

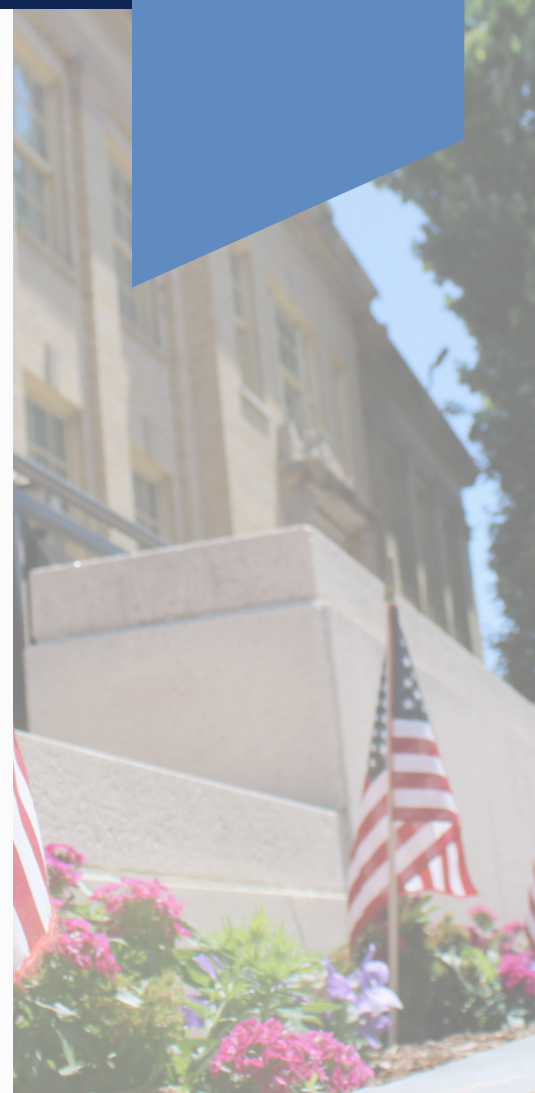
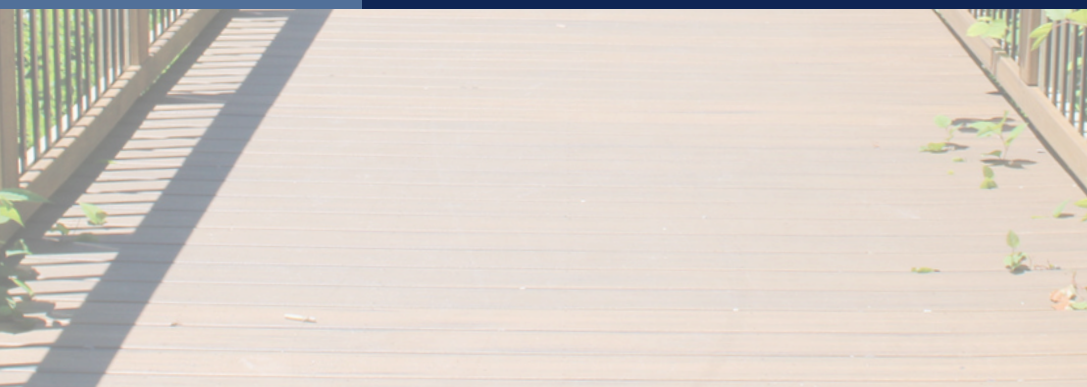
ASHLAND  
FRAMINGHAM  
HOPKINTON  
HUDSON  
MAYNARD  
MEDWAY  
MILFORD  
MILLIS  
NATICK

# MetroWest Shared Public Health Services

# FY'25 ANNUAL REPORT



Est.  
2021





# About Us

**MetroWest Shared Public Health Services (MWSPHS)** was established in 2021 at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic with funding from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's *Public Health Excellence* grant program. This initiative was designed to strengthen the local public health infrastructure by investing in regional collaboration and expanding the capacity of municipal health departments.

The pandemic revealed deep-rooted challenges faced by local health departments across the state, including limited staffing, resources, and sustainable funding. These issues underscored the need for a more resilient and coordinated approach to public health. By sharing services across communities, MWSPHS enables participating municipalities to pool resources, increase staffing and expertise, and deliver high-quality public health programs more efficiently and equitably.

Through this collaboration, MWSPHS strengthens core public health functions, fills critical service gaps, and enhances the region's ability to respond to evolving community health needs. The shared services model not only improves service delivery and health outcomes, but also supports long-term sustainability by helping communities secure additional funding and technical assistance.

MWSPHS currently serves nine member municipalities: **Ashland, Framingham, Hopkinton, Hudson, Maynard, Medway, Milford, Millis, and Natick.**



**229,132.8**  
People  
**Total Population**  
MWSPHS

Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2019-2023



**30%**  
Speak a Language Other Than English  
**Of Total Population**  
MetroWest Region

Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2018-2022



**67%**  
White (Not Hispanic or Latino)  
**Of Total Population**  
MetroWest Region

Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2018-2022







# Meet The Team



**KARINA SCOTT, MPH**  
SHARED SERVICES COORDINATOR

Karina Scott has worked in health and human services for over 15 years. Bilingual in English and Spanish, she began her career supporting homeless families and individuals with a local non-profit. Since 2017, she has held a master's in public and community health. As Shared Services Coordinator, Karina oversees the coordination of nursing, inspectional, community health, human services, and epidemiological resources across participating health departments, while also leading efforts to secure resources and funding for the regional collaborative.



**CASEY MELLIN, RS, CHO**  
REGIONAL HEALTH INSPECTOR

Casey Mellin is the Regional Health Inspector for MetroWest Shared Public Health Services with nearly 18 years of experience in municipal public health. A Registered Sanitarian and Certified Health Officer, Casey has served as a Sanitarian, led several health departments, and worked in communities including Woburn, Dracut, Lexington, and Northborough. He is also fluent in Spanish, which enhances his ability to serve diverse communities effectively.



**EDILANE SILVA**  
REGIONAL COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER

Edilane Silva (Lane) is a bilingual Community Health Worker with 10 years of experience in Massachusetts. Fluent in Portuguese and English, she is among the first CHWs licensed by the MA Department of Public Health and has been a trailblazer in the field. Lane is also a Certified Application Counselor for MassHealth and has completed extensive training in healthcare access, tobacco cessation, cross-cultural communication, motivational interviewing, and Mental Health First Aid.



**POOJA SHELKE, MPH, MS**  
REGIONAL EPIDEMIOLOGIST

Pooja Shelke holds dual Master's degrees in Public Health (Epidemiology) and Analytics. As a Regional Epidemiologist for the MetroWest Shared Public Health Services, she provides epidemiological and analytical support to nine municipalities, conducting disease surveillance, leading program planning and evaluation, and delivering evidence-based recommendations to guide local public health action. Fluent in English, Hindi, and Marathi, Pooja is passionate about advancing data-informed decision-making, fostering cross-sector collaboration, strengthening epidemiological capacity, and promoting community well-being.



**THALITA CAMPELO, BS**  
REGIONAL HEALTH COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Thalita holds a bachelor's degree in public health with a concentration in Community Health and Health Promotion. She is trilingual - fluent in English, Portuguese and Spanish - and is a certified Medical Interpreter. Thalita specializes in developing innovative, engaging health education materials and social media toolkits that are culturally appropriate. Her mission is to ensure communities receive clear, accessible information to support healthier lives.



**ADRIANA BIZJAK, LPN**  
REGIONAL LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE

Adriana is a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), having graduated in 2013. She brings over 11 years of diverse healthcare experience, including work in mental health facilities, home care, and a methadone clinic. Currently, Adriana is bilingual in Portuguese and English and is focused on making a meaningful impact in local public health by participating in vaccine clinics, community outreach, and more.



# Mission & Vision

## MISSION

*To ensure sustainable public health services that promote, protect, and enhance the health, safety, and wellbeing of all people who live and work in the member communities across the MetroWest Shared Public Health Services region.*

## VISION

*Through regional collaboration and shared investments, the MetroWest Shared Public Health Services group delivers foundational public health services as well as implements innovative solutions that foster independence, improve health, and promote wellbeing for all who live and work in the participating communities.*

Our work is guided by a commitment to collaboration, equity, innovation, sustainability, and community wellbeing. By fostering strong partnerships across towns and regions, we ensure that everyone has fair access to essential public health services and opportunities to thrive. We embrace forward-thinking solutions to address today's challenges, while building systems that last for future generations. At the heart of everything we do is a focus on protecting and enhancing the health, safety, and independence of all who live and work in our communities.



**Collaboration** – Working together across communities through regional partnerships and shared investments



**Equity & Inclusion** – Ensuring health, safety, and wellbeing for all who live and work in the region



**Innovation** – Implementing creative and forward-thinking solutions to address public health challenges



**Sustainability** – Building long-lasting, reliable public health services that support communities over time



**Community Wellbeing** – Promoting health, safety, and independence as the foundation for thriving communities

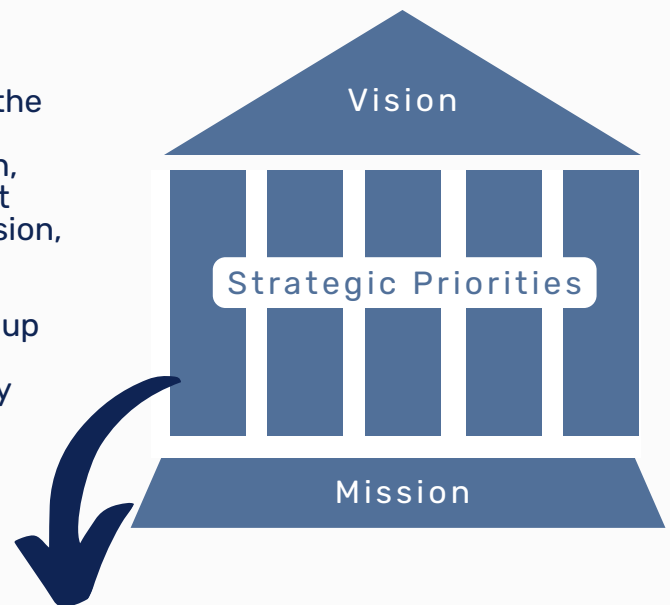




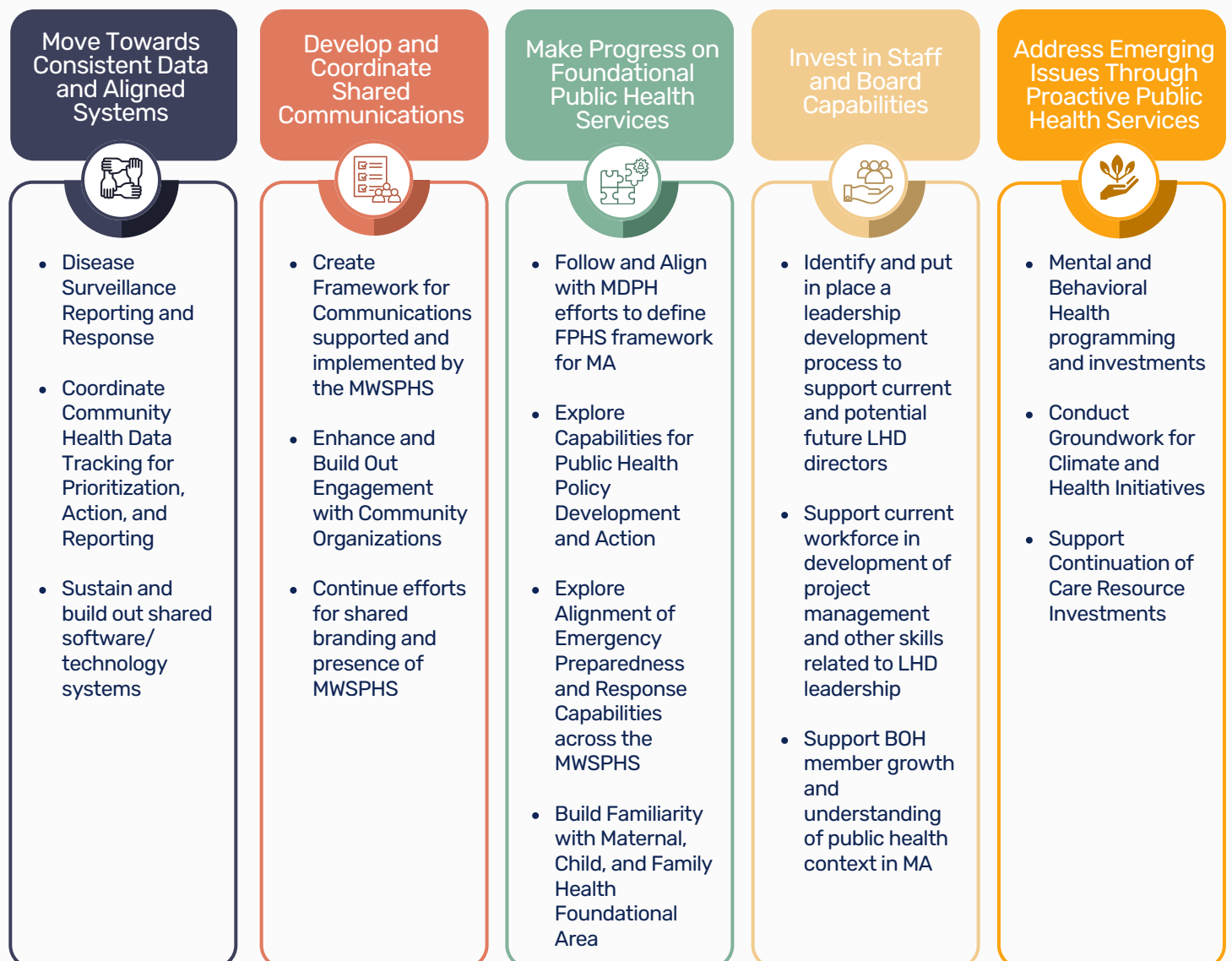
# Strategic Plan 2024-2029

## Strategic Plan:

The Strategic Plan provides a structure for what the group sees possible as it moves forward. At the base of the structure is the group's Mission, which describes the MWSPHS's purpose and what the group does. The top of the structure is the Vision, which describes the group's aspiration for the community and for conditions that will change through the work of MWSPHS. The pillars holding up the structure are the strategic priorities (and associated actions). As these pillars are built, they make the Vision possible, and ideally, the base to build off of in future efforts.



## Strategic Priorities:

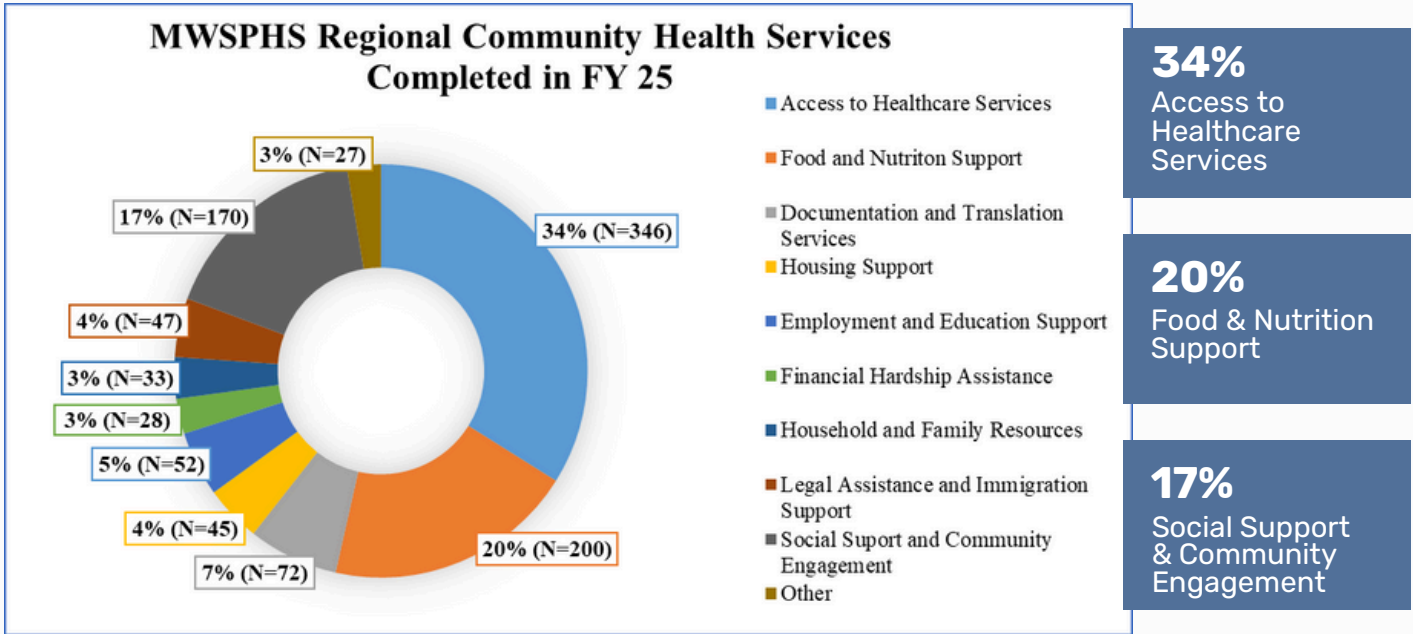




# The Community at a Glance

Our Regional Community Health Worker (CHW) supports and ensures the wellbeing of individuals and families across the MetroWest region. CHW's serve as trusted connectors between residents and essential services, helping people access healthcare, housing, food security, and other critical resources. By building strong relationships within the community, they identify local needs, advocate for underserved populations, and work collaboratively with organizations and municipalities to create healthier, more resilient neighborhoods.

In FY'25, the CHW provided a total of **1,020 community health services**, including assistance with healthcare access, food and nutrition support, documentation and translation, employment and education, financial hardship, legal services, social support, and household and family resources.



Our CHW plays a vital role in ensuring that community members receive support in a culturally competent and inclusive way. As a bilingual speaker, she is able to connect with a broader range of residents and break down language barriers that often prevent people from accessing care. Resources and assistance are provided in ways that are culturally relevant and easy to understand, ensuring that every individual feels heard, respected, and supported.

# Community Health Worker Services



## Food & Nutrition Support

- SNAP, WIC, Sun Bucks applications
- Summer EBT program
- Mobile food pantry registration & delivery
- Open Table registration/ordering
- Backpack Buddies weekend snack program
- Emergency food delivery
- Food pantry referrals



## Housing Support

- RAFT rental assistance
- Emergency shelter referrals
- Help finding affordable apartments
- Housing authority, Section 8, CHAMP applications
- Landlord mediation and letters of support
- First-time homebuyer resources



## Access to Healthcare Services

- Health insurance application/renewal
- Help finding a healthcare provider
- Vaccine-related assistance
- Maternal health & doula/postpartum services
- Transportation to medical appointments



## Documentation & Translation Assistance

- Translation of forms/letters (DTA, Head Start, landlord notices)
- Caregiver authorization affidavits
- School registration forms
- Court paperwork
- Outreach/volunteer flyers



## Social Support & Community Engagement

- Emotional support, stress management, breathing exercises
- Volunteer opportunities
- Community events (e.g., Hudson Resilience Gathering)
- Support for newcomers and isolated individuals
- Autism/caregiver resources



## Financial Hardship Assistance

- LIHEAP/HEAP utility assistance
- Help applying for unemployment benefits
- Tax return support (referrals to VITA, Metro Community Development)



## Employment & Education Support

- Resume building and job search assistance
- English classes and adult education referrals
- Head Start/CHAPS registration
- Support for special needs/autism in schools
- School supplies/back-to-school events
- Summer swim classes



## Legal Assistance & Immigration Support

- Referrals to MetroWest Legal, GBLS, CLA, De Novo
- Family court/divorce support
- Consumer complaint referrals
- Citizenship assistance/events
- Passport/immigration support
- Court form assistance
- Immigration status portal navigation



## Household & Family Resources

- Furniture bank referrals
- Childcare Assistance
- Clothing donations/distribution
- Diapers & formula
- Toy donations/holiday drives



## Other

- All other services that are not listed in the above categories

## Connect with our CHW:

✉ [esilva@townofhudson.org](mailto:esilva@townofhudson.org)

☎ Call or Text (978) 875-5384  
\*Also available through  
WhatsApp







# Nursing Services



## REGIONAL VACCINE CLINIC - ASHLAND HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The Ashland Vaccine Clinic plays a vital role in protecting the health of residents across the region by providing accessible, community-based vaccination services. The regional public health team and the Ashland Health Department has been actively involved in supporting clinic operations, helping to administer vaccines to both adults and children. Through this collaboration, we've been able to increase vaccine access, improve health equity, and respond more effectively to local public health needs.



## SURVEILLANCE

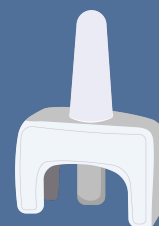
MAVEN, or the Massachusetts Virtual Epidemiologic Network, is an electronic disease surveillance system that enables real-time tracking and management of infectious disease cases. MAVEN strengthens Massachusetts' ability to respond rapidly to public health threats, monitor disease trends, and protect communities statewide. It played a critical role during the COVID-19 pandemic, serving as the primary platform for managing tens of thousands of cases across the Commonwealth. Currently, the Epidemiologist supports Public Health Nurses in our member municipalities by assisting with case investigations during periods of high case volume or when local staff are on leave or vacation. This shared resource ensures continuity and responsiveness in disease surveillance and case management.

## Looking ahead to FY'26

In FY'26, MWSPHS plans to launch a regional Maternal Home Visit Program to support mothers of newborns and infants. The program will provide consistent communication, connect families to vital resources, and promote maternal and child wellbeing. To guide this effort, MWSPHS is forming a working group of maternal health providers (including clinics, hospitals, and non-profits) to address barriers facing new mothers and their families in MetroWest.



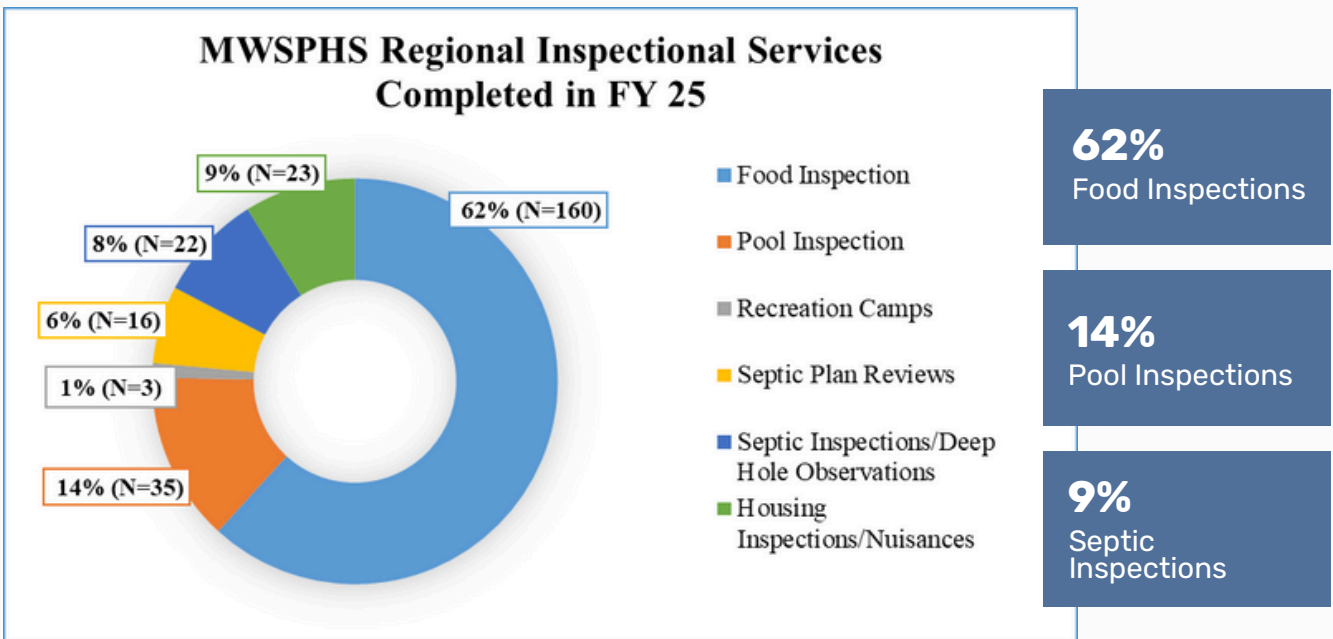
In FY'26, MWSPHS will begin offering Rescue Breathing and Narcan (Naloxone) trainings in member communities, building on Train-the-Trainer certifications completed in FY'25. These sessions will equip residents with life-saving skills to respond to opioid overdoses and reduce harm across the region. To ensure accessibility, all training materials will be available in English, Spanish and Portuguese.



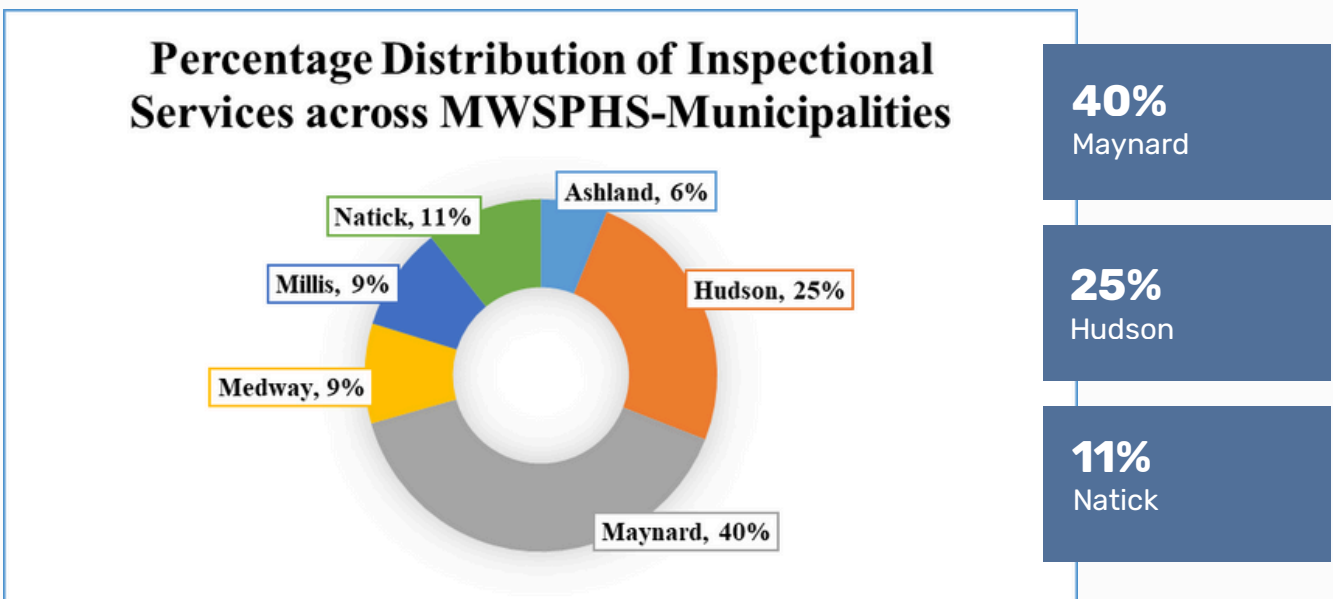
# Environmental Inspectional Services



In FY'25, the Regional Health Inspector provided essential inspectional services throughout the MetroWest Shared Public Health Services region to ensure compliance with public health standards and regulations. These services included food inspections, pool inspections, recreational camp inspections, septic plan reviews, septic system inspections and housing complaint investigations, resulting over **250 inspections** completed during the year.



In FY'25, the towns of Ashland, Hudson, Maynard, Medway, Millis and Natick were able to utilize Regional Health Inspector services.





# Health Communications

The Communications Specialist has developed a range of health and safety materials tailored for the region. These resources include flyers, social media graphics, and public messaging campaigns on topics such as disease prevention, emergency preparedness, and seasonal health tips. To ensure accessibility, all materials are created in Portuguese and Spanish - *the primary languages spoken in the communities we serve* - and can be translated into other languages upon request. By providing clear, consistent, and culturally responsive messaging, the team helps keep residents informed and engaged in protecting their health.

To improve internal communication and resource sharing, all communication materials and resources are centralized in a shared drive, making them more accessible to municipal staff across all member communities.



[Access Here](#)

### FIGHT THE BITE

Know the 5 D's of Mosquito Prevention

- DRAIN**  
Drain standing water from containers around your home weekly.
- DRESS**  
Wear long sleeves and long pants outdoors when possible. Cover up during periods of mosquito activity.
- DEET**  
Use an EPA approved mosquito repellent with DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535.
- DUSK & DAWN**  
Avoid being outdoors when mosquitoes are most active.

### NOROVIRUS CAN BE PREVENTED

- Washing your hands with soap especially after using the bathroom
- Handling and preparing food safely
- Cleaning and disinfecting surfaces with bleach-based cleaners
- Washing laundry thoroughly and handling soiled items carefully with gloves

Be cautious if you are sick and do NOT provide healthcare or prepare food for others while you are sick.

If you think you may have been exposed to or have Norovirus, call your doctor. For more information visit [cdc.gov/norovirus](#)

### ALERTA DE CARRAPATO

As três espécies de carrapatos mais comuns nesta área incluem o carrapato do veado (Deer Tick), o carrapato estrela solitário (Lone Star) e o carrapato do cachorro Americano (Dog Tick). Os carrapatos são ativos o ano todo, com maior atividade nos meses de abril a outubro. Eles podem transmitir doenças tanto para humanos quanto para animais de estimação. Siga estas dicas para evitar picadas e aproveitar sua temporada de verão.

**Na trilha**

- Coloque a camisa dentro das calças e as barras das calças dentro das meias ou sapatos para impedir que os carrapatos cheguem à sua pele
- Verifique com frequência se você e seus animais de estimação estão com carrapatos
- Evite caminhar em áreas com grama alta, arbustos e folhagem densa - caminhe no centro das trilhas

**Em casa:**

- Coloque as roupas na secadora por 15 minutos em temperatura alta para matar os carrapatos
- Fique de olho se você tiver carrapatos! Remova-os imediatamente se encontrar algum
- Fique atento aos sintomas após uma picada de carrapato

**Para sua próxima visita:**

- Use roupas de proteção, como calças compridas, camisas de manga comprida e meias e calças por dentro das meias
- Use permethrin em roupas e sapatos
- Use repelentes registrados pela EPA na pele exposta

### What does Extreme Heat do to the Body?

**Heat-Related Health Risks**

In hot weather, the body must work harder to maintain a normal internal temperature of 97°F to 99°F. Prolonged exposure to heat can lead to serious health issues, including sunburn, heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke. Certain groups are more vulnerable to these conditions, including older adults, young children, pregnant women, outdoor workers, and individuals with asthma or other respiratory conditions.

HEAT STROKE	VS.	HEAT EXHAUSTION
<b>Symptoms:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Body temperature above 104°F</li><li>Pounding headache</li><li>Lack of sweat</li><li>Hot, red skin</li><li>Loss of consciousness</li><li>Rapid heartbeat</li></ul>		<b>Symptoms:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Excessive sweating</li><li>Vision changes</li><li>Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea</li><li>Muscle or abdominal cramps</li><li>Dizziness</li><li>Extreme fatigue</li><li>Fainting</li></ul>
<b>What to do:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Move to shade or indoors</li><li>Cool with ice bath, cold water, or a fan and spray</li><li>Call 911 or seek emergency care immediately</li></ul>		<b>What to do:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Drink cool fluids (water or electrolyte drinks)</li><li>Apply cool, wet towels or ice packs to neck, forehead, and underarms</li><li>Move to a cooler area and rest</li><li>Remove extra clothing</li></ul>

**Understanding Sunburns**

Sunburns are caused by overexposure to harmful UV rays. They result in red, painful, and damaged skin after spending too much time in the sun. Severe cases may lead to swelling, blisters, fever, headaches, premature aging, and an increased risk of skin cancer.

**Sunburn Treatment**

- For mild cases, nonprescription 1% hydrocortisone ointment can help relieve redness and discomfort.
- If blisters appear, do not pop them. If a blister breaks on its own, gently clean the area and apply a dry, sterile dressing to prevent infection.
- Extensive or severe sunburns - especially those with widespread blistering, fever, chills, or signs of infection - should be evaluated by a doctor.

### Summer Sunscreen survival guide

3 SUNSCREEN MUST-HAVES

- Broad Spectrum**  
Choose a sunscreen that protects from both Ultraviolet A (UVA) and Ultraviolet B (UVB) rays.
- SPF 30 or Higher**  
SPF 30 blocks 97% of the sun's rays. Higher SPF's block slightly more, but no sunscreen will block 100% of rays.
- Water Resistant**  
Water resistant sunscreen will last up to 40 minutes.

\* For every 2 hours of sun exposure, use 1 ounce of sunscreen.

**TYPES OF SUNSCREEN**

- Creams are best for dry skin and the face.
- Gels and foams are good for areas with more hair and for people who want a quick-drying option.
- Sunscreen sticks are good for around the eyes and lips.
- Spray/Aerosol is quick and effective for lower extremities such as legs, but should not be used on the face.
- Titanium dioxide or zinc oxide based sunscreens are best for sensitive skin.

**HELP FROM YOUR CLOSET**

- Choose synthetic fabrics such as polyester or nylon over cotton.
- Use a wide-brimmed hat that will also cover your face and ears.
- Avoid baseball caps or visors as they do not protect the back of your neck and ears.

### PRESCRIPTION DRUG USE

**PROPER DISPOSAL TIPS**

Safely throwing away unused medications will keep them out of the hands of people who should not take them. Unwanted medications have traditionally been disposed of by flushing them down the toilet or pouring them down a drain. While this removes them from your house quickly, it is not safe or environmentally friendly to do so.

3 Easy steps to properly dispose of unwanted medications:

- Keep medications in their original containers. Leave drug names visible to help identify the contents if they are accidentally swallowed. Cross out other personal information on labels to make it unreadable.
- Make the medicines as difficult to consume as possible.
  - For pills: add some water or soda to dissolve them
  - For liquids: add inedible material like cat litter, coffee grounds or dirt
- Check local prescription dropbox locations. Contact your local Police department to ask if they have a drop off box or upcoming "Prescription Drug Take Back" day.

For more information visit [cdc.gov](#)

### Virus del Papiloma Humano (VPH)

El VPH se propaga a través del contacto íntimo de piel con piel. Puede contraer el VPH al tener relaciones sexuales vaginales, anales u orales con alguien quien tiene el virus.

Las infecciones por VPH pueden causar cáncer en:

- Hombres: El VPH puede causar cáncer de: Cuello uterino, vagina y cuello en mujeres; Pene en los hombres
- Mujeres: Parte posterior de la garganta (incluida la base de la lengua y las amígdalas) tanto en mujeres como en hombres

Si es sexualmente activo, puede contraer el VPH, incluso si ha tenido relaciones sexuales con una sola persona.

Los síntomas pueden desarrollarse años después de tener relaciones sexuales con alguien que tiene la infección. Esto hace que sea difícil saber cuándo lo obtuviste por primera vez.

Cada año en los Estados Unidos, el VPH causa alrededor de **36,000** casos de cáncer.

El VPH es el infecciones de transmisión sexual (ITS) **mas común** en los Estados Unidos. En 2018, hubo alrededor de 43 millones de infecciones por VPH, muchas entre personas en la adolescencia tardía y principios de los 20 años.

**43 MILLON**

## Social Media

The Communications Specialist has also developed a variety of materials specifically designed for social media outreach. In FY'25, we focused on increasing our presence on Facebook and Instagram to better engage with residents across the region. Much of the content created is intended for both in-person distribution and online sharing, allowing for broader and more flexible access to important public health information.



SCAN ME



# Epidemiology & Data Analysis Services



In FY'25, the Regional Epidemiologist provided comprehensive epidemiological and analytical support to the nine municipalities of the MWSPHS region, including disease surveillance, data analysis, reporting, and community engagement to strengthen local public health capacity. By integrating data-driven insights with municipal priorities, health departments had timely, accurate information to guide decision-making, evaluate programs, and protect the health of their communities.



- **Disease Surveillance & Monitoring:** Supported MAVEN coverage for multiple municipalities by completing case investigations, following up with providers, and ensuring timely responses. Developed a regional SOP to streamline workflows, and compiled data to keep all informed about trends and emerging health concerns.



- **Data Analysis & Reporting:** Created epidemiological reports, GIS maps, and dashboards on key public health issues, including substance use, Hepatitis C, HIV, tick-borne diseases, and youth tobacco use. These reports informed local Health Departments and guided evidence-based prevention and policy decisions.



- **Regional Immunization Support:** Presented an overview of regional immunization rates using MIIS, Donohue Institute, and school survey data to track local vaccination coverage, address vaccination gaps, and provide support with planning.



- **Community Health Surveys & Engagement:** Designed and analyzed community-level surveys for town meetings, youth substance use prevention programs, and participated in focus groups and interviews for opioid abatement funds. Presented results in accessible formats for both technical and non-technical audiences.



- **Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNAs):** Provided research and analytical support for the development of Maynard's CHNA, ensuring that local data and resident feedback were incorporated into priority-setting and action planning.



- **Grant & Research Support:** Provided epidemiological data, research findings and analysis to strengthen grant applications focused on maternal and child health, housing and substance use, strengthening proposals with clear, evidence-based support.



- **Program Evaluation:** Conducted evaluations of public health programs and services by developing data summaries and outcome measures. These evaluations were used to assess program effectiveness, identify gaps, and to guide improvements in planning and service delivery.

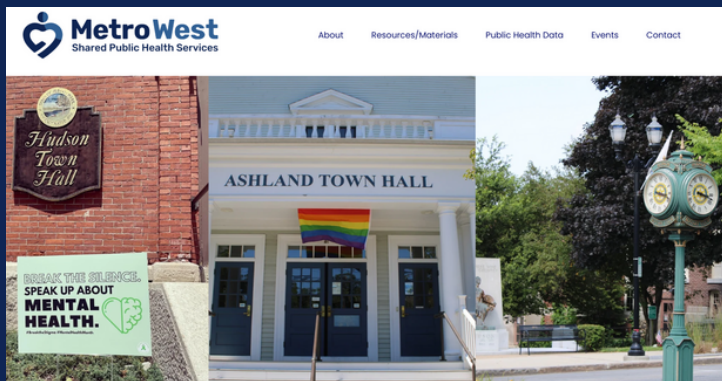


- **Collaborative Partnerships:** Worked with Health Directors, Public Health Nurses and MDPH Epidemiologists to strengthen cross-municipal collaboration. Supported disease surveillance, reporting, and community health initiatives through coordinated efforts between municipalities and the state.



# Regional Website

[www.MWSPHS.org](http://www.MWSPHS.org)



The regional website is a vital tool for sharing public health information, promoting community events, and connecting residents with essential resources and services across all member municipalities.

## FY'26 Website Updates

We will be expanding the regional website to include the Maternal Health Initiative, featuring its own dedicated page with maternal health data, resources, and information to better support families across the region.

## Website Highlights & Impact

### 01.

Through the regional website, residents from all member municipalities have access to a wide range of public health information and resources. This includes many of the materials shared by local health departments, such as flyers, guides, and educational content. Visitors to the site can easily download printable PDFs on various health topics, making important information more accessible to the communities we serve.

### 02.

From the regional website, both residents and municipal staff can access a variety of regional and community-level data. Currently, the site features demographic data, community health profiles, infectious disease statistics, and chronic disease information. This centralized access to data supports informed decision-making, program planning, and a deeper understanding of health trends across the region.

### 03.

Our regional website also serves as a centralized location to advertise and promote public health events across our member communities. It provides residents with up-to-date information on clinics, educational sessions, and other local initiatives. In addition, residents can easily contact our team through the website, making it a convenient hub for both information-sharing and community engagement.



# Working Groups



## INSPECTORS' GROUP

In FY'25, we launched the Inspectors' Group, which served multiple purposes, including bringing together all inspectors in the region to discuss challenges related to housing inspections. This group was facilitated by a Subject Matter Expert who provided monthly support, answering questions and troubleshooting issues. The expert also led discussions on specific topics such as hoarding, overgrowth, rental inspections, and more. The group was very well received and is planned to continue in FY'26.



## EPIDEMIOLOGY WORKING GROUP

The Massachusetts Epidemiology Collaborative (MEC) began in 2022 as a small peer group within MWSPHS, and has since grown into a statewide network of over 50 members serving 200+ municipalities. MEC supports Epidemiologists through resource sharing, data standardization, mentorship, and collaboration. Now formally included in the Massachusetts FY'26 Shared Services Workplan, MEC is recognized for strengthening epidemiology capacity and promoting data-driven public health across the Commonwealth.



## CLIMATE HAZARD ROUNDTABLES

MWSPHS and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) collaborated to host Climate Hazard Roundtables in FY'25, a regional initiative designed to strengthen responses to climate hazards. The sessions focused on addressing vulnerabilities related to extreme heat identified in the 2023 CAPA Solutions heat mapping, and provided actionable solutions for communities to incorporate into their emergency management plans. The roundtables also created opportunities to build climate resilience, protect vulnerable populations, and foster collaboration among experts and peers to share strategies and enhance emergency response efforts.

## Looking ahead to FY'26

At the end of FY'25, the Shared Services Coordinator surveyed Inspectors across the region to gauge their needs and the types of support they would find helpful. Many expressed interest in creating additional support groups similar to the housing-focused Inspectors' Group, specifically focused on food safety and septic system inspections. We are currently seeking Subject Matter Experts to lead these new groups and provide ongoing guidance.

In addition, we are working on creating a Nurses' Group for the region. This group will provide a valuable opportunity to share resources, exchange ideas, and strengthen relationships among nursing staff. It will bring all Regional Public Health Nurses together regularly and involve the Regional Nurse Consultant to offer additional resources and support. One of the group's first tasks will be to finalize the MAVEN Disease Investigation SOP, which has been developed by the MWSPHS Regional Epidemiologist.







# Maternal Health Initiative

## COMMUNITY BABY SHOWER

The Community Baby Shower is a key component of the *Healthy Parent, Happy Baby* initiative. The event was held in Hudson on June 10, 2025 and featured a variety of regional vendors, resources, and raffle prizes for attendees. One of the highlights of the event was the “Baby Boutique” where participants had the opportunity to “shop” for donated baby items, generously contributed by members of the community. The event provided both resources and a welcoming space for new and expecting parents across the region.



## BIRTHING CLASSES

In FY'25, we hosted three free birthing classes in Spanish, English, and Portuguese as part of the *Healthy Parent, Happy Baby* initiative. This component was delivered in collaboration with Accompany Doula, whose trained Doulas facilitated the sessions. The classes were held in Milford, Hudson, and Framingham, providing accessible, culturally responsive childbirth education to families across the region.



## Looking ahead to FY'26

As we enter FY'26, we will focus on organizing another round of free birthing classes in Spanish, Portuguese, and English. These classes will be held in Natick, Framingham, and Milford, continuing our commitment to accessible, multilingual prenatal education. Additionally, we are planning to host our second Community Baby Shower in Framingham in the Fall, offering resources, support, and community connection for new and expectant families.







# Community Outreach

During FY'25, the MWSPHS team prioritized community outreach, bringing public health directly to where people live, work, and gather. We tabled at a wide variety of events, from school-based programs to overdose prevention events and local Farmers Markets. At each event, we brought interactive and engaging materials designed to spark curiosity and start conversations about public health, disease prevention, and overall wellbeing. By offering fun giveaways, educational resources, and hands-on activities, we were able to connect with residents of all ages, raise awareness about important health topics, and strengthen our relationship with the communities we serve.

We participated in...

- Hudson Public Schools' Health & Wellness Fair
- Art Saves Ashland
- MetroWest *You Can.* Harm Reduction Event
- Remote Area Medical (RAM) Clinic
- Brooke High School Career Day
- Hudson Farmers Market
- Healthy Habits at Peter's Grove Living Center
- Hudson RECfest
- Narcan Training at library with Marlborough Hospital
- Careers in Governmental Public Health at Boston University

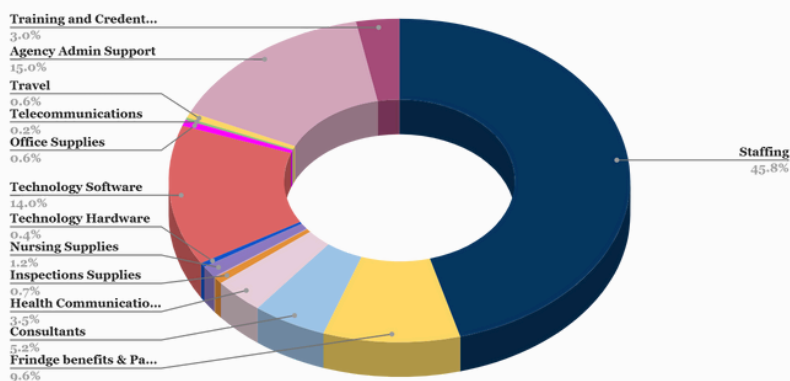




# Budget & Spending

## FY'25 Budget Breakdown: PHE - \$550,683

### PHE Budget Distribution for FY25



### 45% Staffing

These funds support key regional positions, including the Shared Services Coordinator, Epidemiologist, LPN and Health Inspector.

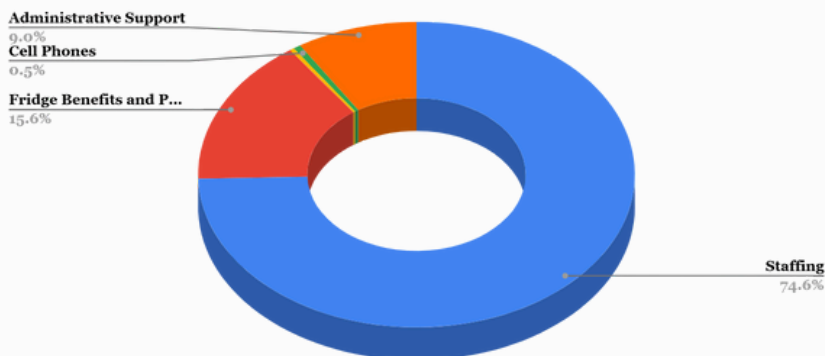
### 14% Technology Software

These funds support systems used by all participating municipalities, such as Relevant. Additionally, this allocation covered data platforms including ArcGIS, MySidewalk, MyJunna, and costs related to regional website maintenance and fees.

## FY'25 Budget Breakdown: CTCI - \$150,000

The Contact Tracing and Case Investigation (CTCI) grant funds support additional regional staffing positions, including an Epidemiologist, Community Health Worker, and Communications Specialist. These three roles provide vital support across all nine municipalities within the Shared Services Arrangement (SSA).

### CTCI Budget Distribution for FY25



## \$30,000

### MetroWest Health Foundation Funds

In January 2025, MWSPHS was awarded \$30,000 by the MetroWest Health Foundation to support the Maternal Health Initiative: *Healthy Parent, Happy Baby*. This grant funds programming for all expecting and new parents across the region, including free birthing classes, community baby showers, and a postpartum support group. The grant runs through December 2025, and MWSPHS plans to reapply for continued funding in November 2025.







# FY'26 Workplan

For the FY'26 Workplan, regional staff will focus on a set of objectives that include both required tasks from MDPH's Office of Local and Regional Health (OLRH) and optional priorities selected by the region. In May 2025, MWSPHS conducted a survey of Health Directors to gather input on the proposed objectives within the categories of Sustainability, Performance Standards, and Elective Objectives. Based on the survey responses and regional priorities, a final set of objectives was agreed upon. These objectives will guide the regional work throughout FY'26, ensuring alignment with state requirements while also addressing locally identified needs.

## PHE-Required Objectives:

- Grant Administration
- Governance
- Foundational Public Health Services Review
- SAPHE 2.0
- METRIK

## Performance Standards:

- **Enhance staff capacity** to effectively meet mandated inspectional requirements and enforce regulations, in alignment with the Performance Standards for Local Public Health
- **Identify areas for improvement** in inspection processes and provide targeted training to enhance the effectiveness and consistency of inspections across all participating municipalities
- **Ensure adherence to infectious disease case investigation** requirements, while enhancing staff training, capacity and quality

## Sustainability Objectives:

- **Communication & Engagement:** Increase community awareness of MWSPHS and its benefits to residents
- **Improved Sharing of Resources:** Develop a framework to optimize operational efficiency and effectiveness
- **Diversification of Funding:** Ensure long-term impact by pursuing additional grants

## Elective Objectives:

- **Maternal, Child and Family Health:** Support caregivers and newborns
- **Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention:** Harm Reduction Prevention
- **Assessment & Surveillance:** Use data to inform public health programming to maximize health outcomes

## Racial Equity themes we will be exploring in FY'26:

### Linguistic Justice

- Translate signage, health education materials, and other vital documents into languages appropriate for the region
  - Examples: Cyanobacteria warning placards, PSA billboards

### Environmental Justice

- Educate landlords/property owners in Environmental Justice (EJ) areas about housing codes and their responsibilities
- Encourage pre-rental inspections of vacant units by a Health Inspector
- Educate tenants on their rights

### Community Engagement

- Develop partnerships with landlords/property owners to improve Housing Code compliance

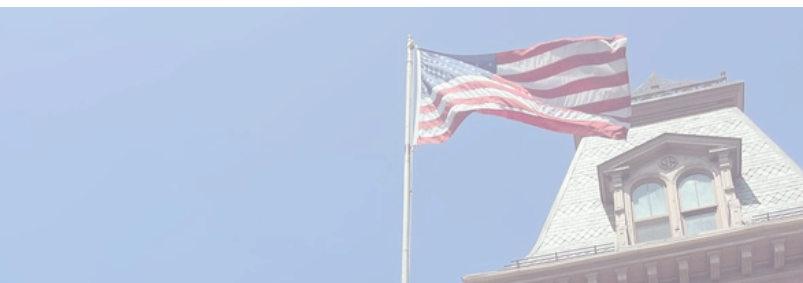
### CLAS Standards

- Training on the 15 federal CLAS (Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services) Standards
- Learn and apply the 6 CLAS-related Areas for Action



**FY'2026**






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