

Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Michigan Public Health Week!

Coldwater, MI. The Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency joins other local public health departments across the state in celebrating Michigan's Public Health Week, April 22 to April 28, 2012. This year's theme is "A Healthier America Begins Today: Join the Movement."

According to Steve Todd, Health Officer and Administration of the tri-county agency, "This year we have much to celebrate. We have just completed our fifth accreditation review cycle through the Michigan Local Public Health Accreditation Program and received their highest honor – Accreditation with Commendation."

Reviews were conducted at the Agency's offices during the week of February 27 to March 2nd. Teams of state staff from the Michigan Departments of Community Health, Agriculture and Rural Development and Environmental Quality met with agency staff to review nine mandated areas, including:

- Powers and Duties & Quality Improvement
- Food Service Program
- Communicable Disease Program
- Hearing Program
- Immunization Program
- On-Site Sewage Treatment Program
- HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Disease Program
- Vision Program

- Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC) and
- Children's Special Health Care Services Program

Accreditation measures whether the health department effectively implements its statutory duties and responsibilities. Full accreditation with Commendation is rare and only occurs when a health department is able to meet the required number of essential and important indicators and also implements a comprehensive quality assurance program. The Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency surpassed these requirements by meeting all 123 applicable essential indicators and 13 important indicators. Steve Todd added "Being fully accredited with commendation assures that residents of the three counties have access to high quality public health programs which help to protect their health, prevent disease and promote wellness. This achievement is a testimony to the high quality services we strive to provide to the community each day and even more so, to the hard work and dedication of our agency staff who make that possible."

The Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency, a tri-county health department, has served Branch, Hillsdale and St. Joseph counties for 40 years. The agency provides a broad array of personal health services including: WIC, Immunizations, HIV/AIDS and STD screening and Vision and Hearing Screening. It also provides many environmental health and health education services, as well as insurance programs. Check out our website at www.bhsj.org to learn more about how the health department works to make the tri-county area a healthier place to live, work and play.

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