

**Board of Health Meeting Minutes
March 21, 2017**

Board Members & Liaisons Present:

Constance Young, EdD, RN, Chairperson
Holly Mulrenan, BSN, RN, MS, Vice Chairperson
Joan Cagginello, MS, RN
Joan M. Costello, BSN, RN
Atty. Christine M. Gonillo, Secretary
Ernest Judson
Ray Vitali, Board of Alderman Liaison
Thomas Jagodzinski, Board of Education Liaison

Board Members & Liaisons not present:

Mitchell Quintner, DMD
Ellen Beatty, Board of Alderman Liaison

Others Present: None.

Health Department Staff Present:

Deepa Joseph, MPH, Director of Health

C. Young called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Approval of Minutes – February 21, 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on February 21, 2017 were approved unanimously on a motion by E. Judson and seconded by J. Costello.

Public Session: *None*

Environmental Division Report – Laura M. Miller, REHS/RS

Food Protection Program: On February 27, 2017 the MHD received multiple complaints of possible foodborne illness from patrons consuming food from the same Milford food service establishment. Based on the information received from the complainants, MHD Sanitarians and the Community Health Coordinator conducted a site investigation to assess the conditions in the establishment and initiate a foodborne disease outbreak investigation. *A foodborne disease outbreak is the occurrence of two or more cases of a similar illness resulting from the ingestion of a common food.* Typically, investigation of a foodborne disease outbreak is a threefold process and requires coordination between MHD, the CT Department of Public Health Food Protection Program (“CT DPH”), CT DPH Epidemiology Program and the State Laboratory in order to identify and eliminate the source of the outbreak. The main component of this investigation included an environmental investigation at the suspected location. The purpose of an environmental field investigation is to determine the contributing factors that may be the cause of the foodborne illness outbreak, whether it is improper food handling, ill food workers, or a contaminated ingredient. This investigation focused on prior and current health status of the

food handlers, and details of the preparation of ready to eat foods prepared in the establishment. General infection control measures were reviewed with each of the food handlers and managers, and enforced, as necessary.

Food Service Establishment license renewals In January 2017, Food Service Establishment license renewal letters were sent out to 389 food service establishments for the 2017 licensing year. Food Service Establishment licenses expire on the last day in February every year. Currently, 352 establishments have renewed. There are 37 outstanding. Final notices will be sent out via certified mail.

Collaborative on Residential Integrity for the disables & Elderly (CRIDE) Members of CRIDE met on March 6, 2017 to discuss the status of four current and two new cases of troubled housing situations in Milford. The health department investigates and presents each case to CRIDE to determine whether any of the individuals are known to the various entities at the table and for additional perspective on working with the situation. Many of these difficult housing problems require a comprehensive process of gaining trust, encouraging the resident's participation in the remediation process, and long-term contact and monitoring. Various members of the CRIDE team often provide the important background information, financial support, critical services and professional guidance that make it possible to resolve these complex cases.

Anti-blight activities: As of the week ending March 17, 2017 the Health Department received 261 general complaints from Milford residents. Of those 261 complaints, 45 were complaints of blight for the 2016/2017 fiscal year thus far. Over time each complaint is in various stages of the process, some properties do not meet the criteria set up in the anti-blight ordinance and are being investigated under the Housing or General Public Health codes. Others are in compliance and show no cause for enforcement action, while others are still in progress or under investigation. Properties that fail to comply with the orders defined in the issued Notice of Violation are referred to the City Attorney's office for enforcement action. The owners of these properties may be fined \$100 for each day the violation(s) continue to exist after the compliance date specified in the notice of violation.

Comments:

- *R. Vitali asked if the complainants are notified of the outcome of outbreak investigations. D. Joseph responded that complainants are informed of the overall outcome, however the MHD must maintain confidentiality throughout the process due to the nature of outbreak investigations and medical information obtained to conduct the investigation.*

Nursing Division Report – Joan Campbell, RN, BSN

Seasonal Flu and Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Campaign

The Connecticut Department of Public Health reports that influenza activity is now past peak in Connecticut and throughout the region. It is currently classified geographically in CT as "widespread" and current flu activity is at a moderate level. The predominant circulating influenza virus is Type A. A total of 4,506 positive influenza cases have been reported statewide for the current season with 1,019 being in New Haven County. A total of 1,509 hospitalized patients with laboratory-confirmed influenza have been reported statewide to date. A total of 34

influenza-associated deaths, with 30 in individuals greater than 65 years of age, and four between 50-64 years of age, have been reported this season. At the end of Influenza Season Week 10 (March 11, 2017), the Center for Disease Control reports that influenza activity decreased but remained elevated in the United States. Ongoing influenza activity is expected for the next several weeks. CDC reports that this season's flu vaccine is 48% effective against all circulating viruses. Individuals who have not gotten their flu shot to date are encouraged to do so now.

The Milford Health Department will continue to offer the influenza vaccine through their April immunization clinic at the Health Department. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices has recommended that providers continue to provide the influenza vaccine into the spring months. 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.

School Health Services

Nursing Staff – Mary Fowler, RN has been selected as the new 12 month nurse. Mary is very excited about this new opportunity and is enthusiastic in assuming her new duties associated with the position. Mary is the school nurse at Pumpkin Delight.

Summer School/Extended School Year (ESY) Programs – The Milford Public Schools will be holding summer school/extended school year programs from June 19 – August 11, 2017. Several school nurses have expressed interest in working at these programs. Selection of nursing coverage is based on seniority. Four nurses will be needed for these programs and will be assigned to work at Foran, Pumpkin Delight, East Shore and Calf Pen schools. Our 12 month nurse, Mary Fowler, will be working at Camp Happiness this summer which is held at Foran High School.

Comments:

- None.

Emergency Preparedness Report - Tara Mustakos Wassmer, REHS/RS, CHES

Milford Health Department (MHD) Emergency Preparedness Coordinator attended “Back to Basics” refresher training to update planning for response to Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and chemical, biological, nuclear, radiological and explosive (CBNRE) events.

Two days after this training a Milford resident came to MHD with a package full of an unknown white powder exposing employees. MHD was immediately locked down, several employees and the resident was quarantined in place; local Police, Fire/Hazmat, State Police, FBI and CT DEEP (Department of Energy & Environmental Protection) were contacted as per protocols. The substance was ultimately ruled benign by the Milford Fire Department Hazmat Team two hours into the event. Had this been a true “white powder” exposure the City of Milford would contact the State DPH for prophylaxis medications from the state’s Strategic Stockpile cache.

MHD is participating in a regional functional exercise tomorrow, March 22nd, to continue the planning for Ebola Virus Disease (EVD)/infectious disease response. Two mass dispensing areas (MDAs) from Region 2, Milford and Meriden will be standing up the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in their town/city and working through a scenario to address an Emerging Infectious Disease (EID) situation. Milford will be conducting a full scale exercise in tandem with this exercise to test the new location of the closed point of dispensing (POD) at Parson's Government Center for city employees. The main purpose of a POD is to get medications to people in a public health emergency i.e. white powder exposure.

MHD sent out the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) survey to volunteers created by the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication (YPCCC) meant to assess knowledge and attitudes of hurricane preparedness and evacuation. Data will be compiled by the Yale group and submitted to MHD in a final report. The plan is to improve community resiliency and storm preparedness.

The same week our storm preparedness survey went out MHD was actively meeting with the Mayor's office, Fire/Emergency Manager, Police and Public Works departments to plan for *Winter Storm Stella*. Several factors such as the amount of snow, potential for ice accumulation, wind, wind chill, coastal Flooding and anticipated power outages are discussed in order to best prepare city departments, staff and residents of Milford. Planning for storms dictates the role MHD plays. This can include:

- Opening and managing a Warming Center, designated location at Milford Senior Center
- Operating a full scale Emergency Evacuation Shelter, designated at Jonathan Law HS
- Stand-by assistance to the Library as Warming Center, program room open to public

The decision was to use the library in the case of *Winter Storm Stella* as a result of the anticipated snow fall amounts and the inability of staff to travel to work.

Comments:

- *None.*

Community Health – Jennifer Clarke-Lofters, MPA

Disease Surveillance

There were 100 cases of disease reported for the months of February, with Influenza as being the most frequently reported.

Putting on AIRS Asthma Program

New contract changes have allowed the program to modify eligibility, while extending the number of home visits as directed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The program now offers up to three (3) home visits and a 6 month follow up after a participant has been enrolled. As you know, follow-ups are conducted 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. In total we received 118 referrals since the beginning of the contract year. For the

month of February we received 23 referrals, completed 35 initial home visits, 22 second and 14 third home visits. We are now approaching clients in the upcoming weeks who will receive 6 month follow up calls. Along with the modification of the program, a new database has also been introduced. This new database has created a challenge in keeping track of home visits which has been shared with DPH. Extracting accurate data for our program has been a challenge that DPH is working on with us.

Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI)

PLTI will begin its eighth training institute on January 14, 2017. PLTI has successfully recruited over 20 diverse participants for this year and we are looking forward to the great relationship building this group will form. We have had great success from this program with 107 graduates. PLTI which 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. Participants are now sharing and receiving feedback on their project ideas.

PHAB (Public Health Accreditation Board)

The Milford Health Department is still preparing itself to submit an application to become accredited. Our next step is looking at quality improvement for the department. We have continued to work on drafting and reviewing our first project in the environmental division. We will continue to work in the health department as a team to become accredited while keeping a look out for other funding opportunities.

NACCHO (National Association of County and City Health Officials) Challenge Award

The Milford Health Department was awarded 2015-2016 NACCHO's Medical Reserve Corps Challenge Award this past spring. The department has worked with Yale Program on Climate Change Communication (YPCCC) to conduct a survey of MRC volunteers and Milford Residents to assess their hurricane knowledge, risk perceptions, training experience, communication skills and resources to conduct face to face conversations. The survey has recently been disseminated to the public and once the results are in, it will be utilized to develop recommendations for a training and recruitment program for Milford MRC to serve as neighborhood ambassadors.

Comments:

- *None.*

Old Business:

- *D. Joseph thanked the Board of Health for the testimony submitted in opposition to the proposal to consolidate local health departments. All bills prohibiting the regionalization of local public health departments, as well as the agency bill authorizing the regionalization will not be moving forward.*

Director's Report: Deepa Joseph, MPH

- *D. Joseph reported that Health Department staff was extremely busy over the past month with an outbreak investigation, suspected white powder incident, preparation for Winter Storm Stella, as well as routine Health Department activities.*

- *E. Judson asked how the Health Department is handling all of the activity with the existing vacancies. D. Joseph responded that the Department is managing activities as well as possible and prioritizing activities accordingly.*
- *E. Judson asked if there is any update on whether the Health Department will be able to fill the vacancies. D. Joseph stated that, due to the current spending freeze, the Mayor has stated that vacancies will not be filled for the remainder of the fiscal year. D. Joseph will continue to revisit this discussion, however, in light of the current state budget proposals, the Mayor has notified all Department Heads that we may need to create a contingency budget that is less than the current requested budget.*
- *T. Jagodzinski asked if that freeze includes the vacant Public Health Nurse position. D. Joseph responded affirmatively. T. Jagodzinski asked how the department has been meeting the nursing needs at the schools. D. Joseph responded that the Department has been utilizing Substitute Nurses in order to meet the needs at the schools.*

New Business:

- *None.*

Adjournment:

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Deepa Joseph
Recorder