

# ACADEMIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

*Bridging Knowledge | Improving Health*

## 2014-2015 Annual Report



## CONTENTS

3 LETTER FROM THE AHD COORDINATOR

4 WHO WE ARE

5 VISION AND MISSION

6 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

9 WHAT WE DO

10 STUDENT EDUCATION AND PRACTICE-FOCUSED TEACHING

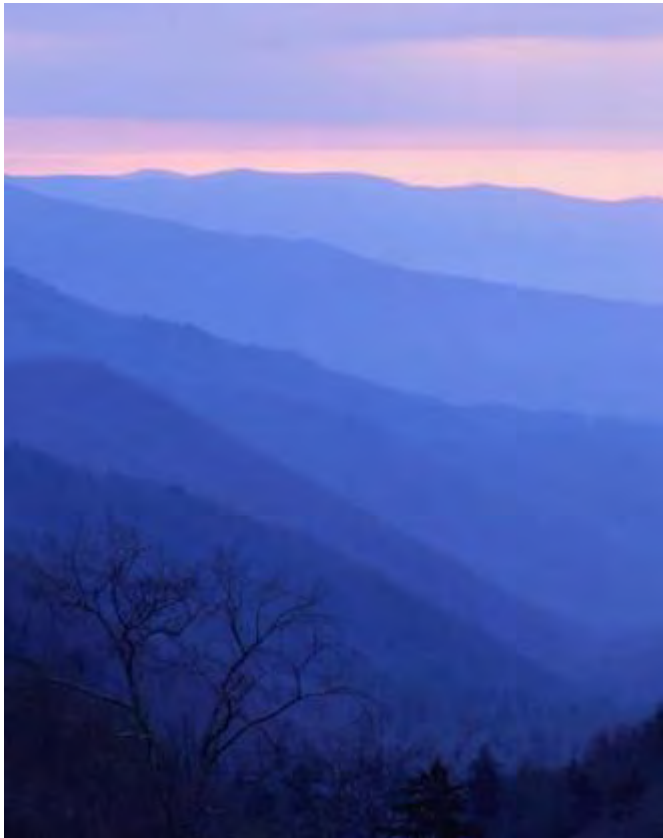
12 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

13 PRACTICE-BASED RESEARCH

14 LOGIC MODEL

15 FUNDING

16 CONTACT INFORMATION





Greetings!

Bridging knowledge, improving health--this is our Academic Health Department's (AHD) vision.

Our AHD, a partnership between the Knox County Health Department and the University of Tennessee, Department of Public Health, was formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 2011 after more than 40 years of informal partnering. Formalizing our partnership allows us to be more strategic about how and why we collaborate; increases our ability to share resources; and allows us to get to know each other's cultures and priorities. Our AHD is built on mutual respect and an understanding that knowledge and expertise flow both ways between the health department and university.

AHD priorities stem from the intersection of each organization's vision, mission, strategic plan, and accreditation requirements. Our ultimate aim is to improve the public's health.

A growing number of AHDs are cropping up across the U.S., though our structure of having a full-time, shared staff position to coordinate the AHD is rare, and we believe—a key to having a successful, comprehensive, and fully operational partnership. Support from leaders at both organizations has also been vital to our success. We have gradually built a culture of collaboration across all levels of each organization. We are fortunate to be located only two miles apart, and our close proximity greatly facilitates collaboration. We have employees at both organizations who are “pracademics,” meaning they have worked in public health practice and academia. These individuals serve as boundary spanners who understand the varying needs and demands of public health practice and academia.

In 2013 we developed a logic model to define metrics for success. Since then, we have formally evaluated the partnership to assure activities are aligned with our top three shared priorities: 1) student preparation; 2) workforce development; and 3) practice-based research to support evidence-based decision making in public health programs and services. We conduct this evaluation on an annual basis.

Every year we learn new things about each other and ourselves. Resource sharing and collaboration allow us to more efficiently and effectively achieve our respective missions as well as our shared vision of bridging knowledge, improving health.

This annual report describes our AHD priorities, structure, and recent accomplishments.

I hope you enjoy the report. Feel free to provide feedback or ask questions.

Sincerely,

*Julie Grubaugh*

**Julie Grubaugh, MPH, CHES**

Academic Health Department Coordinator

Knox County Health Department & The University of Tennessee, Department of Public Health

Knoxville, Tennessee

## WHO WE ARE



The Academic Health Department (AHD) is the public health equivalent to a teaching hospital, allowing students to apply public health academic preparation to the practice-setting, support workforce development, and facilitate practice-based research. The AHD partnership between Knox County Health Department (KCHD) and the University of Tennessee Department of Public Health (UT/DPH) in Knoxville, Tennessee formalized by an [MOU](#) in 2011, establishing [Tennessee's first Academic Health Department \(AHD\)](#).



Knox County Health Department



The University of Tennessee at Knoxville

We are located only 2 miles apart, which makes it easy to collaborate.

As members of the [AHD Learning Community](#), a national community that supports the development, maintenance, and expansion of AHD partnerships, we regularly conduct and share research, participate in webinars, respond to inquiries from newly forming AHDs, and serve as a mentor in the AHD Mentorship Program.

## ORGANIZATIONAL VISIONS AND MISSIONS

Congruency between organizational visions and missions is a prerequisite to a successful partnership. The health department promotes health through “innovative public health practices,” which includes contributions from university faculty, students, and graduates, increasing our public health system’s capacity and expertise. **Thus, the AHD vision is “bridging knowledge, improving health.”**

Key connections are highlighted below.



### VISION

**Every Person, a Healthy Person**

### MISSION

To encourage, promote and assure the development of an **active, healthy community through innovative public health practices**



### VISION

The Department of Public Health will be nationally recognized for academic excellence, the **expertise and talents of its faculty**, and its dedication to preparing students for practical and academic careers in public health. Our **alumni and students will improve the health of communities through outreach, support and research**, reducing health disparities and positively influencing health policy and resource development.

### MISSION

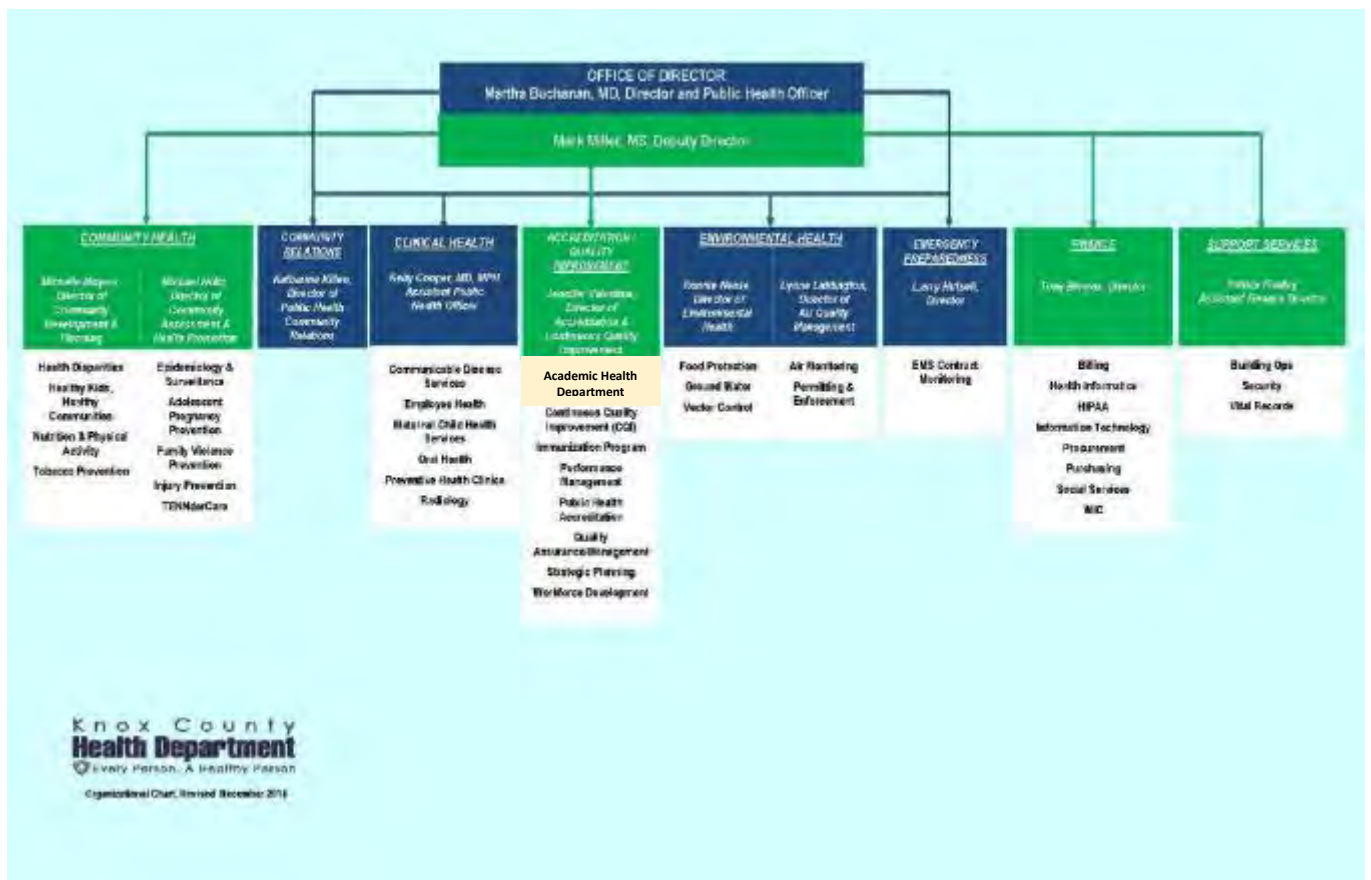
The University of Tennessee’s Department of Public Health **prepares and mentors its students for exceptional careers** in academia, public health research, administration and practice **which promote optimal health of individuals and communities.**

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

### KNOX COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

A metropolitan health department; it consists of ten divisions and employs more than 260 professionals including public health educators, epidemiologists, physicians, environmentalists, nurses, nutritionists, emergency preparedness specialists and many more. KCHD serves a population of approximately 448,000.

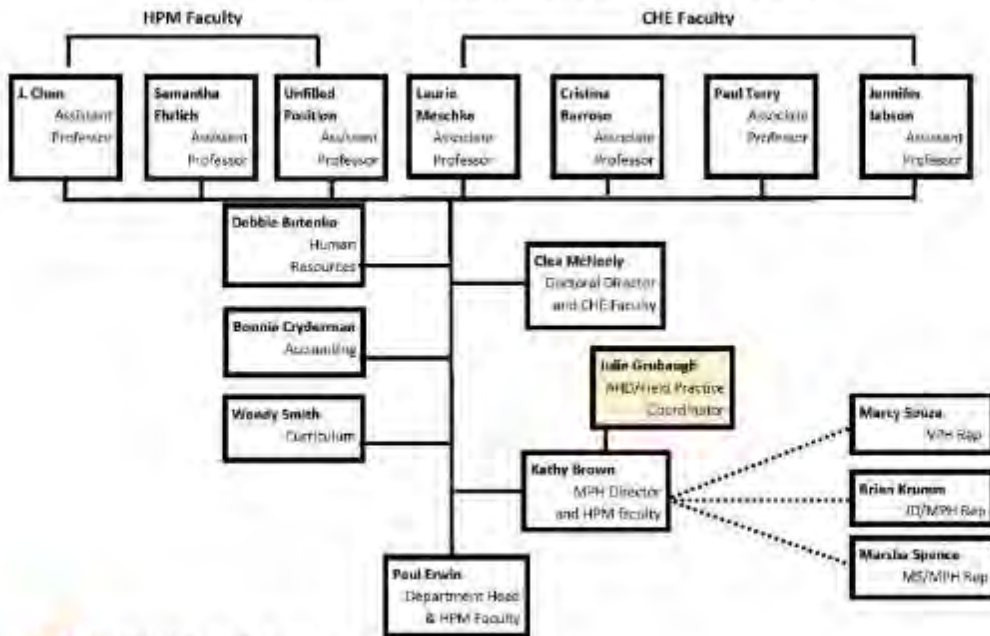
In November 2015, KCHD became the first health department in Tennessee to be accredited by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB).



THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

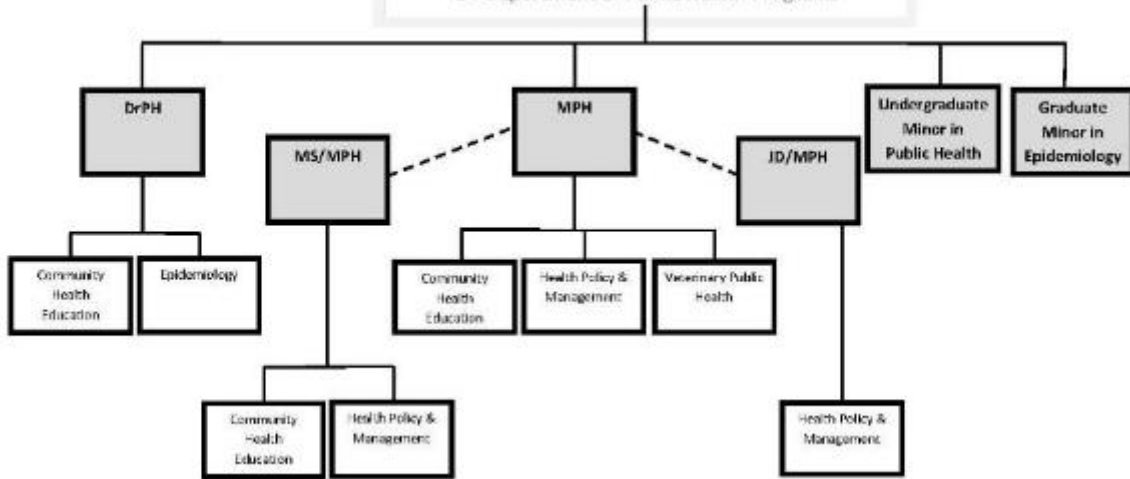
Housed within the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences, the UT/DPH includes ten regular faculty, eleven adjunct faculty, three faculty with joint appointments and four professional staff. MPH concentrations include Health Policy and Management (HPM), Community Health Education (CHE), and Veterinary Public Health (VPH). The MPH program has been accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) since 1969.

**UT Department of Public Health Organizational Chart**



Organizational chart, revised 10/27/15

**UT Department of Public Health Programs**



# ACADEMIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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## AHD Steering Committee

The steering committee, comprised of leadership from both organizations, meets quarterly to develop and monitor goals and objectives, address challenges, and assure joint activities and resource sharing align with each organization's strategic plan and ultimately, improve community health. In addition, faculty and health department employees regularly serve on ad hoc and permanent committees at each organization.



### **KCHD Director**

Martha Buchanan, MD  
*(Per AHD MOU, holds Adjunct Professor title at UT/DPH)*

### **KCHD Deputy Director**

Mark Miller, MS

### **KCHD Clinical Services Director**

Kelly Cooper, MD, MPH

### **KCHD Director Accreditation and Quality Improvement**

Jennifer Valentine, MSN

### **UT/DPH Head and Professor**

Paul Erwin, MD, DrPH  
*(Per AHD MOU, holds consultant title at KCHD)*

### **UT MPH Program Director**

Kathleen Brown, PhD, MPH

### **AHD Coordinator**

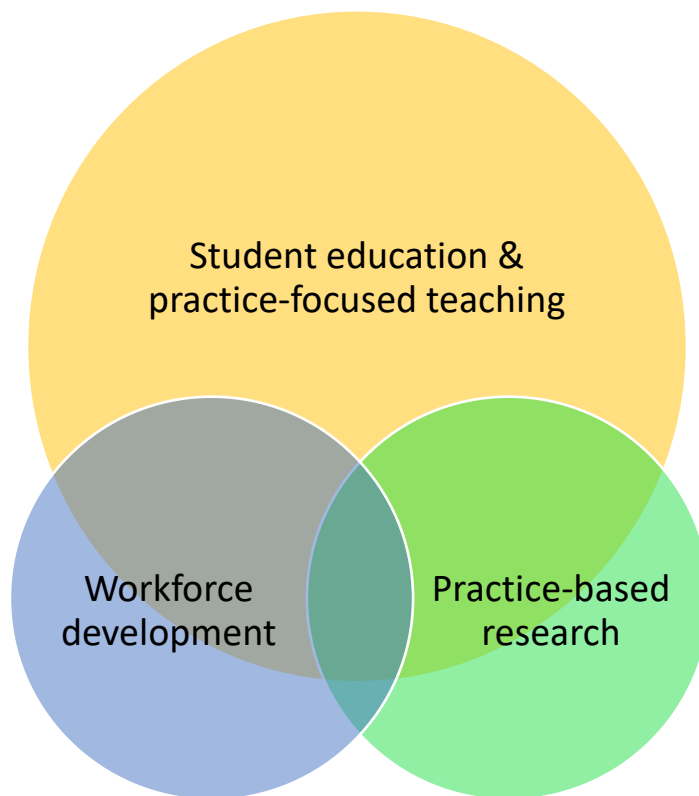
Julie Grubaugh, MPH  
*(Per AHD MOU, position is shared equally, jointly funded, co-supervised, and maintains work space at both locations. Position is held by university HR)*



# ACADEMIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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## Three focus areas



Student education and practice-focused teaching comprises the largest operational aspect of our AHD. Students support workforce development and practice-based research.

Every year, the AHD steering committee (members listed on page 8) develops objectives related to each focus area. Highlights from 2014-2015 are described in the following pages.

## AHD highlights during 2014-2015



“Effective preceptors identify specific intern projects, communicate expectations, and support students’ growth.”  
-Knox County Health Department preceptor training

“The AHD’s new service learning evaluation tool helped me assign student grades”  
-Faculty, Public Health Nutrition



### **Conducted preceptor training at KCHD about how to effectively plan for and manage interns**

Included small group discussion and interactive sharing of experiences. Received very positive feedback! In the future, will split into two separate trainings (new preceptors to learn process and tools and seasoned preceptors to refine skills and share lessons learned).



### **Created a KCHD student webpage to increase student recruitment and publicize successes**

The webpage grew out of recommendations during the preceptor training and was conducted as a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) project to make the KCHD student process more accessible.  
[http://www.knoxcounty.org/health/academic\\_health\\_department](http://www.knoxcounty.org/health/academic_health_department)



### **Developed and pilot tested a survey tool to evaluate service learning projects**

UT nutrition students, faculty, and KCHD’s Community Development and Planning staff completed an online evaluation after a semester-long community-based class project. The AHD will conduct the survey again in fall 2015 and focus on measuring value and impact of the projects.

While our AHD partnership is between the University of Tennessee Department of Public Health and Knox County Health Department, the AHD facilitates student placements from many different schools, disciplines, and types of organizations. For example, during 2014-2015:

- 22 UT MPH students completed field placements at 18 different organizations
- 249 students from multiple schools and academic programs contributed 6,117 hours at Knox County Health Department

Because of our AHD partnership, we have a deeper understanding and appreciation of PH academia and practice needs, which better equips both organizations to excel in its respective missions.



*Healthy corner store pilot initiative*

### **UT Nutrition class partnered with KCHD's Community Development and Planning staff**

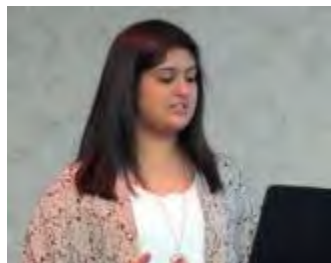
Graduate nutrition students conducted four community-based assessment projects with KCHD during fall 2014: 1) a market basket study to compare food prices and access across sectors; 2) food resource mapping in two sectors; 3) food pantry assessment of healthy foods available; and 4) healthy corner store feasibility survey of staff and customers. Students presented results to HD staff and community partners. The nutrition faculty will continue to partner with KCHD staff to move these initiatives forward.



*Al Iannacone, Environmental Epidemiologist, preceptor; Jessica Matlock, DVM, MPH student intern*

### **Five UT MPH students completed internships at KCHD during 2014-2015**

Interns helped establish and evaluate a new zoonotic sentinel reporting system with local veterinary practices, assisted with community health improvement strategic planning, and developed e-cigarette organizational policy and educational materials. The AHD facilitated many other interns from across disciplines and from a variety of schools. Click [here](#) to see past intern projects featured in KCHD's Student Success newsletters.



*Reeda Shakir, Sewanee pre-med intern*

### **Pre-med intern helped identify evidence-based practices at KCHD**

Facilitated through the AHD Steering Committee, this student reviewed KCHD programs and services to identify what is supported by research, per the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force and the CDC's Community Guide. She recommended increasing certain preventive screening in clinics and combining multiple tobacco cessation tools to be more effective.



“Investing in our workforce is one of our top priorities. We strategically approach the development of our staff to ensure alignment with our organizational vision, mission, and core values. The AHD partnership is an essential part of acquiring, developing, and retaining a competent public health workforce.”

-Director of Accreditation and Quality Improvement, Knox County Health Department



### **UT DPH assisted KCHD with PHAB accreditation**

KCHD underwent its site visit by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) during July 2015. The UT DPH department head participated in a community partner meeting during the site visit. The AHD coordinator participated in two domain team meetings with site visitors to discuss practice-based research and performance management. This process deepened academicians’ understanding of PH practice needs and priorities. In November 2015, KCHD became the first accredited health department in Tennessee!



### **KCHD assisted MPH program with CEPH accreditation**

KCHD’s clinical services director served on the UT DPH accreditation review team, which met biweekly for 6 months to critically review the self-study draft. The KCHD director and deputy director reviewed the self-study final draft and provided input. They also participated in a community partner meeting with CEPH during the site-visit. These activities built KCHD’s professional expertise and understanding of PH academia needs and priorities.



### **KCHD employees presented career information to students**

KCHD health educators, program managers, and health inspectors, presented to undergraduate and graduate student classes as well as allowed students to interview them at the HD about their jobs and roles in providing the 10 Essential Public Health Services. KCHD employees gained public speaking experience and reportedly caused employees to take more pride in what they do.



“Raising awareness and preventing neonatal abstinence (NAS) is a priority for our community. The information gathered in this collaborative research project will help us increase access to contraception in women at risk for having a child with NAS.”

-Director, Knox County Health Department



### **Conducted joint research on Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS)**

With funding from the Tennessee Department of Health (TDH), the study examined facilitators and barriers to women’s beliefs about birth control. The women were currently enrolled in medically assisted therapy for opioid addiction in one of two Knoxville clinics. Surveys completed by 287 women suggested that contraception knowledge was very

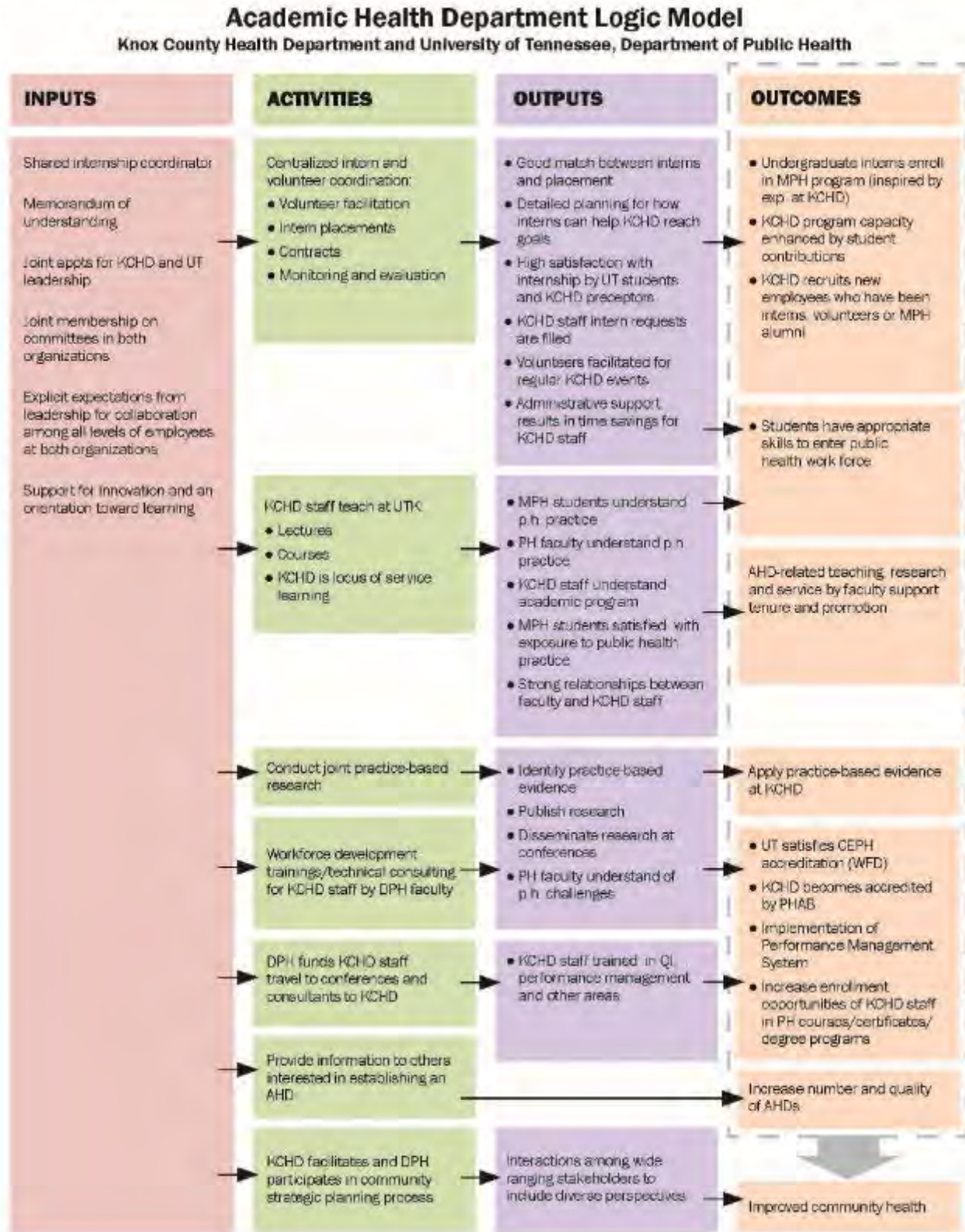
low. Insurance coverage was most frequently cited (22.6%) as a barrier to contraception use. Women who had greater contraception self-efficacy, a past medical appointment related to contraception, and were non-smokers were more likely to use contraception. Study results were shared with the TDH and will soon be submitted for publication.



### **Identified evidence-based practices currently in use at KCHD**

KCHD’s clinical services director supervised an intern who analyzed KCHD’s clinical and community services and programs to assess the extent of alignment with evidence-based practices, per the US Preventive Services Taskforce and The Community Guide to Preventive Services. The intern presented findings to directors, managers, and several AHD steering committee members.

LOGIC MODEL



## FUNDING



### Shared position

The AHD coordinator position is a full-time exempt staff position jointly and equally funded by the Knox County Health Department and the University of Tennessee, Department of Public Health. Office space is provided at both organizations.

During the initial three years of the partnership, the university-funded portion came from a sub-award to the UT/DPH from East Tennessee State University's Public Health Training Center and faculty salary recovery dollars; however, beginning in year four permanent funding was allocated for the position.

### Workforce development

The university funds speakers and attendance at conferences for Knox County Health Department employee professional development. It also provides access to the university library database for a small number of health department employees to gain access to peer-reviewed journals.

### Other

Both organizations regularly share resources with each other such as meeting space and technical expertise. Perhaps the greatest exchange of resources is not money, but time and relationship building to accomplish our AHD vision: bridging knowledge, improving health.

Click [here](#) to view our AHD MOU, which further describes our activity agreements.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

# ACADEMIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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