



**Delaware County Health Department
Board of Health Meeting
January 18, 2023**

ATTENDEES

Rosemarie Halt, Chair
Lily Higgins, MD, Vice Chair
Oni Richards
Annemarie Hirsch
P.J. Brennan, MD

Meeting Minutes

- I. There being a duly convened quorum, Chair Rosemarie Halt called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.
- II. Chair Announcements
 1. Board reappointments
 - a. County Council has approved Lily Higgins as Vice Chairman and Annemarie Hirsch, who are both currently serving.
 - b. Nomination for Rosemarie Halt, Chair; approved by Annemarie Hirsch, seconded by Oni Richards.
 - c. Nomination of P.J. Brennan; approved by Annemarie Hirsch, seconded by Rosemarie Halt.
 - d. Nomination of Lily Higgins, Vice Chair; approved by Rosemarie Halt, seconded by Oni Richards.
 - e. Announcement: a Board of Health Executive Session will be held after this meeting with regard to current litigation.
- III. Public Comment
 1. None
- IV. Approval of Minutes
 1. Approval process to take place during Executive Session after Board of Health Meeting.
- V. Director Updates
 1. Community Health Assessment/Community Health Implementation Plan
 - a. Community Health Assessment in final stretch of formatting and incorporating appropriate data.
 - b. DCHD utilizes a variety of secondary data sources to complete Community Health Assessments.
 - c. This access will in the Community Health Implementation Plan promoting health equity. It will improve access to healthcare and community services.
 - d. Three identified priorities:
 - i. Promote whole-person care, prevent mental health and substance use disorders.
 - ii. Promote healthy women, infants, and children.
 - iii. Prevent chronic diseases.
 - e. CHIP is next in the process and will:
 - i. Same consultant will be utilized to build upon training, education, and guidance for the team.

- ii. Create targeted goals, activities, and evaluations.
- iii. DCHD will have representation on state health improvement plan which compliments the county health improvement plan.
- iv. Launching a meeting next week with partners in each of the three priorities.
- v. S.M.A.R.T.I.E. goals will be used (Strategic, Measurable, Ambitious, Realistic, Time-bound, Inclusive, and Equitable).
- vi. CHA and CHIP will be sent to the Board of Health member and made public; comments are welcome.

2. Communications Update

Matt Rankin, Communications Specialist

a. Presentation

Question: Any follow up on the Detera pouches? Some responded the pouches were great and others were confused about what to do with it. DCHD will send messaging after the initial launch.

Question: Do we know how many pouches were received back to DCHD? None, because they are disposable. Received some surveys, 46% said it prompted them to dispose of their medicines.

Question: Are the demographics of your social media sites able to target different age groups? DCHD could expand into TikTok and Instagram.

Question: Saw a post on social media. Are you assessing how people are responding to the posts? Yes, we see them and would say that most attitudes are very positive, with a few exceptions. Also, people are sharing. Negative responses are wanting attention; DCHD is not engaging with negative comments on the posts.

3. Respiratory Illness

a. Wastewater monitoring

- i. Monitoring is done by the state through Delcora.
- ii. Measuring Covid virus, RSV, and flu. Wastewater sampling verifies what DCHD is observing as trends go higher or lower.
- iii. Covid virus in wastewater; seeing a little decrease as of today; RSV has been increasing, flu increasing but less than last year; pneumonia has been detected. RSV has increased this year over last year.
- iv. Not all respiratory illness cases are reported; peaks were around holidays.

Question: What actions are taken around wastewater? The results can influence DCHD messaging and timing of messages. DCHD has an imbedded school nurse working with Delco schools where DCHD can share respiratory illness concerns.

Question: If detected in the wastewater early, would we promote early vaccinations, CDC? There's great potential in using the data as we learn more about its validity.

Question: Only able to test for respiratory diseases? We only receive respiratory illness data. Unable to get granular data.

Question: You mentioned other partners, ED's have been swamped since the holidays. Is DCHD working with them to get a weekly report from them? Well-established HD's have that type of relationship. DCHD has some reporting from hospitals. DCHD building relationship with hospitals to share data, situational awareness, etc. These relationships are built over years.

Question: Chief Bettigole discussed procedure during Hahnemann closure. Sounds like DCHD is building those relationships. Maybe have a weekly call, as during Covid.

Might be able to start doing that quarterly? Director Lyon is familiar with these relationships, it's a great next step for DCHD. Bandwidth for staffing is not there yet.

Question: There's Healthshare where health information is shared; should be able to get ED patient information in real time. We can explore that. Must evaluate where it is valuable in a public health setting.

Value seen in the advocacy; the impact of the capacity on the institution. Thinks it enables better advocacy. Also suggest with strategic planning, consider if some of the BOH members can facilitate calls. When you take the daily data and you can plot that and pull for Delco residents. Then you would know daily, weekly why a Delco resident went to a hospital/ED.

Question: Outcome of measles case? Currently 9 cases in the region. The case in Delco is recovering, no major complications.

Question: Status of TB case? They are adherent; did not require legal action. Responding to treatment.

VI. New Business

1. Reviewed Consolidated Report. Staffing increases in each division. New positions being approved by County HR; interviews are happening and going well.
2. Recognized the tremendous job DCHD staff did when Dr. Bogen, PA DOH Acting Secretary of Health, visited the DCHD Yeadon Wellness Center site. Director Lyon was notified late Monday that Dr. Bogen would be visiting and touring DCHD; she and her team decided to visit Yeadon. Executive Director of the County also attended. Attendees had a nice dialogue with Dr. Bogen as she described the State's priorities, which matched with DCHD; she seemed very impressed with what DCHD is doing.

VII. Public Comment

1. **Bill McIntyre, 215 Cherry Hill Ln., Broomall.** Thought that pharmacies carrying the Deterra pouch is a good idea. Wastewater issue with people flushing their medicines. While wastewater is being monitored, is it possible to target medicines in the wastewater to see if there is a decrease since Deterra has been put in place?
2. **Patty McIntyre, 215 Cherry Hill Ln., Broomall.** Not understanding the panic over measles cases.

Reply from Dr. Brennan: If you take a typical birth cohort of approximately 3 million children who were born in a typical year prior to measles vaccine being available, virtually of the children in that cohort would have developed measles early in life. Even with a low death rate several thousand children might die from measles infection in a typical year. Measles is not supposed to be a deadly disease, but it is. In the early 1990s Philadelphia had a measles outbreak in children primarily in two schools in North Philadelphia. Approximately 1800 kids developed measles. The philosophy of those schools at the time was not to vaccinate; nine children died. Deaths from measles are preventable by vaccination. Other complications can occur. Infection occurring in a pregnant person can result in severe birth defects in the infant and measles encephalitis, an infection involving the brain can also cause severe disability. More and more, people are foregoing vaccines and school age vaccination rates are falling. Of the 9 local individuals who have measles, 140 people have had to be quarantined to prevent further spread. A tremendous amount of effort to stop the disease has been expended. Public health is about preventing injury, premature death, and illness. DCHD makes calls to see if those infected have immunity, if not,

28 days of quarantine is required for exposed non-immune persons. Our team educates, prevents panic, and promotes prevention.

3. **Frank Spina, 2835 N. Providence Rd., Upper Providence.** Research found that in 2023 community project funding money \$1.57M came to DCHD to fund health resources. Part of money was to go to establishing public health, electronic medical records system, and a mobile health unit. How are the purchase decisions made? RFP's?

Jonathan Lichtenstein, County Solicitor replied: Contracts go through county council; listed on the Delco website under Purchasing Department; you will see the expenditures there.

Director Lyon replied: Yes, the money was granted to DCHD. However, zero dollars of that money has been received by DCHD; they are earmarked.

- VIII. Motion to adjourn made by Chair Rosemarie Halt; approved by, Annemarie Hirsch, seconded by Lily Higgins.

Next meeting is March 21, 2024 at the Yeadon Wellness Center, 125 Chester Ave., Yeadon, PA. There will be public notice of the location.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa C. Lyon, MPH, CPH
Board Secretary