

An Overview of the Combined Health District of Montgomery County

The Combined Health District works to safeguard the public health of Montgomery County. Our mission is to “preserve, promote and protect the public’s health and well-being by preventing disease, protecting the environment and providing health care. Services shall be of high quality and available and accessible to all citizens.” The Health District reaches all people regardless of race, age, or income level and is not a welfare agency, but does work toward helping those in need.

Working with area hospitals, we provide neighborhood health centers. Some services our health centers offer include prenatal care, immunizations for children, education and testing for Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) and HIV/AIDS. We also work with individuals who need help treating alcohol and drug abuse problems. We have special programs for children with asthma, children who are overweight, and those suffering from ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder). With physician’s orders, we have programs that provide nursing care to those who are homebound. Our Environmental Health Division inspects restaurants, grocery stores and other public facilities. We protect ground water and drinking water supplies, and enforce air pollution controls. Problems caused by insects, rodents and trash are another area of concern that the Health District addresses.

We work toward rapid bio-terrorism response and planning for emergency preparedness for an eight county region, working closely with area hospitals, other local health departments, police, fire and emergency medical technicians.

We speak in local schools and before other public or private agencies to help educate people about many health issues. We also operate support groups for those with Cancer, Lupus, Diabetes, and many other health issues.

Below is a list of some of the services the Health District offers:

- Childhood immunization shots and other immunizations such as flu shots
- Home care services for the elderly, disabled and terminally ill
- Maintenance and provision of birth and death records
- Inspections of grocery stores and restaurants
- Inspections of public places such as swimming pools, hospitals, trailer parks and other public areas
- Reviewing of plans for private drinking water wells and private septic tanks
- Protection of public drinking water
- Trash, garbage, and other nuisance problem investigations
- Prevention and treatment programs for substance abusers
- Investigation and education for indoor air problems
- Enforcement of air pollution control laws
- Blood-lead testing
- Nutrition, stress reduction, and fitness programs

This is only a small part of what we do. Our services are far ranging and comprehensive. Call 225-4403 and we will be delighted to send you more information about our services. Or, check out our website at www.chdmc.org.

Health District Nurses Make A Difference

Aunt Nellie MacGregor (97) and her niece, Nan Preuss (85) have lived in the Northridge area of Montgomery County for most of their lives. Both grew up as children in northern Scotland near Aberdeen, and still speak with a pronounced Scottish accent.

Nellie came to the United States at age 16 in 1925 and soon married a young Scot named Jim MacGregor as the Great Depression was just getting under way. Nan arrived from Scotland in 1968 at age 47. Although she was planning to move to South Africa or Australia, Aunt Nellie convinced her to try the States instead.

About 4 year ago Nellie, at age 93, fell on the back porch and broke her hip. Nurses and aides from the Combined Health District began to help Nellie with her injuries and some hypertension problems. Nan also moved in with her aunt to help around the house.

Then Nan began to have her own health problems. A combination of diabetes, open heart surgery, bowel cancer and two corneal transplants in her left eye provided many occasions when the Health District nursing services were needed. Nan discounts her health problems and stresses, "I'm doing find now and don't really have any complaints." Registered nurse Mary Jane Wells has helped in many ways over the years, and now routinely stops by to help draw up Nan's syringes, since her eyesight in her left eye has deteriorated because of the previous surgeries.

The love and caring between the Health District nurses and the patients goes both ways. Nan is a prolific knitter and has made over 30 pairs of knitted booties for other home care patients which the nurses deliver as they make their rounds.

Nan summed it up when she said her aunt and she felt the same way. In a strong Scottish brogue she looked at Health District nurse Mary Jane Wells and explained, "They've been God's blessing to us."



Health District nurse Mary Jane Wells helps draw up syringes for Nan Preuss who now suffers from vision problems.



Nellie MacGregor (age 97) and Nan Preuss (age 85) have received home care services from the Combined Health District for a number of medical problems.