

Board of Health Meeting Minutes
January 20, 2015

Board Members & Liaisons Present:

Constance Young, EdD, RN, Chairperson
Joan M. Costello, BSN, RN, Vice Chairperson
Atty. Christine M. Gonillo, Secretary
Ernest Judson
Holly Mulrenan, BSN, RN, MS
Greta Stanford, Board of Alderman Liaison

Board Members & Liaisons not present:

Mitchell Quintner, DMD
Laura Fucci, Board of Education Liaison
Ray Vitali, Board of Alderman Liaison

Others Present: None.

Health Department Staff Present

Deepa Joseph, MPH, Director of Health
Beverly Hayes, BS, Recording Secretary

C. Young called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes – December 16, 2014

The minutes of the meeting held on December 16, 2014 were approved unanimously on a motion by E. Judson and seconded by J. Costello.

C. Young turned the meeting over to E. Judson for the Election of Officers.

Election of 2015 Officers

The following officers were elected for 2015 and approved unanimously:
Constance Young, Chairperson on a motion by J. Costello, seconded by E. Judson.
Joan Costello, Vice Chairperson on a motion by E. Judson, seconded by C. Young.
Christine Gonillo, Secretary on a motion by C. Young seconded by E. Judson.

The meeting was turned back over to C. Young, elected Chairperson.

Introduction of the School Medical Advisor:

D. Joseph introduced the newly appointed School/Community Medical Advisor.

Dr. Andrew Carlson highlighted that he was born and raised in Milford and is a graduate from Joseph A. Foran High School and Cornell University in Ithaca, NY. He graduated from the University of Connecticut School of Medicine in Farmington, CT. He is very active in the local

area coaching several youth sports teams, serving on the executive board of the Woodruff YMCA in Orange, and is active on the board of directors of the Connecticut chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Dr. Carlson also serves as a school and team physician for Hopkins School in New Haven as well as the Foran High School Football team physician. He added that he expects to spend time getting to know the staff and spending time working with Deepa and Joan on policies and improving where needed.

Public Session: *None*

Environmental Division Report – Laura Miller, REHS/RS

Gastrointestinal Outbreak Investigation

On Tuesday December 30, 2014 the Milford Health Department (MHD) received a report of a gastrointestinal (GI) outbreak in a Milford Healthcare institution. It was further reported that the first case became ill with vomiting and diarrhea on December 29, 2014. Because most institutions serve a high-risk population (elderly and immunocompromised), it was important that we immediately start an environmental assessment at the facility to collect information about the outbreak and assess whether the transmission was person-to-person among residents and staff, including food workers, and not a foodborne illness.

The primary objective of our environmental investigation in this setting is to prevent the outbreak from becoming foodborne. A standardized questionnaire was developed and used to interview all staff who works in the kitchen and the dining room. We evaluated the institution's policies and procedures and implemented control measures to reduce the risk of foodborne transmission. All food workers were interviewed by MHD Sanitarians individually and in private. They were questioned if they had any symptoms of vomiting and/or diarrhea. During the interviews it was determined that one food worker had experienced symptoms similar to the other cases; they were excluded from working at the institution until they were symptom free for 72-hours. Once the institution reported that no new cases developed for several days, the GI outbreak was considered over and we ended our environmental investigation. It is concluded that the outbreak was person-to-person transmission, not related to the food.

Food Protection Program

Food Service Establishment license renewal letters were sent out to 389 food service establishments for the 2015 licensing year. In addition to commercial food service establishments, MHD licenses and inspects 25 itinerant food vendors and 11 concession stands located at various baseball fields around the City.

Comments:

Nursing Division Report – Joan Campbell, RN, BSN

Seasonal Flu and Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Campaign

The Connecticut Department of Public Health reports that influenza activity has been increasing in CT and has been classified geographically as “widespread”. The predominant circulating

virus is Type A (H3N2). As of 1/10/15, a total of 933 positive influenza cases have been reported statewide for the current season with 278 being in New Haven County. Influenza has been reported in all eight counties. A total of 385 hospitalized patients with laboratory-confirmed influenza have been reported statewide. One flu-associated death in an individual greater than 65 years of age has been reported to date in Connecticut.

As of 1/10/15, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports influenza activity in the U.S. remains high but there are early signs that activity has begun to decrease in parts of the country. However, it is too soon to tell whether influenza activity has peaked yet this season. While early data indicates this season's vaccine is not working as well as usual against circulating H3N2 viruses, CDC continues to recommend vaccination.

The Milford Health Department continues its seasonal influenza campaign with monthly immunization clinics held at the Health Department. We will continue to provide the influenza vaccine through March 2015. Both the regular flu vaccine and the high dose vaccine for individuals over sixty-five years of age will be offered. The school nurses and Health Department continue to monitor the influenza Like Illness (ILI) activity in the schools; to date there is no significant ILI activity observed among our school age students. The school nurses are providing influenza prevention and hand washing education in all of the schools.

School Health Services

The school nurses will be meeting with Dr. Andrew Carlson, our new Medical Advisor, on January 28th. The nurses are excited about his appointment and look forward to work with him. The school nurses recently completed the Annual Health Condition Data Survey for each of their schools. This survey reflects how many students in each school are affected with a specific health condition. This data gives us a comprehensive overview of the health needs of the students in Milford.

Southern Connecticut State University Nursing Students

The Health Department will provide a learning experience in school and community nursing for senior nursing students from Southern Connecticut State University for the spring semester. We will have seven students who will divide their time between school nursing experience and working with the Visiting Nurses Association. The students will work with the school nurses in assessment of students, providing daily care, performing mandated screenings and learning the role of the school nurse in the education environment.

Comments:

Emergency Preparedness Reports – Tara Mustakos-Wassmer, REHS/RS, CHES

The City of Milford Health Department continues to monitor the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak. Local health authorities are responsible for the needs of individuals under quarantine monitoring. This can include food, shelter (if applicable), laundry services if needed, medical & prescription needs, entertainment and arrangement of educational services for school-aged children. The Milford Health Department developed a draft plan to address an EVD quarantine person in Milford.

Health Department staff will participate in the next CT Department of Public Health EVD update schedule for later this week. An email to local partners is sent out from this office with new information as needed. This list includes staff from: Milford Health Department, Milford Hospital (leadership and ED staff), Milford Fire, Milford Police, Milford Board of Education Facilities, Milford Public Works, Milford Emergency Management, Bridges Community Center, American Medical Response (AMR), Yale New Haven Hospital and Department of Emergency Management, Division of Homeland Security (DEHMS).

The second Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training is being held this month. The Milford Health Department Volunteer Coordinator and CERT certified instructor are holding two, 10 hour classes to cover the course material. This team consists exclusively of retired Milford Fire Department staff (aka the Dinosaurs). The group is a valuable asset with years of experience in first response and the possession of a canteen truck. CERT is activated under the umbrella of emergency management, under the supervision of Fire Chief Douglas Edo and the Director of Health.

Region 2 Emergency Support Function (ESF) 8, Public Health & Medical, will meet again in February 2015 for the first quarterly meeting of the year. Director of Health Deepa Joseph and Alan Lynn from Milford Hospital were voted Chair and Co-Chair. Region 2 consists of 30 towns, of which all health departments and districts in this geographic area regularly participate for grant deliverable work and attend the quarterly meetings. Region 2 will be looking to spend a grant in the amount of \$30,000, on drills and exercises leading up to a full scale drill November 2015. This money is being allocated to the 5 Emergency Regions of Connecticut to help satisfy existing grant deliverables and for capacity building of healthcare coalitions. Region 2 will be looking to develop redundant communications for our region.

Comments:

- *D. Joseph added that there is some community interest in creating a youth CERT Team. Bruce Varga and D. Joseph are looking into the feasibility and standards to be followed for training a team with members under the age of 18.*

Community Health – Deepa Joseph, MPH

Disease Surveillance

There were 72 cases of disease reported for the month of December, with influenza being the most reported disease. The CT DPH reports that influenza activity has been increasing in CT and has been classified geographically as “widespread”. The predominant circulating virus is Type A (H3N2).

Putting on AIRS Asthma Program

The Putting on AIRS asthma program received 5 referrals for the month of December, for a total of 41 referrals this contract period with twenty (20) home visits completed. The Program Coordinator focused heavily on follow-up contacts for the month of December. As part of the program, the Coordinator conducts a 2-week, 3 month, and 6 month follow-up after the home visit. The purpose of the follow-up is to discuss whether individuals and/or families have implemented the recommended control measures, to determine outcomes as a result of the home

visit, and to discuss any challenges/barriers/etc. The Program Coordinator completed 15 follow-up calls for the month of December.

Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI)

The Milford Health Department has been awarded grant funding to support the 6th Annual Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI) in Milford. PLTI enables parents to become leading advocates for children in their community through participation in four phases of training—a one-day retreat, a 10-week course on parent leadership, a 10-week course on civic engagement, and a community project to practice what participants have learned within a community context. PLTI kicked-off with 15 participants who attended a one-day retreat on Saturday, January 17, 2014 at the First United Church, Congregational in Milford. Several guests of honor welcomed the class at the retreat including Mayor Blake, Representative Pam Staneski, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Elizabeth Feser, Gary Johnson, President/CEO of the United Way of Milford, and Peggy Kelly, Executive Director of Kids Count of Milford.

Comments:

- *C. Young inquired as to the impact of earlier groups of PLTI to see how many of the projects have been sustained and if any members are engaged in public service as a result of the training. D. Joseph responded that whenever she applies for the grant funds she has to provide a report with that same information and she will provide the report to the Board at the next meeting.*

Old Business:

- *J. Costello stated that Dr. Lynch has sent in his resignation. Board members discussed potential individuals to fill the vacancy on the Board. C. Young added that she will contact the Mayor to see if a decision has been made yet.*

Director's Report: Deepa Joseph, MPH

- *D. Joseph added that she would like to work on a 3-5 year plan to incorporate priorities for the Health Department moving forward. Areas of focus will include national accreditation for the department, increasing the health department's visibility in the community, and raising awareness regarding the impact of public health on individuals and families in the community, to name a few. D. Joseph stated that once some of the staff vacancies are filled, she will be able to focus on these areas.*
 - *E. Judson asked for an update on filling of vacancies of Administrative Assistant and Deputy Director. D. Joseph stated that the Administrative Assistant position has been posted externally and closed on January 9, 2015. The 80 eligible applicants will be tested and the top three names will be provided to her for interviews. D. Joseph shared that the Deputy Director position will not be filled at this time. Board members discussed concerns regarding ability to maintain grant funding and increase grant funding with the vacant position. D. Joseph stated the Health Department's Board of Finance hearing is scheduled for February 12, 2015.*

- *D. Joseph discussed the various responsibilities of the Sanitarians and how the Environmental Division impacts various aspects of resident's lives from septic system plan reviews to beach water sampling to food service establishments to housing issues and more. D. Joseph will be working with Laura Miller, Chief of the Environmental Health Division and Joan Campbell, Director of Nursing to create a 1-page handout to be utilized as a tool to increase awareness regarding the Health Department. These handouts will be shared at the Board of Finance and Board of Alderman meetings.*
 - *G. Stanford supported that idea to present this type of information. E. Judson suggested that they get a reporter to do a series highlighting the features of each division.*
- *C. Gonillo asked about the use of interns. D. Joseph responded that the Health Department currently has high school interns and historically have had public health interns from local universities in the past.*
- *D. Joseph added that the Department of Human Services and the Health Department will be applying jointly for a grant from the United Way of Greater New Haven's Neighbor-to-Neighbor lifeline program.*
- *D. Joseph stated that the "Have a Heart—Give Smart" campaign has resulted in some panhandlers contacting various social support agencies in Milford to access services.*

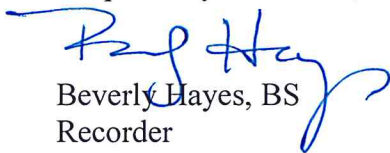
New Business:

Adjournment:

E. Judson motioned to adjourn the meeting seconded by J. Costello and was unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 6:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,


Beverly Hayes, BS
Recorder