

Board of Health Meeting Minutes February 17, 2009

Board Members & Liaisons Present:

Constance Young, EdD, RN, Chairperson
Ernest Judson, Vice Chairperson
Howard Fink, MD, Secretary
William F. Lynch, MD
Mitchell Quintner, DMD
Joan M. Costello, MSN, RN
Deborah Woods

Board Members & Liaisons not present:

Ray Vitali, Board of Alderman Liaison
David Amendola, Board of Education Liaison
Nick Veccharelli, Board of Alderman Liaison

Health Department Staff Present

A. Dennis McBride, MD, MPH, Health Director
Joan Cagginello, Nurse Administrator
Beverly Hayes, Administrative Assistant
Kathy Scarinzi, RN, School Nurse

C. Young called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.

Election of Officers

C Young called for nominations for Chairman. E. Judson cast a ballot seconded by W. Lynch for C. Young. The board voted unanimously for C. Young, Chairman. C. Young called for nominations for Vice Chairman. H. Fink cast a ballot seconded by W. Lynch for E. Judson. The board voted unanimously for E. Judson, Vice Chairman. C. Young called for nominations for Secretary and E. Judson cast a ballot for H. Fink seconded by W. Lynch. The board voted unanimously for H. Fink, Secretary.

Approval of Minutes – December 16, 2008 & January 20, 2009

The minutes of the December 16, 2008 and January 20, 2009 meeting were unanimously approved on a motions by E. Judson seconded by J. Costello.

Nursing & School Health Services Presentation – presented by Joan Cagginello

J. Cagginello presented Nursing & School Health Services along with K. Scarinzi, RN, School Nurse who presented an overview of day as a school nurse and fielded questions regarding same.

Environmental Health Report – prepared by Laura Miller

Recalls

On January 10, 2009, King Nut Companies, a distributor of peanut butter manufactured for them by Peanut Corporation of America (PCA), announced a recall of peanut butter distributed under the King Nut label. It was determined that an open 5-lb tub of peanut butter tested positive for

Salmonella Typhimurium, the positive sample was matched to the current multi-state *salmonella* outbreak affecting 42 states. City Line Distributors, of West Haven, CT, distributed the affected peanut butter; fortunately we did not find any of the products in Milford.

Since being informed of this major recall in January, PCA has expanded the recall to include all peanuts and peanut products distributed from their Blakely, Georgia facility since December 1, 2007. In addition many other food manufactures are recalling products that were manufactured with peanuts supplied by PCA. This recall is ongoing and the product list is expanding significantly. In addition to updating the Milford Health Department website with products that were distributed to Connecticut, we have informed food service establishments that the best way to obtain an accurate list of all recalled products is to check the FDA web site on a regular basis.

For all recalls, the Environmental Division posts notice on our website, issues a health alert, via fax and or email, to all applicable establishments i.e. Long Term Care Facilities, Health Care/Hospitals, Schools, Daycare Centers and Food Service Establishments, etc., in addition to following up with inspections. During the site-visits, we are able to provide education and product disposal guidance. To date we have no reports nor have we seen any of the peanut butter at any Milford establishment.

No Freeze Shelter

Whenever the temperature and/or temperature combined with the wind chill is less than thirty-two degrees Fahrenheit, the Beth El Center opens a no-freeze shelter. The Center began the no-freeze shelter on the evening of Saturday January 10, 2009 and the plan is to continue to keep the shelter open through February and possibly into the first few weeks of March depending on the weather and their funding. From January 10 - February 10, 2009 Beth-El reports serving one hundred twenty-five individuals (125); one hundred two (102) males and twenty-three (23) females. Of that number the unduplicated count is twenty-five; twenty males and five females. The maximum capacity of the shelter is eight cots. The shelter has not reached full capacity on any of the open nights.

Comments:

Nursing Division Report – prepared by Joan Cagginello, RN

Seasonal Influenza Status

There has been a rapidly increasing level of influenza cases observed by CT Department of Public Health in the past few weeks. Over 700 cases have been confirmed in the state since the beginning of influenza season, with New Haven County reporting the highest number of cases. Connecticut continues to be classified as having “regional” flu activity in the national reports of influenza activity.

School Health Services

In correlation with the increase in influenza activity, our influenza like illness surveillance monitoring has demonstrated an increase in absenteeism in the schools. School Nurses reported high incidence of flu-like symptoms among school children and an increased number of students were dismissed home and absent from school. This is historically the time of year that we see

this trend with illness among school age children. It is most often in the two weeks preceding winter recess in the schools.

Connecticut Association of Public Health Nurses (CAPHN)

CAPHN has identified the Milford Health Department staff as leaders in School Nursing and has asked for our assistance in holding a collaborative program with the Association of School Nurses of Connecticut.

A continuing education program will be held on February 24, 2009 on the common nursing practice between Public Health Nurses and School Nurses. Speakers will include Public Health Nurses, Directors of Health, Nursing Supervisors and Deepa Joseph, MPH will present a program on our Influenza Like Illness Surveillance program.

Presentation of the School Health Services and Public Health Nursing Program provided to the Board of Health.

Comments:

Community Health Division Report - prepared by Deepa Joseph

Disease Surveillance

There were 38 cases of disease reported for the month of January. The Health Department received 12 reports of laboratory-confirmed cases of influenza. We have had a total of 15 cases of influenza reported in Milford to date for the 2008-2009 influenza season.

Neighbor-to-Neighbor Lifeline Grant

The Milford Health Department recently applied for funding through the Neighbor-to-Neighbor (N2N) Lifeline grant program, a grant provided by the United Way of Greater New Haven & the Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven. The N2N grant program is a 6-week effort to distribute grants to agencies to support the increased needs around emergency housing, food, and relief during this economic crisis. Our application was partially funded for \$4,500 and is to be used to provide emergency food vouchers to residents in need, as well as to assist existing or developing food banks in Milford.

Putting on AIRS Asthma Program

The program has received a total of 62 referrals for this contract year, with 6 of those referrals received in January. The Community Health Coordinator continues to look for additional grant funds to support the program due to the increase in referrals. Based on the trend of referrals thus far, the program may be in need of additional funds to support the program for the last few months of the contract year.

3rd Symposium on Compulsive Hoarding & Troubled Housing

The Milford Health Department is in the process of planning our third regional symposium on compulsive hoarding and troubled housing issues to be held in June. The committee is in the process of finalizing the keynote speaker. The speaker will focus her discussion on compulsive hoarding and utilizing human capital as a response strategy. She will also lead a breakout session entitled "Enhancing Motivation and Effective Communication Strategies with Hoarders." Additional sessions to be finalized include a session on reasonable accommodations in public housing as it relates to hoarding, as well as a session focused on animal hoarding.

Comments:

Emergency Preparedness Reports

Regional/CRI Emergency Preparedness Report - prepared by Diana Yassanye

Regional Preparedness Grant

There will be a meeting of the ESF 8 chairs from all 5 CT DEMHS regions on February 24th. This is the first meeting of its kind and the agenda will include issues of public health preparedness as well as medical services such as emergency medical transport, hospital surge capacity, mass fatality management and more.

The Regional Coordinator, Cities Readiness Initiative Coordinator and Health Director are currently attending the Public Health Preparedness Summit to glean more information about numerous topics including the public health role in a radiological incident, the state of preparedness in the new administration and the changing requirements of the Strategic National Stockpile.

Cities Readiness Initiative

The full-scale, regional exercise (1st MEDs) on May 19, 2009 is in full planning development.

The regional Technical Assessment Reviews (TAR) conducted by the CDC and DPH last spring are being analyzed to establish a report of the overall “health” of public health preparedness in Region 2. The second, and in some cases, third round of assessment reviews will occur in early spring. It is assumed that the second set of regional scores will show vast improvement, as plans are being modified to address specific issues in the TAR.

Local Emergency Preparedness/Volunteer Activity Report – prepared by Tara Mustakos

Volunteer Programs: Milford Coalition for Community Preparedness & Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) & the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)

The Milford Health Department held the most recent all volunteer meeting on Tuesday January 27th from 6:30 –8:30 PM. The meeting was held at Platt Technical High, Milford’s public Point of Dispensing (POD). The agenda for this meeting included discussion of the “3 Days, 3 Ways” public health preparedness program. The focus of the program is preparedness for individual residents: “have a plan, make a kit and get involved.” Bruce Varga and Chelsey Donine presented to volunteers an overview of the program and how it will be implemented for the Milford community.

A second program developed by Washington State Emergency Management was introduced to the MRC/CERT volunteer community. “Map Your Neighborhood” is an initiative to prepare individual neighborhoods for public health emergencies. The presentation emphasized building relationships and strengthening disaster readiness among neighbors.

A survey was distributed to all volunteers at the meeting and mailed out to those not present to assess the interest of volunteers in specific areas of community preparedness. The four items on the survey included: training for shelter management, training for animal response/care,

participation in a “call-down tree” and interest in participating in the next public health full scale exercise.

The next scheduled public health exercise is planned for May 19th, 2009. The exercise deemed “First Meds” will be a full scale Regional exercise through the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEHMS) Region 2, of which Milford is the lead planning agency. Local planning for the exercise is in the developmental stages. The goal of the exercise is to drill the dispensing of medications to first responders and critical staff for the City of Milford through the Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI) grant. Milford will be exercising a portion of the Mass Dispensing Plan that speaks specifically to the first responders. This will include the drop spot of the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) materiel to the public works yard on Ford Street and the movement of medications to the Milford Senior Center, which has been designated as the “Municipal POD” for Milford. The purpose of the Municipal POD is to temporarily serve as the pick up location for Milford first responders and those deemed critical staff for continuity of city operations.

Comments:

New Business:

Director’s Report:

- D. McBride expressed concern regarding the challenges that Public Health will face in light of families and communities struggling in the difficult economic times. He further noted that the demand for individuals seeking Public Health Services will increase. Dr. McBride shared information from the Connecticut Directors of Health meeting that addressed the anticipated challenges.
- W. Lynch inquired about sheltering during extreme weather conditions. D. McBride responded that several Milford agencies met to develop a no-freeze shelter plan that allows the Beth El shelter to accommodate 8 beds for homeless individuals on nights that the temperature falls below 32 degrees. Additionally, there are temporary arrangements in place to transport individuals to the State armory in Stratford if needed.

Adjournment:

E. Judson motioned to adjourn the meeting seconded by H. Fink and approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly Hayes, BS
Recorder