
HEALTH DEPARTMENT
NEWS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New Deputy Health Officer Named in Kent County

GRAND RAPIDS – After nearly two decades of working in health, Teresa Branson has helped thousands of people through a variety of programs. The Kent County Health Department is pleased to announce she has been named Deputy Administrative Health Officer, effective Monday, February 24, 2014.

“Teresa is an excellent ambassador for health in Kent County,” said Adam London, Administrative Health Officer of Kent County. “Her ability to create collaborations and partnerships with other organizations is phenomenal. I am confident that she will do an extraordinary job for Kent County in her new role.”

Branson has led the Health Education and Promotion section of the Health Department since 2007, and boasts a track record of achieving successful outcomes. Accomplishments under her leadership include:

- Increased Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program client caseload from 1,158 to 2,662 since 2007.
- Increased access to dental care for 115+ uninsured women through the Brush Up For Baby Program.
- Increased access to case management/support services for 400 high-risk Inter-conception Care (IC) Program clients.
- Demonstrated improved birth outcomes for 58 IC clients evidenced by reduced pre-term births/low birth-weight infants, increased gestational age and reduced NICU admissions.

In the past two years, Ms. Branson has co-facilitated fifteen Health Equity and Social Justice Dialogue Workshops, reaching over 400 KCHD employees and community partners; She and her team developed Community Health Equity Guidelines, a Kent County Community Plan of Action for Achieving Health Equity, Framing the Relationship between Race and Health toolkit, and a video entitled: Framing Social Determinants of Health in Kent County. “I look forward to new challenges as Deputy Health Officer,” said Branson. “We have a very committed staff who serve, protect and promote a healthy community every day.”

Ms. Branson also launched two multi-media campaigns in the past two years: RethinkDrinks – An effort to reduce adult heavy drinking in Kent County, and a marketing campaign for the Women’s Health Network – Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program. “Teresa is an outstanding supervisor, whose visionary leadership has led staff at the Kent County Health Department to better understand health disparities, and work to achieve social justice,” said London. “We are fortunate to have her in such a prominent leadership role.”

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KCHD has been in the business of providing health services to Kent County since 1931. The Health Department is home to nearly 260 employees including public health nurses, sanitarians, health educators, technicians, public health administrators, and specialized staff at the Kent County Animal Shelter. The Health Department operates one main clinic and four satellite clinics located in Wyoming, Kentwood, Rockford, and Grand Rapids. To learn more about KCHD services, visit www.accesskent.com/health.