

Panhandle

Public Health District

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Panhandle Public Health District has been recognized with two 2026 NACCHO Model Practice Awards!

Panhandle Public Health District received national recognition for implementing best practices in local public health. Their award-winning programs aim to improve the health and wellness of all community members in the Panhandle of Nebraska.

The Model and Promising Practice Awards are presented annually by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) to recognize excellence in local public health and this year, 42 outstanding local health department programs have been recognized as Model Practices and 61 programs have been recognized as Promising Practices. The awards were presented during NACCHO360 in Louisville, Kentucky on July 16, 2026.

Model Practices are programs demonstrating exemplary and replicable qualities in response to a critical local public health need, and Promising Practices have demonstrated exciting approaches and strategies to local public health challenges that are on track to becoming Model Practices.

Youth Advisory Council – Led by Kelsy Sasse, this initiative has empowered youth voices and strengthened partnerships to improve the health and well-being of young people across the Nebraska Panhandle. The council was one of the top five out of all the national awards to share on a best practices panel at the conference as well!

Maternal Self-Monitored Blood Pressure Initiative – Led by Dez Brandt, this program is helping improve maternal health by increasing access to blood pressure monitoring, education, and early intervention.

PPHD Director Jessica Davies and Deputy Director of Maternal & Family Health Services Dez Brandt received both of the awards on behalf of Panhandle Public Health District and the many staff, partners, and community members who helped make these initiatives possible.



These national awards recognize innovative, community-driven public health practices that create meaningful impact. We are incredibly proud of our team and grateful for everyone who contributes to improving the health of our Panhandle communities.

Congratulations to Kelsy, Dez, and the entire PPHD team on this outstanding recognition!

To view the full list of recipients for the 2026 Model and Promising Practice Awards visit: [National Association of County and City Health Officials \(NACCHO\) – 2026 Model Practice Gallery](#)

Panhandle Public Health District is working together to improve the health, safety and quality of life for all who live, learn, work and play in the Panhandle. Our vision is that we are a healthier and safer Panhandle community.