

Board of Health Meeting Minutes
March 17, 2009

Board Members & Liaisons Present:

Constance Young, EdD, RN, Chairperson
Ernest Judson, Vice Chairperson
Howard Fink, MD, Secretary
William F. Lynch, MD
Joan M. Costello, BSN, RN

Board Members & Liaisons not present:

Mitchell Quintner, DMD
Deborah Woods
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
Deepa Joseph, Community Health Coordinator
Lesley Darling, PLTI Coordinator

C. Young called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

Approval of Minutes – February 17, 2009

The minutes of the February 17, 2009 meeting were unanimously approved on a motion by E. Judson and seconded by H. Fink.

Community Health Presentation – presented by Deepa Joseph

Environmental Health Report – prepared by Laura Miller

No Freeze Shelter

As previously reported, the no-freeze shelter at Beth-El began on the evening of Saturday, January 10, 2009. The hours were from 9 p.m. to 7 a.m. In order to open the no freeze shelter this winter, Beth-El raised the funds through donations from local service clubs, individuals, and some of their partner churches.

During the period from January 10, 2009 to March 7, 2009, a total of one hundred ninety-three (193) individuals were served. Of that number the unduplicated count is 33 males and 6 females. The maximum capacity of the shelter was eight (8) cots. Full capacity was not reached on any given night. The highest population on any one night was seven, but the majority of the nights, the population ranged from two to four clients. During the winter of **2008**, the Beth-El no-freeze shelter serviced ninety-three (93) people, of that number; the unduplicated count was thirteen (13).

The Health Department will be meeting with Beth-El Center, Milford Social Services, other appropriate City Departments and some of the local churches to discuss some of the issues regarding an emergency no-freeze shelter operation in Milford. Not only is it important to shelter people over night from the extreme cold, individuals must leave shelters during the day while the temperatures remain at or below freezing, and some may have no place to go and warm up.

Recalls

On January 10, 2009, King Nut Companies, the 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. 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.

This peanut recall is on going and continues to affect many different types of packaged foods, *if* a food item was manufactured using peanut products recalled by Peanut Corporation of America that food has the potential to be contaminated with *Salmonella*. Most recently Chocolate Chewies, Inc., of Eugene, OR recalled Baba Joon's Peanut Chocolate Chewie cookies, because they have the potential to be contaminated with *Salmonella*. The cookies were manufactured using peanut products recalled by Peanut Corporation of America. The peanut chocolate chewies were distributed in Eugene, OR; Newtown, CT; East Meadow, NY; and Coral Springs, FL. via internet sales and wholesale orders.

The Environmental Health Division continues to post recall notices on our website, issue health alerts, 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. To date we have no reports of illness linked to this peanut/ peanut product recall.

Comments:

Nursing Division Report – prepared by Joan Cagginello, RN

Influenza

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) national influenza activity classification, widespread flu activity continues in Connecticut. Connecticut is among thirty-five states that report widespread flu activity at this time. All Connecticut counties report activity, with a total of more than 2,700 laboratory confirmed cases since the beginning of the flu season. Fairfield and New Haven counties account for more than two-thirds of the confirmed cases.

Nationally, there has been an increased level of outpatient influenza-like illness visits to healthcare providers. Nationwide, there have been a total of 26 pediatric deaths that were documented influenza-associated since the beginning of the influenza season this year.

Immunizations

Due to an ongoing nationwide shortage of the Haemophilus Influenzae type B (Hib) vaccine, the Connecticut Department of Public Health has temporarily suspended the school entry required booster dose of Hib vaccine for Pre-K and Kindergarten entry. The primary series of Hib is still

strongly advised to be administered at 2, 4 and 6 months of age. The booster dose, typically administered between 12-15 months of age has been suspended and will be reinstated once the Hib vaccine supply is adequate.

The Connecticut Department of Public Health and the State Department of Education announced last week that anticipated changes in immunization requirements for daycare and school students will be delayed until the fall of 2010, as the changes in regulations have not yet been approved. The proposed modifications include a change in pneumococcal , hepatitis A, varicella and mumps vaccines.

School Health Services

The nurses and dental hygienists will participate in their Professional Development Day on March 30th. A full day program will be held, including biannual CPR re-certification from the American Heart Association. Several members of the Health Department staff will join the nurses to become certified as well. The school nurses will also be joined by the school social workers and school psychologists for the afternoon program presented by Attorney Marsha Moses on Section 504 Accommodation Planning for students.

The two new school nurses hired in August have successfully completed their probationary period. Lisa Skawinski at Foran High School and Alissa Erotopulous at St. Gabriel School have assimilated well as members of the Health Department staff and active members of their school communities

Milford Public Schools are holding kindergarten registration in all elementary schools during the month of March. While the number of students enrolling in school is consistent over the past few years, the number of students with health concerns has increased. The elementary school nurses have met with the parents of all of the students registering for kindergarten to discuss health concerns and obtain releases to speak with primary care providers regarding the health care needs of the children during the school day.

Comments:

Community Health Division Report - prepared by Deepa Joseph

Disease Surveillance

There were 48 cases of disease reported for the month of February. The Health Department received 31 reports of laboratory-confirmed cases of influenza. We have had a total of 46 cases of influenza reported in Milford to date for the 2008-2009 influenza season.

Putting on AIRS Asthma Program

The program has received a total of 64 referrals for this contract year, with 2 of those referrals received in February. As we approach the end of the two-year contract, program staff is working with DPH on the evaluation phase of the program. Outcome evaluation data will be available in August 2009 based on activities that will begin in April, including surveys and database analysis.

2nd Milford Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI)

Milford's 2nd PLTI class has reached the midway point in this 20-week course focused on teaching leadership skills to parents to encourage advocacy on behalf of Milford's children. All

participants have submitted Community Project proposals ranging in topics from health, education, safety, and the environment. Classes will continue through June and will culminate with a local graduation ceremony to be held mid-June.

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 on June 17, 2009. The keynote speaker for the symposium this year is Christiana Bratiosis, a doctoral candidate at Boston University. Christiana has focused her research and clinical work on adults with compulsive hoarding, working under renowned researcher Dr. Gail Steketee. Christiana's dissertation research focuses on the formation and operation of multi-disciplinary task forces as a way that communities are currently responding to the ever-increasing number and severity of public hoarding cases. Assistant State's Attorney for Housing Matters Judith Dicine will also be speaking on the topic of reasonable accommodations as it pertains to hoarding. The symposium will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn in Milford.

Comments:

Emergency Preparedness Reports

Regional/CRI Emergency Preparedness Report—Prepared by Diana Yassanye, MS

Regional Preparedness Grants

The Vulnerable Populations Grant that was awarded to Milford Health is underway. This grant is designed to engage service organizations with clients considered "vulnerable populations". Instead of requesting that those citizens who require supportive services to register before an emergency, we intend to charge service agencies with assisting with their clients in an emergency. The funding will go towards provider education, outreach and database building.

The Public Health Preparedness Summit offered new information on the changing face of public health preparedness. One of the most discussed issues was the public health response to radiological disasters. The third hospital catchment-area exercise in the regional series will address some aspect of the recovery and mitigation in a radiological emergency. This exercise is slated for the fall and there will be a regional training this summer leading up to the exercise.

Cities Readiness Initiative

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

As a component of the exercise, DPH has decided to drop off dummy pallets of medications to each participating Mass Dispensing Area on May 18th. This will test the state's routes and delivery procedures as well as engage the State Police, as escorts.

Local Emergency Preparedness/Volunteer Activity Report—Prepared by Tara Mustakos, CHES

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

The Milford Health Department has received back approximately 60% of the surveys distributed out to volunteers 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.

Emergency operations shelter training will take place for the interested MRC/CERT member volunteers. Shelter operations training will be given to the volunteers through a partnership with the Milford Red Cross. Further development for this training is currently underway.

The next scheduled public health exercise is planned for May 19th, 2009. The exercise “1st 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 active throughout all participating agencies. 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.

The Milford Health Department will also be participating with the Milford Fire Department in a Table Top Exercise on June 4th, *Hurricane Ready 09*. This exercise will be a test of emergency communications, evacuation and sheltering policies. Currently this exercise is being planned through several surrounding fire departments and will be brought to the local level. More information to follow.

Comments:

New Business: None.

Director’s Report:

- D. McBride stated that the budget hearing for the Health Department will be on April 15, 2009 at 7:00pm.
- D. McBride reported that he has been appointed to the Governor’s Taskforce on Climate Change to work on issues related to its impact on public health.

Adjournment:

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Deepa Joseph, MPH
Recorder