

# COUNTY OF MONTEREY HEALTH DEPARTMENT



## Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Implementation Highlights

This report presents a sample of the many achievements since 2018, reflecting the wide range of ways that the department's bureaus and programs have improved services and outcomes aligned with the department's strategic plan.

### Vision

Creating a legacy of health together.

### Mission

To enhance, promote, and protect the health of Monterey County individuals, families, communities, and environment.

### Core Values

- Integrity
- Health Equity
- Respect
- Innovation
- Excellence

### MCHD Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Goals:



1: Empower the community to improve health through policies, programs, and activities.



2: Enhance community health and safety through prevention.



3: Ensure access to culturally and linguistically appropriate, customer-friendly quality health services.



4: Align and improve operational functions to meet current and developing population health needs.

Health Equity means that all communities have the same opportunities to be healthy.

The Monterey County Health Department works to eliminate avoidable, unfair, and unjust obstacles to health (including poverty, discrimination, lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, and unsafe housing and neighborhoods).



Since 2018, MCHD has had between 877 and 916 full-time equivalent positions (FTE) filled each year and 1,105-1,119 FTE budgeted annually.

Led by the Health Director, MCHD provides cost-effective primary care to eligible residents, offers a variety of mental health and substance use services, protects the public from environmental hazards, safeguards residents who can no longer care for themselves, coordinates countywide EMS, and implements programs that inform and empower communities to make Monterey County a healthier and more equitable place.



# Goal 1: Empower the Community to Improve Health

- Objectives 1.1 Engage community members in policy development & planning
- 1.2 Develop & support population health initiatives with meaningful participation of community members

Through the VIDA (Virus Integrated Distribution of Aid) project, MCHD has supported COVID-19 prevention and mitigation efforts implemented by **125 community health workers and 10 community organizations.**

VIDA and the Monterey County COVID-19 Collaborative have provided testing and vaccination information in English, Spanish, and indigenous languages of Mexico (including Triqui, Zapoteco, and Mixteco). The VIDA project facilitated more than 750,000 interactions with community members in Oct 2020-Dec 2021.

Monterey County is one of six communities in California and one of just 73 communities across the U.S. to be recognized by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services with a \$3.95 million grant to advance healthy literacy and to support an equitable community response to COVID.

## Supporting Active Transportation

Community members have worked with MCHD to support active transportation projects and events throughout Monterey County. Four cities have passed resolutions to support walking, biking, and other people-powered ways of getting around and related road improvements.

- ✓ Gonzales 2018
- ✓ King City 2019
- ✓ Salinas 2019
- ✓ Soledad 2020

In February 2020, the City of Salinas adopted the Alisal Vibrancy Plan. The plan built on the extensive work MCHD and Alisal residents have done to address the social determinants of health and on community capacity building led by the Building Healthy Communities (BHC) Hub.



Photo Credit: David Bacon

## Micro-Innovation Grants to Increase Latino Engagement

As the "safety net" mental health provider in the county, the Monterey County Behavioral Health Bureau (MCBH) serves the local Medi-Cal eligible population. Latino/a/x residents, however, have consistently been underrepresented as mental health service consumers in Monterey County.

One way MCBH is addressing this inequity is through a diffuse network of micro-innovation activities designed by and for specific cultural or ethnic communities or neighborhoods. Between 9 and 15 micro-grants of \$1,000 to \$50,000 have been awarded annually by a review board comprised of MCHD staff and a community stakeholder. To remove a barrier for individuals and small groups which do not typically contract with the County, MCBH has also coordinated with nonprofits able to serve as a fiscal sponsor.





## Goal 2: Enhance Public Health & Safety through Prevention

Objectives 2.1 Address public health & safety risks through policy & systems change

2.2 Engage community organizations, businesses, & other government agencies in changing environments to make residents healthier & safer

### Coordinated, Countywide Multi-Sector Response to COVID-19 + Collaboration for Equitable Recovery

MCHD was one of the founding members of the countywide COVID-19 Collaborative coordinated by the Community Foundation for Monterey County. The Collaborative has helped keep messaging around COVID-19 transmission, testing, and vaccinations consistent and reduced duplicative efforts across industries/sectors, with strategies evolving along with the changing circumstances of the pandemic. The Collaborative’s online toolkit of updated graphics and messages culturally relevant to the county’s many communities and grounded in science and best practices in public health and equity has been especially effective at getting information to people clearly and quickly. Work supporting recovery and resilience continues.

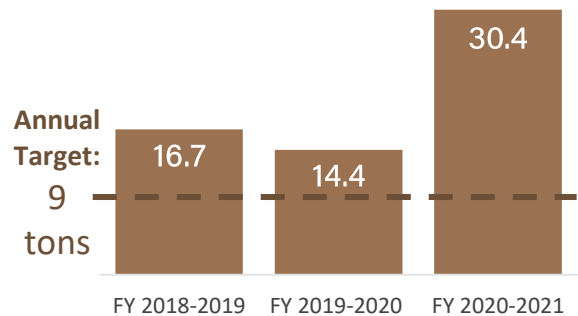
“It takes significant effort... to have understanding and patience to bring people to the table and to meet them halfway—and [we]... are successfully doing it.”

— Dr. Pedro Moreno, Alisal Health Clinic

### Increasing Emergency Responders’ Effectiveness

In 2020, Monterey County Emergency Medical Services expanded the scope of practice for paramedics and Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) in the county to include **COVID-19 nasal swab testing**, and for EMTs and other Emergency Medical Responder-trained personnel to include administering **epinephrine auto-injector** and **intra-nasal naloxone**. By the end of 2020, 13 law enforcement agencies in Monterey County were certified to administer naloxone to prevent deaths from opioid overdoses. In the first two years of the program, **law enforcement officers administered naloxone 19 times**.

### Tons of Trash and Recycling Collected at Volunteer Events Coordinated by the Environmental Health Bureau



More than **645** volunteers have helped keep Monterey County’s beaches, agricultural lands, and open spaces clean!

MCHD has worked with cities to adopt policies that protect residents from secondhand smoke and limit youth access to tobacco products and marketing.

### Smoke-Free Housing Ordinance

Provides equitable, healthier housing conditions for vulnerable community members including lower-income older adults and families with young children.

- ✓ City of Pacific Grove 2019

### Tobacco Retail Licensing

Limits youth access to tobacco and counters tobacco marketing that targets people of color and LGBTQ communities.

- ✓ City of Gonzales 2019
- ✓ City of Pacific Grove 2020
- ✓ City of Seaside 2020
- ✓ City of King City 2021





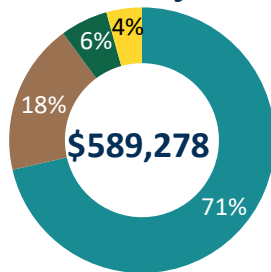
## Goal 3: Ensure Access to Culturally & Linguistically Appropriate, Customer-Friendly, Quality Health Services

- Objectives 3.1 Maximize preventative care, early diagnosis/intervention, & timely treatment
- 3.2 Promote linkages between clinical & community-based prevention activities
- 3.3 Increase patient-centered coordination of services

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recognized the Monterey County Tuberculosis Control Unit as a **2022 TB Elimination Champion** for containing an outbreak of active tuberculosis in 2021. The Unit traces contacts with people who have TB infections, removes barriers to screening and treatment, and provides extensive case management diagnosis until people have completed treatment (which can last 6-24 months).

### Financial Benefits Secured for Monterey County Medical-Legal Partnership Patients, 2018-2021

- Public benefits
- Health-related costs
- Unpaid wages
- Unlawful rent charges



The Public Administrator/Public Guardian (PA/PG) makes vital decisions for residents who are mentally incapacitated, who are dependent and impoverished, and who are victims of neglect or physical or financial abuse. In 2018-2021, it successfully addressed

**100% of urgent client safety needs within 5 days.**

MCHD ensures that lower-income residents can get healthcare when they need it. Every year, more than:

- 44,600** patients get care from Clinic Services
- 13,600** patients receive mental health or substance use services
- 22,000** people engage with programming focused on preventing serious mental illness and connecting people with timely access to mental health services/interventions

### Supporting the Mental Health of Children and Youth at Schools

The California Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission awarded Monterey County's Behavioral Health Bureau (MCBH) a two-year Mental Health Student Services Act grant of \$4 million to expand access to mental health services for children and youth (including campus-based services) and to support children, youth, and families in connecting with ongoing services. MCBH will build upon existing partnerships with School Districts and the Monterey County Office of Education to increase clinical services for prevention and early intervention activities, immediate crisis support, and ongoing services to students experiencing mental health emergencies; and to provide training for school district personnel on mental health related topics.

**98% of Clinic Services patients say their provider communicated well and answered all questions**





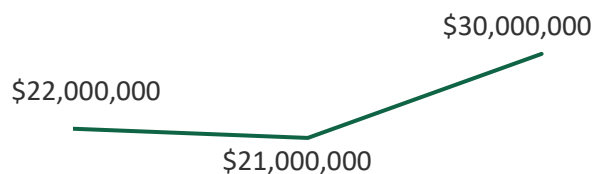
## Goal 4: Engage MCHD Workforce & Improve Operational Functions to Meet Current & Developing Population Health Needs

- Objectives 4.1 Attract, develop, & maintain a competent, diverse, & responsive workforce
- 4.2 Promote trust & communication throughout the organization
- 4.3 Align funding with strategic initiatives & mandated programs
- 4.4 Optimize efficiency & effectiveness

### Using Tech to Reunite Pets with Their Families

Monterey County Animal Services has deployed new technologies to reunite lost pets with their families. In 2019, the Bureau partnered with **PetCo Love Lost** (formerly named Finding Rover), a free app that utilizes facial recognition technology to scan the unique features of a pet’s face and maintains owners’ contact information. In 2020, the Bureau launched the **Lost2Found Texting Program**, which guides owners (who text **831LOST to 56525**) through the process of checking if their pet is at the local animal shelter and provides tips on the most effective ways to search for their pet. It also provides tips to good Samaritans seeking to reunite a found pet with their family (text **831FOUND to 56525**).

### Grant Funding Secured by MCHD



FY 2018-2019

FY 2019-2020

FY 2020-2021

MCHD achieved a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) score of 20, which has helped attract National Health Service Corps (NHSC) Provider Scholars and Recipients – and hired its first NHSC Scholar in 2020.

MCHD’s Administrative Bureau managed equipment procurement and facility improvements necessary to support COVID-19 response efforts (including increased implementation of the County’s telework policy).

More than half of all MCHD employees (488) participated in a *Coping with COVID-19* survey that Human Resources conducted in May 2020 to assess how staff were managing the transition to hybrid/remote work, implementation of COVID-19 protocols, and deployment as disaster service workers and to identify additional supports for workers and opportunities for improvement.



### Supporting the City of Gonzales in Receiving National Culture of Health Award

MCHD supported the City of Gonzales’ application for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s Culture of Health Prize. Gonzales was one of five communities in the U.S. recognized in 2019 for reshaping their environment, governance, and community to promote health equity.



# Making a Difference for Monterey County Residents



## WIC Win-Win: Food for Families, Funds for Farmers

During summer 2021, WIC staff distributed 14,000 vouchers that WIC participants could use to buy fresh fruits and vegetables at their local farmer’s markets – and more than 94% of those vouchers were redeemed! These vouchers provided more than \$92,000 to the local farming community. This redemption rate was the highest in California, far above the statewide redemption rate of 49%!



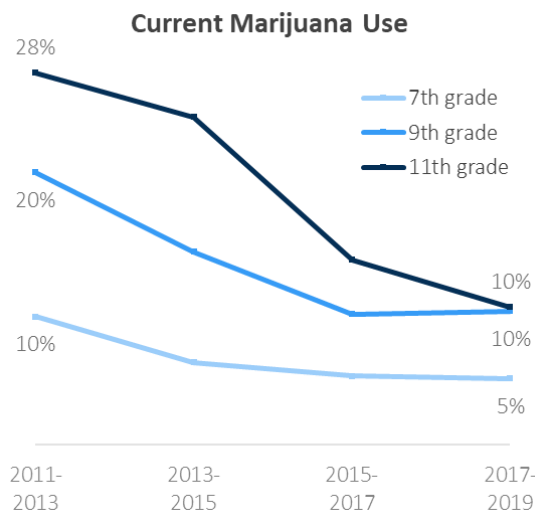
## High COVID-19 Vaccination Rates for Communities Most Burdened by Inequities

**Latino/a/x Residents** By February 2022, more than 71% of Latino/a/x residents had been fully vaccinated compared to 58% of Latino/a/x people statewide and 68% of White (non-Hispanic) residents of Monterey County.

**The Salinas Valley + City of Salinas** Within Monterey County, people living in South County, the Salinas Valley, and Salinas experience more structural inequities and as a result have worse health outcomes compared to residents in North County, the Peninsula, and Big Sur. Throughout California, healthier and more resourced communities have received COVID-19 vaccinations more quickly and at higher rates than less healthy and more disadvantaged communities. Although this was also initially the trend for Monterey, the vaccination rate in less healthy, more disadvantaged parts of the county began converging with the rates elsewhere in the county by October 2021 and fully surpassed them by February 2022. Vaccination rates in less healthy areas in Monterey are also higher compared to similarly disadvantaged areas throughout California.

## Dramatic Decrease in Marijuana Use and Repeated Alcohol or Drug Use Among Youth

The percentage of middle and high school students who used marijuana in the past month and of high school students who have been drunk or high 7 or more times in their lifetime have both fallen to be half (or less!) than in 2011-2013.



## Healthier Pregnancies + Less Financial Stress

MCHD’s Clinic Services Bureau and California Rural Legal Assistance formed the Monterey County Medical-Legal Partnership in 2017 to provide clinic patients with legal information and support. MLP’s advocacy on behalf of pregnant farmworkers prompted the California Employment Development Department (EDD) to clarify that pregnant people may qualify for the State Disability Insurance (SDI) program *at any point in their pregnancy* if it is medically advisable. Workers who have paid into the program (typically via payroll deductions) need their medical provider to certify that it is no longer medically advisable for their patient to continue working before they can receive payments. In 2019, the EDD clarified that medical providers can certify patients for SDI if their regular work requirements “pose a risk to the pregnant patient or fetus.” The regular exposure that most farmworkers have to pesticides can cause birth defects and additional risks to pregnancy even in the first trimester. Providing up to 70% of normal wages for up to 52 weeks, SDI makes it possible for families to maintain financial stability while also ensuring a healthy pregnancy. Eligible undocumented workers are also able to participate without harming their immigration prospects under the federal Public Charge Rule.

