



**Berrien County
Health Department**

Berrien County Health Department

Annual Report

2017

Health Officer Message



It is with great pleasure that I submit to you the 2017 annual report for the Berrien County Health Department. This report provides an overview of the programs and services we provide that protect and promote the health of our residents. It also highlights important public health issues and trends which help to guide our work to make our community a healthier place to live, learn, work, and play.

2017 was a year with lots of “new” for the Berrien County Health Department. I began the year in the new role of Health Officer. We welcomed new staff members into all areas of our department including the addition of a new Deputy Health Officer, Courtney Davis, and Business Manager, Lisa Ankenbruck, to our Leadership Team. Our department embraced new opportunities to better meet

our community’s needs, new partnerships with organizations in the community working towards improved public health, and new policies to streamline service delivery.

With all these exciting new changes, there were also new challenges. Facing new political agendas, an unsure future for health care funding, and the current environment of having to do more with less, our department was required to use our resources in innovative ways. We were challenged to think of new solutions to public health issues, such as mosquito-borne disease prevention, tuberculosis control, and opioid addiction. We implemented a new electronic medical record within our clinic, unveiled a new website (www.bchdmi.org), and continued to think of creative, new ideas to improve the lives of the people we serve.

I am proud to serve you, our residents, as Health Officer of this wonderful organization and community and I thank you for your continued support making our work possible. If the year 2017 proved anything, it was that the Berrien County Health Department is an organization that can optimistically face challenges head-on, be good stewards of the resources entrusted to us, and continuously aspire to our mission of preventing disease, protecting health, and promoting an optimal quality of life for all.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nicki Britten".

Nicki Britten, MPH
Health Officer

2017 BY THE NUMBERS

1,544

families served by breastfeeding peer counselor program

21,113

children received hearing and/or vision screening

1,756

pounds of properly disposed medications

352

private well permits issued

on-site septic permits issued

159

first-time mothers served in Nurse-Family Partnership

2,088

communicable disease investigations

246

497

people tested for HIV

1,445

Sexual Health Clinic visits

1,030

restaurant inspections conducted

728

4th and 5th-graders educated about alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs

107

pregnant and parenting teens in case management through MI-APPP

families provided education and support through Triple P - Positive Parenting Program

289

1,122

adults and children immunized against influenza

Improving Service...

Maternal-Child Health Needs Assessment

Of the three core functions of public health, assessment, policy development, and assurance, BCHD knows that community health needs assessments are essential to fully understand health problems facing a community before implementing solutions. Assessing the health needs of the community involves systematically collecting and assembling information on health problems, trends, populations at risk, root causes, and priorities to best determine how to prevent or improve the problem. In 2017, BCHD was tasked with assessing the health and wellbeing of families in Berrien County through a Maternal-Child Health Needs Assessment. Using an assessment methodology called Mobilizing for



Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP), BCHD staff gathered quantitative data on the health status of women and children in Berrien County, conducted surveys, focus groups, and key informant interviews to collect qualitative information, and compiled that information into a report showing themes and strategic issues to address. The themes identified a need for additional mental health awareness and support services for parents and children, specifically within educational institutions; more flexible health care services that are easier to access; and a lack of affordable childcare, transportation, and awareness of resources available to families. This Maternal-Child Health Needs Assessment allowed BCHD to further explore the needs of our communities as well as ways in which BCHD could better structure programs and services to fulfill those needs.



New Electronic Health Record

In 2017, the Berrien County Health Department made a big switch to a new Electronic Medical Record (EMR). The new EMR, Patagonia Health, is a platform specifically developed to capture the unique aspects of a public health clinic, from sexual health visits to immunizations. With a dramatically and ever-changing healthcare industry and federal requirements for electronic health records, this new EMR helps propel BCHD into the future with 21st century features like notifications and appointment reminders, quick lab results, easier scheduling, and a patient portal to enable direct communication with their providers at BCHD.

...Improving Health

Taking Charge of Your Sexual Health

For many years, the Berrien County Health Department has offered family planning services as well as sexually transmitted disease (STD)/HIV testing and treatment. In 2017, BCHD integrated these clinical programs to provide a more seamless, comprehensive experience for clients. BCHD focused efforts to merge the programs from a client perspective, cross-train staff, and re-brand the reproductive health programs as the Sexual Health Clinic in 2017. With the assistance of a grant through the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Title X program, BCHD implemented a wide-scale outreach and social marketing campaign to increase awareness of the Sexual Health Clinic services available at BCHD, increase knowledge of the importance of taking care of one's (reproductive) health, influence an attitude shift in regards to seeking care at BCHD, and increase the volume of clients seen through BCHD's reproductive health clinics. A new website landing page, an educational infographic, a new pamphlet, promotional videos, and the use of social media and digital

advertisements allowed BCHD to reach thousands of people throughout the course of the campaign. As a result of this campaign and outreach project, the Sexual Health Clinic increased its number of appointments made by more than 12% post implementation!

Get the support you need at Berrien County Sexual Health Clinic

Taking care of your sexual health matters. It's just as important as keeping the rest of your body and mind healthy.

We are here to help you plan for a healthy future. The Berrien County Health Department Sexual Health Clinic offers accessible, non-judgmental, and supportive services to women, men, and teens regardless of income, insurance status, background, or sexuality. Our low/no-cost services are 100% confidential and include birth control, STD testing, and annual wellness exams and testing for men and women.



Get the facts

Get the Support You Need at the Berrien County Health Department Sexual Health Clinic

TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR SEXUAL HEALTH

Only **1** in 4 sexually active men between the ages of 15 - 44 use a condom every time.

We provide free condoms to anyone who needs them.

Nearly **1/2** all pregnancies in the U.S. are unintended.

The Sexual Health Clinic provides multiple forms of birth control and can help you plan for the future you want.

12.7% young people won't seek sexual health care for fear that their parents will find out.

Our clinic provides confidential sexual health services for people of all ages, including teens.

In Berrien County rates of gonorrhea increased more than **+160%** 2014-2016

Get tested for gonorrhea and other STDs at the Sexual Health Clinic.

70% Young people in Berrien County are at higher risk for STDs, accounting for nearly 70% of all gonorrhea and chlamydia cases.

All Sexual Health Clinic services are fully confidential and non-judgmental.

At least half of all sexually active men and women will acquire genital human papillomavirus (HPV), a virus that causes several kinds of cancer, at some point in their lives.

Men and women can prevent cancers caused by HPV by getting the vaccine at the Sexual Health Clinic.

Berrien County Health Department Sexual Health Clinic
Benton Harbor • Niles • Three Oaks
www.bchdmi.org • 269.926.7121

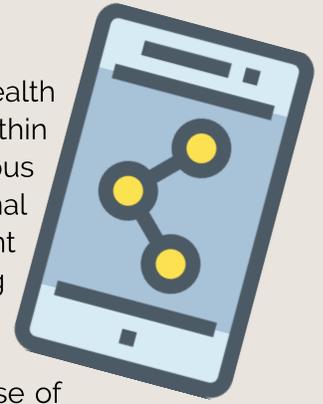
Examples of materials that were developed during the outreach campaign. More information on the Sexual Health Clinic can be found at www.bchdmi.org.

Your Sexual Health Matters

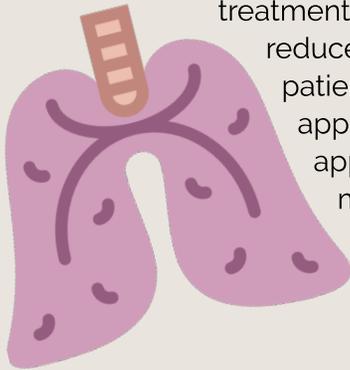


Berrien County Health Department Sexual Health Clinic

Using Technology to Improve Public Health



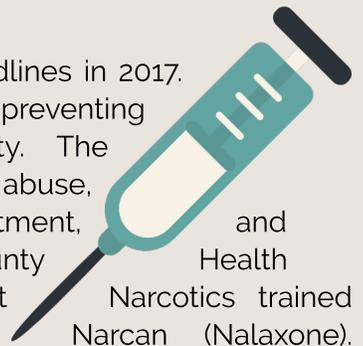
As a public health department in the State of Michigan, the Berrien County Health Department is responsible for the treatment and control of infectious disease within Berrien County. In order to effectively treat and control the spread of infectious diseases that require strict medication adherence, like tuberculosis, national guidelines recommend the use of a patient-centered case management approach which includes direct observed therapy (DOT) of those receiving routine medications. With past cases of certain infectious diseases requiring daily monitoring, BCHD has utilized the traditional DOT approach necessitating nursing staff to monitor medication adherence twice daily throughout the course of



treatment, resulting in a time, staff, and resource-intensive investment for BCHD. To reduce costs, increase staff efficiency, safety, and convenience for infectious patients, BCHD began to use video/electronic DOT as an alternative and beneficial approach to traditional direct observed therapy. This HIPAA-compliant mobile application allows patients to record videos of themselves taking their medications so that providers can review them remotely. This creates accountability between the patient and BCHD nurses, encourages communication, and provides dose-by-dose adherence data to better serve patient's needs.

Addressing the Opioid Epidemic

The heroin and opioid-related overdose epidemic dominated national headlines in 2017. As a community, Berrien County has taken a proactive approach to preventing prescription drug abuse and opioid overdoses in our community. The *Voice.Change.Hope.* Alliance continues to spread awareness about opioid abuse, provide connections to resources for individuals and families seeking treatment, engage stakeholders at all levels in community action. The Berrien County Department, in partnership with *Voice.Change.Hope.* and Families Against Narcotics trained over 300 community members in using the opioid-overdose reversal drug, Narcan (Nalaxone). Narcan blocks opiate receptors in the brain and works quickly to restore breathing. While it can cause withdrawal symptoms such as nausea and disorientation, but there is no risk for abuse or addiction. If given in a timely manner, the antidote can prevent deaths from overdoses due to opioid drugs, such as oxycodone or heroin. Law enforcement agencies throughout Berrien County were also trained to use this life-saving medication, resulting in a record number of lives saved in overdose emergencies in 2017. Berrien County Medical Examiner data reflects this positive "Narcan Effect" in the number of overdose deaths in 2017, with a nearly 33% reduction in drug-related overdose deaths (from 34 deaths in 2016 to 23 in 2017).



The Berrien County Health Department will continue to work to sustain this positive trend in preventing overdose deaths as well as opioid abuse. Every life saved in an overdose emergency using Narcan represents another opportunity for that individual to seek and successfully begin a journey towards recovery.

Keeping Our Beaches Safe

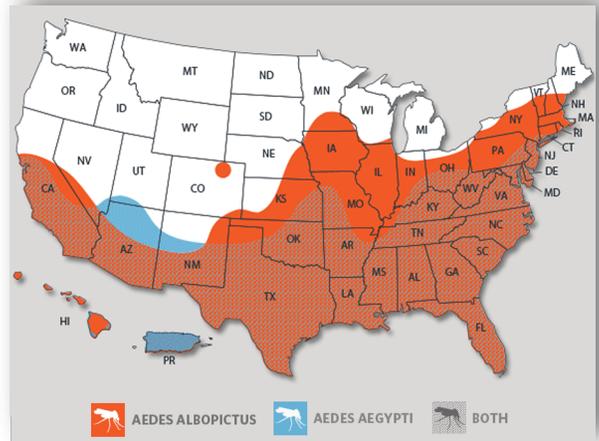
Every year, thousands of residents and tourists visit and enjoy the many beautiful miles of sandy Lake Michigan beaches located in Berrien County. Each year, the Berrien County Health Department monitors the surface water along fourteen of those public beaches to assure a safe and healthy recreational experience for those who swim in the water. Surface water samples are tested for Escherichia coli, or *E. coli*, which at high levels can indicate that contamination by birds, sewage, or other wastewater has occurred and that harmful bacteria may be present that could make people sick. By monitoring the quality of surface water at public bathing beaches, the public's health is protected by managing the risk associated with swimming in open waters. Each week during the beach bathing season, BCHD Environmental Health staff sample water from the chosen beaches and deliver the samples to a local lab for testing. If high E.coli levels are shown, the Environmental Health staff work with the municipality to advise beach-goers against swimming in the water until the samples show safer levels. All weekly beach testing results are publicly available for anyone to check (www.deq.state.mi.us/beach). In 2017, no beaches exceeded the State of Michigan's safe bathing standards for the entire season!



Environmental Health Sanitarians gathering water samples from Lake Michigan

Fight the Bite: Mosquito Surveillance in Berrien County

In 2017, Zika virus continued to capture the public's attention, as it is the first known mosquito-borne virus to cause major birth defects and other neurological disorders. With the Zika virus crisis continuing in the Americas into 2017 and the potential for mosquito species that are known carriers of the virus to potentially migrate into Berrien County, the Berrien County Health Department embarked on a collaborative effort to collect data on mosquito species in the area and educate the community about the virus, and other mosquito-borne illness thanks to a \$20,000 grant from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. Throughout the summer months of 2017, BCHD collected mosquito specimen samples from 8 different locations



throughout Berrien County, analyzed the mosquitoes to identify the species that are known-carriers of Zika virus, and reported the data to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Over the course the 16 weeks of surveillance, more than 3,600 mosquitoes were collected!

In addition to monitoring for mosquito species, BCHD also launched an outreach and educational campaign urging residents to "Fight the Bite" to prevent mosquito-borne illness, like Zika virus and West Nile virus. BCHD focused efforts on migrant and seasonal farm workers and pregnant women or others who may be traveling to Zika endemic areas. BCHD also partnered with the Berrien County Parks Department's recycling program to conduct a tire clean up event that encouraged residents to safely dispose of scrap tires on their property that can hold pools of standing water, thus removing potential mosquito breeding grounds. More than 800 tires were collected – enough to fill two semi-trailers! Through dozens of outreach events, strong partnerships with area organizations, and the use of social media and radio advertisements, BCHD spread the message to cover up when outdoors, use insect repellent, remove standing water from around their home, and be cautious when traveling to areas where Zika virus has been confirmed.



Mosquito traps were placed in eight different locations around Berrien County

TIPS TO HELP FIGHT THE BITE this summer

With the emergence of Zika virus and higher rates of Lyme disease, how can Berrien County residents protect themselves from mosquito and tick borne infections and diseases?

<h3 style="text-align: center;">TRAVEL HEAVY</h3> <p style="font-size: small;">Michigan has 73 cases of reported Zika virus, all of which occurred from traveling. Make sure when going to tropical places that you wear light long sleeve shirts and pants to avoid bringing back an unwanted souvenir.</p>	<h3 style="text-align: center;">ORDER MATTERS</h3> <p style="font-size: small;">Make sure to apply sunscreen BEFORE insect repellent to maximize your bug spray's effectiveness.</p>
<h3 style="text-align: center;">ACTIVE INGREDIENTS</h3> <p style="font-size: small;">The CDC recommends using bug spray with high percentage of DEET, Picaridin, IR3535, Oil of lemon eucalyptus, and 2-undecanone. DEET is safe for women who are pregnant, but not for children under 2 months.</p>	<h3 style="text-align: center;">HOUSE CHECK!</h3> <p style="font-size: small;">Are the screens in your windows and doors free from holes and tears? Are there any openings that could potentially let mosquitoes into the home? This includes gutters!</p>
<h3 style="text-align: center;">SITTING WATER</h3> <p style="font-size: small;">Check your yard and porch. If there are buckets, tires, pots or anything else that could be holding water, that is a breeding ground for mosquitoes and should be drained or filled with dirt or sand.</p>	<h3 style="text-align: center;">BE A WIMP</h3> <p style="font-size: small;">Both Zika virus and Lyme disease have subtle symptoms for the first few weeks. If you feel flu like symptoms after a mosquito or tick bite, go to a doctor immediately. This may stop someone else from getting sick too.</p>

WHAT TO WATCH OUT FOR

- Zika virus** - flu like symptoms (fever, headache, etc.), rash, joint and muscle pain, red eyes
- Lyme Disease** - flu like symptoms (headache, fatigue, swollen lymph nodes), bullseye rash at bite site, muscle and joint aches, facial palsy

For more information, visit www.bchdmi.org

Events & Highlights from 2017



The Back to School bash in August provided kids and families with an opportunity to receive hearing and vision screenings, sign up for WIC, learn about parenting programs, and more!



Frank Poorman Boardroom dedication at Benton Harbor location



Former Health Officer, Mike Mortimore, Excellence in Impact Award at United Way Annual Celebration with current Health Officer, Nicki Britten



Cooking demonstrations at the Benton Harbor Farmers Market



BCHD summer interns at health fair



The 2nd annual Breastfeeding on the Bluff event had over 160 moms and babies in attendance!



WIC staff at the Project FRESH kickoff in June

2017 Friend of Public Health

The Berrien County Health Department has a long-standing tradition of honoring worthy recipients, either an individual or organization, for their outstanding contributions to the health of the community while reflecting the spirit of the Berrien County Health Department's mission and its population based approach to health status enhancement. In 2017, the Friend of Public Health Award was bestowed on former Michigan Representative, Al Pscholka.

Throughout his tenure as a member of the Michigan House of Representatives, Mr. Pscholka remained a stalwart champion for his constituents, committed to serving the communities he represented in Berrien County rather than giving in to the pressures from his party or outside opinions. Arguably the most notable contribution that Mr. Pscholka made to the improvement of public health was his advocacy efforts to expand Medicaid coverage for more than 600,000 residents in Michigan through the Healthy Michigan Plan. Expanded Medicaid coverage allowed thousands of residents in Berrien County to gain access to much-needed health care services, especially life-saving preventative services, like cancer screenings, wellness checks, immunizations, and more.

Another significant policy contribution that Mr. Pscholka made during his time in the legislature was the passing of the expanded Good Samaritan law, granting limited exemption from prosecution to people of any age reporting a possible drug overdose to law enforcement or emergency medical authorities. This bipartisan law expanded a previous version (Public Act 220 of 2015), which exempted individuals under age 21 from certain prescription drug-related criminal charges in the event they are reporting life-threatening overdoses. The passing of this law was prompted by the tragic death of a Berrien County teenager who overdosed at a party

when his friends were too afraid to call for medical assistance. With unanimous support for this bill in both the House and the Senate, the Good Samaritan law will make people more likely to call for help if someone is having an adverse reaction to drugs, thus translating to lives saved before an overdose becomes deadly.

Mr. Pscholka is the very definition of a health champion and effective lawmaker, making him a unanimous choice for the Friend of Public Health Award in 2017. He has demonstrated time and time again his passion for helping the people of Michigan, and his ability to make meaningful change to improve the lives and wellbeing of residents through legislation that will have positive impacts on public health for years to come.



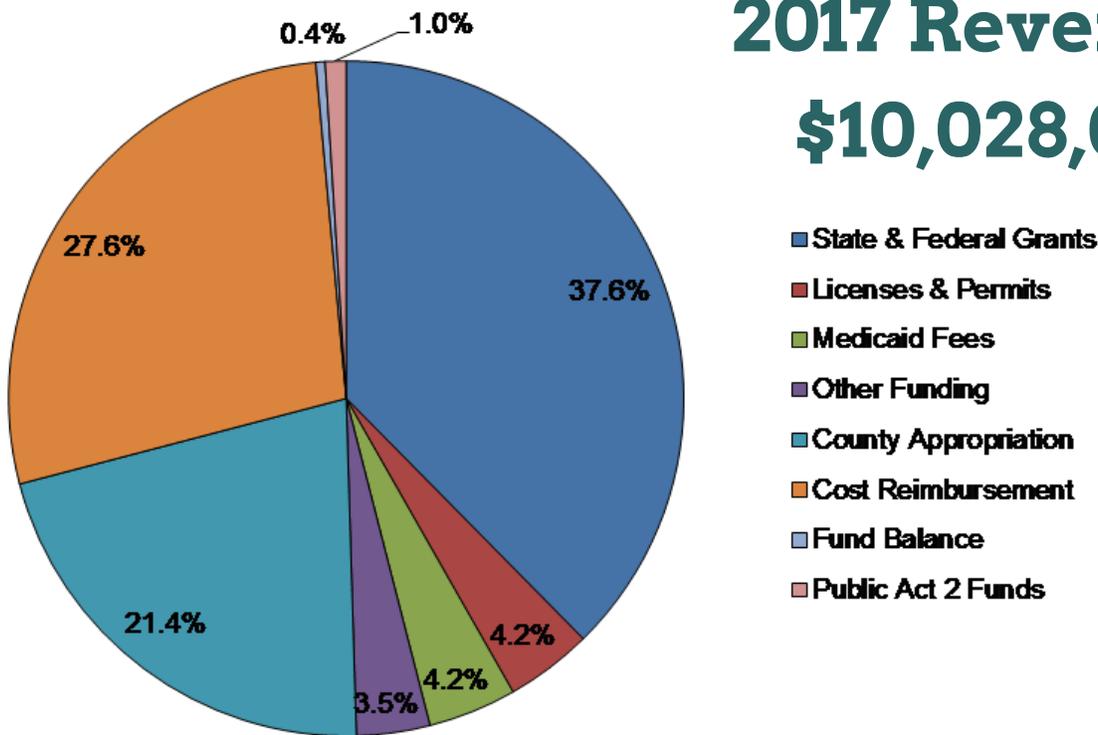
Mr. Al Pscholka and Nicki Britten, BCHD Health Officer

2017 Financial Statement

The Berrien County Health Department's finance team is responsible for accounting, budget, accounts payable, accounts receivable, and purchasing. Finance staff also provides a variety of financial, reporting, and decision support services to leadership and management staff. The annual budget for the Berrien County Health Department is more than \$10 million and funded through multiple revenue streams that include Federal, State, and County/Local dollars and grants.

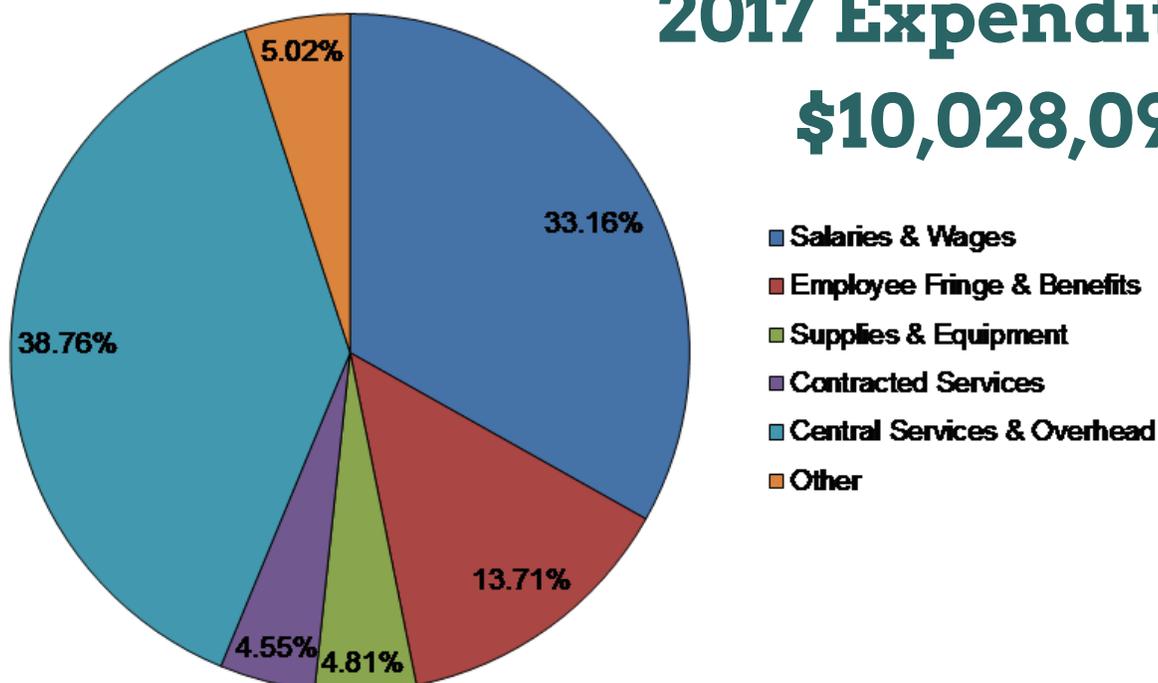
2017 Revenues

\$10,028,099



2017 Expenditures

\$10,028,099



Berrien County Health Department

The mission of the Berrien County Health Department is to serve the residents of Berrien County by preventing disease, protecting health, and promoting an optimal quality of life for all.

2149 E. Napier Ave.
Benton Harbor, MI 49022

1205 N. Front Street
Niles, MI 49120

21 Elm Street
Three Oaks, MI 49128

269.926.7121 | www.bchdmi.org

Activities and programs of this department are supported by the members of the Berrien County Board of Health and Berrien County Board of Commissioners.

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