with Cambridge Police Department and the Council on Aging, the unit hosted two Medication Takeback Days, collecting 70 pounds of unused or expired medications in October 2022 and over 187 pounds in April 2023 from Cambridge residents.

Our Work

Commissioner of Laboratory Animals

The Commissioner of Laboratory Animals, a licensed veterinarian, reviews the care and use of laboratory animals in Cambridge. The majority of the duties performed by the Commissioner involve permitting, or registering, facilities in the City that fit the definition of a research institution according to Cambridge Municipal Code, as well as inspection of these institutions' entire animal use programs. The Commissioner also meets with the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) Chair and unaffiliated IACUC members of each institution; in most cases, she also meets with the entire IACUC at each institution. Critiques and education are provided to these facilities as a part of the meetings and inspection process. During FY23, 39 institutions were permitted. To support the provision of the most up-to-date and advanced information regarding animal welfare improvements to research institutions in the City, the Commissioner regularly reviews current relevant scientific literature; this year she also attended two continuing education events dedicated to the field of laboratory animal science and medicine.

In addition to the responsibilities associated with permitting laboratory animal facilities in the City, the Commissioner also performs public health-



CPHD staff welcome residents to a vaccine clinic at the King Open School.

related duties on behalf of CPHD. The Commissioner served as a co-chair of the Ethics Committee as well as participated in the conversation regarding the humane approach to pest management as part of the Rodent Task Force. Duties have also included providing consultation on emerging or relevant zoonotic diseases to staff, such as Lyme disease and Mpox, as well as providing information regarding the Commissioner role to public officials and businesses in neighboring municipalities.

Environmental Health

During FY23, the Environmental Health (EH) team tackled a wide range of topics. EH staff responded to City staff and officials and the general public on questions related to the environment, including outdoor air quality as well as chemicals in drinking water and artificial turf. Staff also continue to monitor COVID-19 data along with the Director of Epidemiology and Data Services. The team collaborated with the Inspectional Services Department (ISD) to formalize an indoor air quality

program that is integrated into ISD housing code enforcement. These assessments include evaluation of factors that affect air quality such as moisture control, bacteria, and mold. Using housing code enforcement authority leads to better outcomes when potentially unhealthful conditions are present. Environmental health also monitored tick- and mosquito-borne diseases, such as West Nile virus, and collaborated with ISD on rodent control efforts.

The EH team also performed regulatory duties. During FY23, the following permits were issued:

Over **150** lab biosafety permits.

2 tanning bed permits.

130 tattoo and body art practitioner permits and **10** tattoo and body art establishment permits.

3 permits for beekeeping in collaboration with other CPHD staff.

3 bodywork therapy practitioner permits and **1** bodywork therapy establishment permit.

Our Work

EH worked with the Equity, Resilience and Preparedness unit on the emergency preparedness grant called Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Emergencies for People Experiencing Homelessness. EH staff also provided education and resources to the Cambridge Community Corps members so they could keep residents up-to-date on a variety of topics such as extreme heat.

In July 2022, a state law went into effect that required enhanced notifications to warn the public about untreated or partially treated wastewater, including combined sewer overflows (CSOs), sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs), and blended wastewater. EH staff worked with the CPHD's Communications Division as well as the City's Department of Public Works to develop and disseminate public health warnings when a wastewater event occurred.

EH held its first Cambridge Biosafety Forum since the pandemic in May, 2023. The forum was for people interested in learning about institutional biosafety committees and municipal regulation of the biotech sector. Cambridge is the first city in the world to establish direct citizen oversight of biological research, and remains the standard for strict public oversight of this sector.

Equity, Resilience and Preparedness

The Equity, Resilience and Preparedness Unit continued to play a vital role in emergency preparedness and community resilience. Staff monitored extreme weather and worked with City partners when emergency plans were needed. The unit led an annual drill at one of CPHD's vaccine clinics with the purpose of evaluating CPHD's capability for rapidly dispensing emergency vaccines and medications. The team expanded with the addition of the Social Justice & Health Equity Specialist, a grant-funded position to help ensure that Cambridge students are the healthiest that they can be.

The unit, along with the Communications and Marketing team, worked with the City's Community Development Department, Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department, and Cambridge Arts, with support from the City Council, to launch the Block Parties initiative. This effort made it easier for Cambridge residents to host block parties in their neighborhood and connect with their neighbors. Not only is this type of connection great for socializing; it can be vital in an emergency such as a hurricane or power outage. The Block Parties Initiative was very popular, with more than 50 groups receiving \$200 in grants. Residents hosted three times



Block Parties were enjoyed by hundreds of Cambridge residents.

as many block parties in Cambridge during the summer of 2023 than the previous calendar year.

Equity, Resilience and Preparedness staff worked to secure funding for emergency response and other public health endeavors; the unit received approximately \$700,000 from the American Rescue Plan Act 2021. The unit also worked on the Accelerating Climate Resiliency grant with partners from Community Development and Public Works. The funded project, Shade is Social Justice, uses art installations to provide shade and cooling spots in different areas of Cambridge.

The team worked with the Environmental Health unit on the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Emergencies for People Experiencing

Our Work

Homelessness grant. The grant supports local jurisdictions in developing emergency preparedness plans for individuals experiencing homelessness. Work included gathering feedback from local organizations that work with unhoused populations and a multi-agency tabletop exercise involving unhoused individuals during a heatwave. Findings were presented by staff at a National Association of County and City Health Officials conference in April 2023.

Cambridge Community Corps (C3)

Throughout FY23, the C3 continued to be an agile resource for the Cambridge community, responding to the needs of those who are most vulnerable and working to make Cambridge more informed and prepared for potential emergencies. The C3 provided assistance at CPHD's many vaccine

A C3 member promoting a City survey at a community event.



clinics onsite by helping with crowd control. The team also went door-to-door in neighborhoods to promote vaccine clinics. Corps members delivered hundreds of COVID-19 test kits and masks directly to residents.

The C3 went through a Climate Readiness Initiative training which focused on climate justice and heat. Funding for the training came from a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Action Grant with support from Metropolitan Area Planning Council and the City's Community Development Department. Corps members also helped at City events such as the Cambridge's Safer Homes, Safety Community Gun Buyback. They also handed out information to residents on heat safety, the Block Party initiative, and the City's Social Capital Survey.

School Health

During the 2022-2023 school year, the school health staff at Cambridge Public Schools (CPS) performed:

27,270 student visits for illness, injury, medication administration, and medical procedures.

4,004 vision screenings and made **281** referrals.

3,129 hearing screenings to CPS students and made **51** referrals.



The school health team staffs the teen health center at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School.

1,682 postural screenings to CPS students and made **36** referrals.

735 students participated in Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT), which is a comprehensive approach to find and provide an early intervention to those with substance use disorders or those at risk for disorders. Nursing staff also sat on numerous 504 teams to assist in coordination of care for students with complex medical needs.

School health staff assess immunization status throughout the school year, with special attention to immunizations at the start of school. The immunization coordinator reached out to new families in the district or students entering kindergarten over the summer to ensure that students were up to date on routine vaccines.

CPHD and CPS continued to provide a comprehensive COVID-19 testing program for students and staff. During the 2022-2023 school year, 990 COVID-19 tests were administered by school health staff. Beyond administering tests, school health staff were integral to CPS infection control teams to determine who

Our Work

could remain in school given COVID protocols. They were also charged with staying up to date on COVID-19 information to help educate families and CPS staff.

School nurses administered many of the COVID-19 and flu vaccines at CPHD's vaccine clinics and provided education to families about the importance of receiving the COVID-19 and flu vaccines.

2022 Cambridge Middle Grades and Teen Health Survey

Following the pandemic “pulse check” survey that took place in May 2021, CPHD and Cambridge Public Schools (CPS) conducted the Cambridge Middle Grades and Teen Health Survey among students in grades 6-12 in its regular long format in the spring of 2022. A total of 918 middle grades students participated in the voluntary survey, representing a 76% participation rate. At the high school, 1,282 students (69%) participated. The report describing the overall results was finalized in December 2022 and shared with the School Committee. Key findings were presented in March 2023 to the School Climate Subcommittee and were also shared with City and community partners.

Results showed some bright spots, including a decrease in reported bullying and an increase in participation in after-school activities. Students reported an increase

in social supports and connectedness, although these had not returned to pre-pandemic levels. Other areas suggested the need for attention. Based on the data, CPS and CPHD identified four core areas of focus for the next two years: belonging; healthy relationships; mental health; and healthy habits, including sleep and screen time.

CPS has implemented a multi-tiered approach to supporting student mental health and wellness within the schools. CPHD led the development of infographics representing key indicators from the middle and teen health surveys. These materials are designed to inspire conversations between youth and caregivers. CPHD will continue to work with CPS and the community to share these findings and support students by providing education about mental health, supporting healthy behaviors and raising awareness about available behavioral health services.

Oral Health Division

In September 2022, a new CPHD Oral Health Division was created to educate the whole community about oral health and its importance to overall health. The Division presently administers Cambridge Healthy Smiles, an oral health program in the Cambridge Public Schools (CPS).



An Oral Health Division group photo.

The restructuring and expansion of the Oral Health Division will enable the unit to reach families and seniors in addition to school-age children. Its goal is to identify families in the community with dental concerns and provide oral health resources and assistance in finding a dentist. The Division is in the process of creating community programs to provide oral health education and guidance for all ages for caring for teeth for a lifetime.

Cambridge Healthy Smiles

The Cambridge Healthy Smiles program reaches over 1,800 CPS students and teaches oral health classroom lessons in all CPS schools. The program provided toothbrush kits to all students in 1st, 3rd, 6th, and 9th grades this school year. In addition, Cambridge Healthy Smiles worked with school health

Our Work

staff and family liaisons to identify students with dental needs and connect them with a community dentist. Program staff also connected with the health and wellness sixth grade classes to discuss oral health when students were learning about personal hygiene.

The program continued its annual water bottle initiative and gave out over 2,200 water bottles to students and school programs to remind them of the importance of drinking water while at school. Cambridge Healthy Smiles also introduced a new sports guard initiative to teach high school athletes about the importance of wearing a mouth guard while

The high school lacrosse team was the first team to be fitted for mouth guards.



CPHD's Leadership and Operations and Administrative Services kept the department running.

playing sports. Both the water bottle and mouth guard initiatives were supported by the Charles Bullock Trust Fund for Children.

Support Units

CPHD has several divisions that keep the department running and support the department's many functions and services.

- The Division of Financial and Contractual Operations managed the department's FY23 budget and contractual planning, preparation, and monitoring. See the Financial Overview near the end of this report.
- The Division of Operations and Administrative Services worked tirelessly on day-to-day operations, provided administrative support at Cambridge Hospital's Tuberculosis clinic, and helped organize CPHD's numerous vaccine clinics. The unit also managed the City's burial permits and permits

for funeral directors. During FY23, the unit processed 412 burial permits and 5 permits for funeral directors.

- The Communications and Marketing Division undertook a variety of activities ranging from responding to media inquiries to promoting CPHD programs, initiatives, and events. The unit also wrote articles, social media posts, and press releases to educate residents on such varied topics as baby formula resources during the formula shortage, COVID-19 vaccination recommendations, water safety guidance, and food recalls. In FY23, the team also developed and launched CPHD's new website.

CPHD staff delivered hundreds of COVID-19 rapid tests to local businesses.



Community Health Improvement Plan

The City of Cambridge's Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) is a five-year blueprint that guides the health department and its partners in addressing the City's biggest health concerns. During its third year, the CHIP's priority area workgroups provided much-needed services and information to the Cambridge community. Some highlights of activities are listed below.

Community and Social Resilience

- Secured funding for emergency response and other public health endeavors. The unit received approximately \$700,000 from the American Rescue Plan Act 2021, which helped fund the Cambridge Community Corps.
- Launched the Closer Neighborhoods Survey in The Port neighborhood to better understand the social connections in Cambridge, which will support the City's response to emergencies.

Music Jam Sessions were enjoyed by many.



Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL)

- The Food and Fitness Policy Council launched a citywide physical activity assessment with the support of a grant from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council to identify residents' needs, opportunities, and barriers regarding access to physical activity in Cambridge. The council made recommendations that facilitate equitable access for all residents.
- The HEAL team, in collaboration with Cambridge Economic Opportunity Committee and Food for Free, completed a project that involved interviews with food pantry managers about food purchasing and patron food preferences and an examination of budget and development of purchasing options for fresh local produce.
- Provided education and outreach and participated in events related to local food, tap water, Bluebikes reduced-price program, cooking, and healthy eating.

Mental Health

- As a way to connect more with adolescents, Cambridge Public Library staff presented care calls at 9th grade orientation. Staff were able to connect with some freshmen who signed up for a check-in.

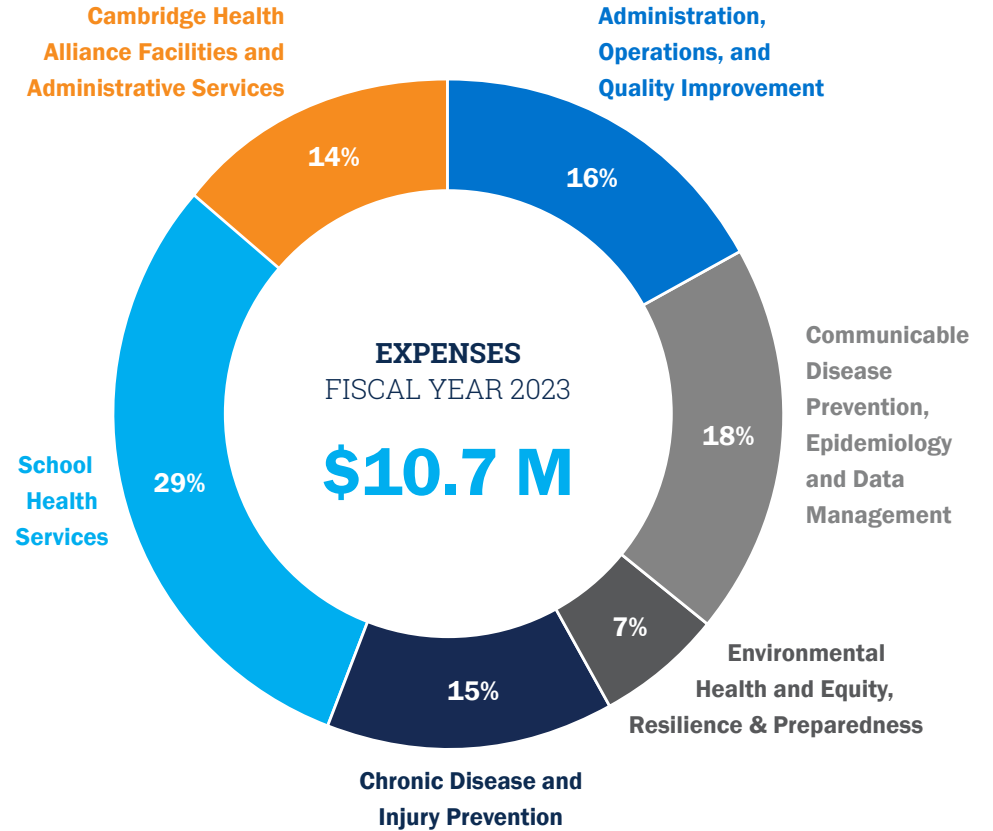
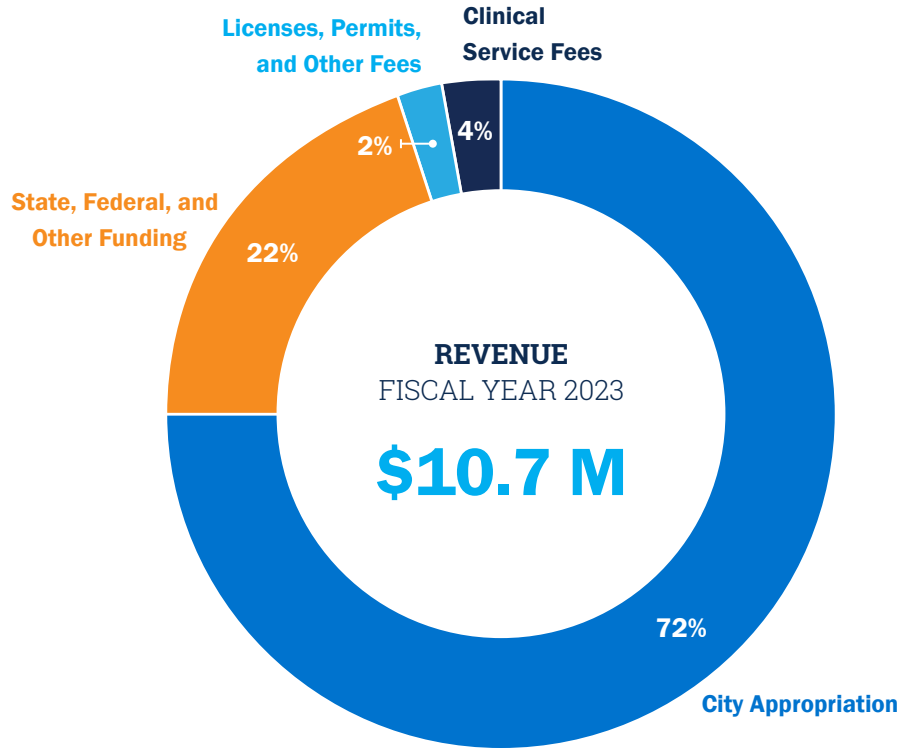


A resident drumming at a Music Jam Session at the Cambridge Senior Center.

- From January - March there were nine youth feedback sessions at the Valente library branch. The goal was to hear from teens what they need from an after-school space.

Additionally, the health department, in collaboration with the Cambridge Senior Center, continued its popular Music Jam Sessions in the fall 2022 and spring 2023. The sessions provided seniors an opportunity to connect with others while creating music. This was a way to creatively engage residents in the CHIP priority areas.

Financial Overview



Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Thank You to Our Partners

We are grateful for the many exceptional partners who worked with us this year. We appreciate their ongoing commitment to the health of Cambridge residents, their creativity, and their collaborative spirit.

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities
Cambridge Family Policy Council
Cambridge Multi-Service Center
Cambridge Office of Early Childhood
Cambridge Public Schools
City Manager's Office
Commission on Immigrant Rights and Citizenship
Community Development Department
Conservation Commission
Department of Human Service Programs
Department of Public Works
Domestic and Gender-Based Violence Prevention Initiative
Fire Department
Food and Fitness Policy Council
Find It Cambridge
Human Rights Commission
Inspectional Services Department
Law Department
License Commission
LGBTQ+ Commission
Participatory Budgeting
Peace Commission

Police Department
Public Library
Substance Use Advisory Council
Traffic, Parking, and Transportation Department
Water Department
Women's Commission

CAMBRIDGE HEALTH ALLIANCE

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Access: Drug User Health Program (AIDS Action Committee/Fenway Health)
Academic Public Health Volunteer Corps
Agassiz Baldwin Community
CASPAR/Bay Cove Human Services
Cambridge Black Pastors Alliance
Cambridge Community Center
Cambridge Community Foundation
Cambridge Housing Authority
Cambridge Volunteer Clearinghouse
Cambridge Economic Opportunity Committee
Cambridge & Somerville Healthcare for the Homeless
Cambridge YMCA
Community Tracing Collaborative
East End House
Fenway Health: AIDS Action
First Church Cambridge
Food For Free
Green Cambridge

Islamic Society of Boston
Just-A-Start
Material Aid and Advocacy Program
Mass Farmers Markets
Massachusetts Department of Public Health
Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House
Mount Auburn Hospital
Pro EMS
Pentecostal Tabernacle Church
Ragon Institute
Reservoir Church
St. John the Evangelist Church
Spaulding Hospital Cambridge
Salvation Army
YWCA Cambridge
Y2Y

UNIVERSITIES/AFFILIATES

Harvard University
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Lesley University

BUSINESS COMMUNITY

CambridgeSide
Central Square Business Improvement District
Cambridge Chamber of Commerce
East Cambridge Business Association
Harvard Square Business Association
Kendall Square Business Association
Trinity Property Management

Acknowledgments

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DESIGN

Fenway Group

Please Note: The officials and members listed above were
in office during FY23, the time this publication covers.



Cambridge
Public Health
Department

 **CHA**
Cambridge
Health Alliance



Cambridge Public Health Department is a city department administered by Cambridge Health Alliance, a regional health care delivery system.

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