

The DPH Bulletin

From the Delaware Division of Public Health

May 2024



The Delaware Healthy Mother and Infant Consortium presented the 2024 Kitty Esterly, MD Health Equity Champion Awards on April 17. From left to right: Dr. Ronald Tello, Estefania Cuellar, and Vanessa Spence accepted The Hispanic American Association of Delaware's Organization award. Erica Allen, far right, received the Individual award. Photo by Chelsea Manwiller, DPH

2024 Health Champion Awards presented

The 2024 Kitty Esterly, MD Health Equity Champion Awards were presented at the [Delaware Healthy Mother and Infant Consortium's](#) (DHMIC) annual summit on April 17. Dr. Esterly, a pediatrician who specialized in neonatal care, was a visionary who worked to improve health equity.

Erica Allen of Smyrna, Del. was honored for seeking to level the playing field for Black birthing families. Allen is the founder of the Do Care Doula Foundation and the Central Delaware Community Doula and Perinatal Educator Program. She provides free doula training and an avenue for Black women to find a meaningful career in their local community. Allen's doulas provide free pregnancy, birth, and postpartum care to their clients – thanks to grants, fundraising, and other money-generating efforts that allow these doulas to get paid while providing free services.

The Hispanic American Association of Delaware (HAAD) was honored for its commitment to promoting health equity beyond providing basic services. HAAD actively addresses the underlying social, economic, and environmental factors that contribute to health disparities. Through tailored programs, collaborative partnerships, data-driven approaches, and community engagement, HAAD demonstrates their dedication to eliminating disparities and creating a more equitable health care system for the Hispanic community in Delaware.

Public invited to Stop the Bleed® Training on May 23 at Legislative Hall

May is National Trauma Awareness Month. Governor John Carney and Lieutenant Governor Bethany Hall-Long have proclaimed the week of May 19-25, 2024 as Emergency Medical Services Week and Stop the Bleed Day on May 23, 2024.

The [Delaware Trauma System of Care](#) includes the pre-hospital care of injured patients, the immediate care and transport to an appropriate trauma center, and post-acute care such as patient rehabilitation.

Injury prevention reduces risk and trauma. The number one cause of preventable death after an injury is uncontrolled bleeding. A person with a severe bleeding injury can bleed to death in less than five minutes unless someone controls the bleeding until first responders arrive. This is why 12 years ago, the American College of Surgeons Committee on Trauma developed the Stop the Bleed® national training program so the public can help save a life when an injured person is bleeding severely.

[Delaware Trauma System of Care members](#) invite the public to their May 23 Stop the Bleed® Day



training at Legislative Hall, located at 411 Legislative Avenue in Dover, Del. From 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., on the second floor, Trauma System of Care members will train legislators and the public

on tourniquet use and provide tourniquets to those who are trained. There is a limited number of tourniquets. The May 23 training is free and takes less than 15 minutes. No registration is required.

The Division of Public Health's Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) offers Stop the Bleed® training. The training includes a one-hour interactive online course at [Training | Stop the Bleed®](#). The online course is followed by in-person hands-on practice of applying pressure, wound packing, and tourniquet use. To receive this training, call OEMS at 302-223-2700 and ask for the Stop the Bleed® program. For more information, visit [StoptheBleed.org](#).



DELAWARE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
Division of Public Health

Elected officials observe Black Maternal Health Awareness Week with action

At the April 17 Delaware Healthy Mother and Infant Consortium Summit, Representative Melissa Minor-Brown (RD-15) and Senator Marie Pinkney (SD-13) presented House Concurrent Resolution 107, which they sponsored. The resolution recognized Black Maternal Health Awareness Week (BMHAW), which was celebrated April 11-17, 2024.

The resolution recognizes the work of the DHMIC, the Delaware Perinatal Quality Collaborative, and other stakeholders who promote promising efforts to reduce maternal and infant mortality, morbidity, and disparities. It also calls for improving public and professional awareness of maternal health outcomes, women's experiences at childbirth, and critical postpartum care, especially for women of color.

During BMHAW, Congresswoman Lisa Blunt Rochester invited DHMIC Vice Chair Tiffany Chalk and Mona Liza Hamlin to a roundtable discussion about decreasing maternal mortality rates for people of color. Chalk chairs the Well Woman/Black Maternal Health (WW/BMH) Committee and Hamlin is the WW/BMH Co-Chair. An article about the meeting can be found [here](#).



Mawuna Gardesey of the Division of Public Health was recognized at the 2024 Delaware Healthy Mother and Infant Consortium Summit for his 27 years of state service. Photo by Alyssa Imprescia, DPH.

Gardesey receives gubernatorial tribute

Mawuna Gardesey of the Division of Public Health was honored for his 27 years of State service with a tribute signed by Governor John Carney and Lieutenant Governor Bethany Hall-Long. It was presented at the April 17 Delaware Healthy Mother and Infant Consortium (DHMIC) Summit in Wilmington. Gardesey led the planning of 18 Annual DHMIC Summits.

The Public Health Administrator works for the Center for Family Health Research & Epidemiology within the Family Health Systems Section. He began his service as the State Minority Health Director. His work to reduce infant mortality began when the Infant Mortality Task Force convened in 2004. In 2007, Gardesey was hired as the Center's Bureau Chief and led a team to support the Task Force and the establishment of the DHMIC and its governance structure. He also led the development of the Healthy Women Healthy Babies Program, the Medical Legal Partnership Program, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System. Delaware's infant mortality rate decreased from 9.3 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2004 to 5.9 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2021, a 37% decrease.

"Mr. Gardesey has exemplified discerning character, empathy, and commitment to promoting the health and well-being of all Delawareans, especially women and children," the tribute reads. The dignitaries expressed gratitude for his leadership in the areas of public health, health equity, and maternal and child health, and best wishes for continued success."

RECENTLY PUBLISHED



The DPH Health Systems Protection Section published the [Drinking Water State Revolving Fund State Fiscal Year 2022 Annual Report](#) in November 2023.

The Delaware Journal of Public Health published a link to the [Impact of Diabetes in Delaware 2023](#) report and the following two articles in its Chronic Disease in 2024: Diagnosis, Treatment, Prevention issue at <https://djph.org/>:

1. [Lieutenant Governor's Challenge: Motivating and Honoring Delawareans to Improve Their Health and Well-Being](#)
2. [Advancing Healthy Lifestyles: A Multicomponent Initiative to Reduce the Burden of Obesity In Delaware](#)

Gun violence: a public health crisis

The [American Public Health Association](#) calls gun violence a public health crisis and a leading cause of premature death. Gun Violence Awareness Day is June 7, 2024 and [#wearorange weekend](#) honors survivors and those working to end gun violence.

In 2021, there were 152 deaths due to firearms among Delaware residents only, according to the Division of Public Health's Delaware Health Statistics Center (DHSC).



[Delaware state law provides for emergency Lethal Violence Protective Orders \(LVPO\) and non-emergency LVPOs](#) to temporarily prohibit the ownership, possession, control, purchase, access or receipt of a firearm or ammunition by someone who poses physical danger to self or others. [The Johns Hopkins School of Public Health](#) says such laws are evidence-informed gun violence prevention policy.

[10 Del. Code c. 77 § 7703](#) permits Emergency LVPOs to be petitioned by law enforcement only, with a Justice of the Peace Court hearing within 24 hours of its filing. The law does not grant the individual to be heard or to be advised that law enforcement is seeking the LVPO. For a Non-Emergency LVPO, [10 Del. Code c. 77 § 7704](#) grants law enforcement and family members the right to file an affidavit or verified petition in Superior Court, where the individual has the right to be heard. In both types of LVPOs, the court can prohibit the individual from residing with another person who owns, possesses, or controls firearms or ammunition.

For national data, visit the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#). Visit the National Extreme Risk Protection Order Resource Center at [www.erpo.org](#) for more information about LVPOs.

DHSC provided the following firearm mortality data:

- Among Delaware residents only, assault (homicide) accounted for 51% of the 2021 firearm deaths (78) and intentional self-harm (suicide) accounted for 49% (74).
- In 2021 among Delaware residents only, 87% of the non-Hispanic Black male firearm deaths were due to homicide, compared to 7% of the non-Hispanic White firearm deaths of both sexes from homicide.
- Of the 42 firearm deaths within the 15-24 age group (28%) that occurred in 2021 among Delaware residents only, 18% occurred among non-Hispanic Black males.

Gun violence is preventable with awareness, responsible ownership

Awareness, action, and responsible gun ownership reduce firearm injury, disability, and death.

In 2020, the total cost of firearm related injuries and deaths in the U.S. was \$493.2 billion, a 16% increase since 2019, according to the [American Journal of Preventive Medicine](#).

Anyone with access to firearms should know how to use them safely. Gun owners can take a variety of gun safety training courses, including firearm basics, concealed carry, and specialized skills training.

Hunters can seek hunter education and training centers in each county. The Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife manages two shooting ranges:



[Ommelanden Hunter Education and Training Center](#), located at 1205 River Road in New Castle, Del.; and [Owens Station Shooting Sports and Hunter Education Center](#), located at 12613 Hunters Cove Road in Greenwood, Del.

Gun safety instructors offer this advice:

- Never point the gun at an unintended target.
- Be sure of the target and what is beyond it.
- Immediately unload firearms when not in use. Use gun locks.
- When not in use, store firearms in a safe place such as a locked metal gun safe. Do not store firearms and ammunition together.
- Prevent children and unauthorized adults from accessing firearms and ammunition.
- Regularly clean firearms and have them serviced regularly.
- Before or while shooting, never use legal or illegal substances or medications.
- Wear ear and eye protection when shooting.

For more information about comprehensive gun safety in Delaware, visit the Office of Governor John Carney at [de.gov/gunsafety](#) or [#gunsafetyDE](#).