

North Shore Public Health Collaborative

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 18th, 2024

2:00-3:10 pm

Attendees

Name	Role	Community
Judith Ryan	Public Health Nurse	Danvers
Lisa Tobin	Director	Lynn
Andrew Petty	Director	Marblehead
Sharon Cameron	Director	Peabody
Chassea Robinson	Public Health Nurse	Peabody
David Greenbaum	Director	Salem
Jeff Vaughn	Director	Swampscott
Laura Nash	Epidemiologist	NSPHC
Meg Dlusniewski	Coordinator	NSPHC
Kitzia Diaz	Public Health Nurse	NSPHC
Hayden Fitch	Sanitarian	NSPHC

Work Plan and Budget Updates

- There is a meeting with A1 pest control scheduled for Monday at 11 to discuss Lynn's pilot rodent mitigation program in-depth.
- Hiring updates: There are no current candidates for the social worker position. The last of 3 Public Health Nurse interviews will be completed on Tuesday. The last of 4 Community Health Worker interviews will be completed on Monday.
 - The group discussed what the role of the Community Health Worker will be. Part of this person's job will be to work with each community to identify priorities and start to define the role of a CHW in the collaborative. Examples include community outreach, developing communications materials, assisting TB patients, and connecting community members with resources.
- Relavent Systems will install the inspection software onto iPads directly, so they'll be ready to go when everyone receives them.
- Budget updates: Due to the delay in the DPH contract amendment and subsequent hiring delay, we anticipate having about \$225-\$250k in unspent staff funds. The group agreed that contracting with a food inspector to provide additional support through this fiscal year would be a good use of extra funds. The group discussed how to use funds to improve language capacity. The previous request for a Spanish class or language learning software was declined. The group suggested additional Pocket Talk devices as they work best when there are at least two devices, equipment for live interpretation, and contracting with the New American Center for interpreter services.

Epidemiology Updates

COVID 19

- Updated vaccine uptake remains generally low
- Vaccine data from this fall tells us that the vaccine correlates with 70% effectiveness of preventing COVID-19 hospitalization
- Wastewater information tells us we're in a time of increased activity, but concentrations are decreasing, a roughly similar pattern as seen in last year
- Vaccination rates (as of 1/11/24):
 - Beverly – 20.7%

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- Danvers – 19.1%
- Lynn – 10.6%
- Marblehead – 30.8%
- Nahant – 27.4%
- Peabody – 15.9%
- Salem – 19.5%
- Swampscott – 27.6%
- LONG COVID: a study recently posted in the BMJ followed a cohort of people through 2022; demonstrated that there is a dose-response relationship between the number of COVID-19 vaccinations you receive and long COVID
 - 1 dose – reduces risk of long-COVID by 21%
 - 2 doses – reduces risk of long-COVID by 59%
 - 3+ doses – reduces risk of long-COVID by 73%

Influenza

- Influenza severity right now is classified as “very high” in Essex County
- Most common strain is type A, unsubtyped
- Vaccination rates
 - Beverly – 40.3%
 - Danvers – 41.5%
 - Lynn – 33.0%
 - Marblehead – 50.8%
 - Nahant – 47.2%
 - Peabody – 38.8%
 - Salem – 37.8%
 - Swampscott – 48.2%

RSV

- Updated as of January 11th, 2024
- In Essex County 30,598 residents have been vaccinated against RSV
- In MA 272,458 residents have been vaccinated against RSV

Measles

- Two active YET unrelated measles outbreaks among unvaccinated people: Philadelphia and New Jersey
- A Delaware children’s hospital on alert after an unvaccinated patient exposed 30 others
- Two Washington DC airports on alert for an unvaccinated, infected international traveler
- An explosion of measles cases in the U.K. in the past month (255 cases)
- Why is this important?
 - Measles has epidemic cycles. It flares up every four to five years—2008, 2011, and 2019. We can also see this pattern during the pre-vaccine era (see below).
 - It is exactly 5 years since the last flare-up, which suggests this may be a bad year. Of course, the pandemic could throw off patterns
 - Important to note that babies under the age of 12 months cannot be vaccinated and are put at risk
 - Even if you are vaccinated, you can still be a carrier

Body Art Regulations

- The group discussed the balance between smaller community-specific meetings with the goal of keeping the regulations consistent across the region. The group agreed to hold three in-person regional meetings, one in each of the municipalities with the most body art facilities (Salem, Peabody, and Lynn). Since there are different

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considerations for each specialty (tattoo, piercing, microblading), it may make sense to either set an agenda with specific times for each discussion area or hold breakout groups.

Community Updates

- Marblehead is conducting its homeless census; this is a state requirement for certain grants that are carried out by different organizations or departments depending on the municipality. Salem has had a difficult time finding temporary shelter for people living in the outdoor encampment; the Salvation Army is one potential option. They want to make sure there is a place for people to stay before breaking up an encampment, especially during the winter months. The shelters housing recently arrived migrants are full. Many people living in encampments have been offered housing but prefer to live in the encampment for a number of reasons, including wanting to stay with their significant other and pets and feeling a sense of community and safety in the encampment.