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### **Miscellaneous**

#### **CT Association of Directors of Health (CADH)**

Positions held: Member; Elected to Board of Directors; Emergency Preparedness Committee Chair; Advocacy Committee Member

The CT Association of Directors of Health continues to co-host bi-weekly statewide local health calls with DPH. The CADH Board of Directors meetings are held monthly. The Advocacy Committee has been meeting weekly to review and respond to proposed legislation that may impact public health. We have submitted additional testimony to the co-chairs and members of the appropriations committee on the following (we will continue to meet weekly and respond accordingly):

1. Testimony in support of SB 340: An Act Concerning Tobacco License Renewals.
2. Testimony opposing the Governor's proposal, SB 16: An Act Concerning Items to Implement The Governor's Budget, to suspend the transfer of funds to the Tobacco and Health Trust Fund for Fiscal Year 2025 and consider increasing the amount of funding to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's recommended amount between \$22.7M and \$32M annually.

### **Workforce Development**

Lisa T. continues to chair the NVHD Workforce Development Committee. Staff continue to work on completing the required two online training courses this quarter. The staff meeting training topic was on nutrition since March is National Nutrition Month. Siddhi Sheth, MS, RDN, CDN and Cingari Family Dietitian (Shoprite Stores) and her student intern provided a training to staff.

#### **Grant: Public Health Workforce Development and Infrastructure Funds to Local Health Departments and Districts**

*Status: Contract Executed with the Department of Public Health.*

We will be rolling out the activity plan for this grant beginning in April.

### **Quality Improvement**

The QI Committee met on March 14<sup>th</sup> for its quarterly meeting. The group will individually review the NVHD QI Plan and compare notes for the official yearly plan assessment at the next scheduled quarterly meeting. Paulina and Vanessa have continued working on NVHD's Annual Quick QI Awards, which will be presented to staff at the conclusion of National Public Health Week in April. The QI Project to clean up the R: Drive is ongoing.

### **Naugatuck Valley Overdose Prevention & Education (NOPE) Program**

#### **CHIP Substance Use Workgroup/ Valley Opioid Task Force**

I continue to monitor fatal and non-fatal overdose data as well as hospital admission data related to substance use. Our next Task Force meeting is on April 17<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Grant: Academic Detailing on Opioids Safety (ADOPS)**

*Status: Contract Executed with CT Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS)*

We are currently advertising and trying to schedule additional physician/APRN/pharmacist site visits. Lisa has been traveling around the Valley trying to recruit participants while also supplying opioid prevention education materials from the CT LiveLoud campaign.



Grant: Overdose Data to Action: Limiting Overdose through Collaborative Actions in Localities (OD2A)

*Status: Application Approved! Awaiting sub-contract from New Haven Health Department & CDC.*

The purpose of the initiative is to implement strategies that will decrease fatal and non-fatal drug overdoses, decrease illicit opioid and stimulate use, improve health equity, increase adoption of harm and stigma reduction strategies, and improve care by tracking data on connections to and retention in care.

Amendments to our contract are in progress and NVHD will now be hiring two full-time Overdose Prevention Navigator positions. One Navigator will be designated to the Valley, and one will cover the additional communities of Milford, Orange, and West Haven. This contract will run through August 2028.

**Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Anti-Racism (IDEA) Committee**

The committee is still in the planning stages of the IDEA Assessment and has had to postpone March's meeting to April. As part of NVHD's acknowledgement of Women's History Month, IDEA collaborated with Health Educator Lisa Trupp to promote four notable female public health heroines who have contributed to the field; read more about them on our social media!

The "Idea of the Month" postings (in which the committee shares one term or concept from NVHD's IDEA Glossary) in the building have been successfully executed; the term highlighted in March was "neurodiversity," inspired by the numerous health observances centered around mental and brain health, such as National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, National Traumatic Brain Injury Awareness Month, National Sleep Awareness Week, and World Down Syndrome Day.

**Air Quality and Climate Change**

Grant: EPA Air Quality Monitoring Grant

*Status: Application Approved! Awaiting Approved Revised Budget and Sub-Contract from CT DPH;*

*Phase: Training and Planning Meetings*

**Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP)**

Barbara attended the Region 5 PHEP workgroup meeting for program staff and health directors hosted by the Region 5 CRI Lead, Torrington Area Health District, on March 19<sup>th</sup>.

DPH hosted the sixth session of their Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Capabilities Training Series on March 21<sup>st</sup>, which Barbara and I attended. The topic was Medical Surge (Capability #10).

**ESF 8: Public Health & Medical Services, Chair**

I facilitated the Region 5 ESF 8 meeting on March 1<sup>st</sup>; Barbara attended. We also attended the Region 2 ESF 8 meeting on March 20<sup>th</sup>. I attended and provided the ESF #8 update to the Region 5 REPT on January 8<sup>th</sup>. I attended the Region 2 Regional Emergency Planning Team (REPT) Steering Committee & full REPT meeting on March 15<sup>th</sup>.

I attended the Division of Emergency Management & Homeland Security (DEMHS) media meeting with emergency management officials and Connecticut's TV and radio stations for more effective public safety messaging, especially during storms and other emergencies on February 5<sup>th</sup>. I also attended and provided an update on our Regional Family Assistance Center Operations Plan to the DEMHS Region 5 School Safety and Security Working Group.

Barbara and I attended a joint Region 5, 2, and 1 Family Assistance Center Committee meeting. I continue help lead the effort to update all three regional plans, update the training curriculum for workers and volunteers, and begin to put



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together an application for the Healthcare Coalition funding to support a tabletop and/or functional exercise hopefully in the Fall of 2024. I was asked to be a panelist speaker on Mass Fatality response and Family Assistance Centers at the CT Conference for Municipalities Emergency Management Symposium in April at Camp Nett in Niantic on April 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Barbara and I attended the virtual training session for PER-409, Pandemic Planning for Mental and Behavioral Health on March 6<sup>th</sup>. Barbara attended the Mental Health First Aid training held at Meriden Health Department on March 7<sup>th</sup> (co-taught by NVHD’s Lisa Trupp). On March 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, Barbara attended and passed the TEEX training course on Domestic Preparedness for Health Organizations with Community Infrastructure, hosted at Post University in Waterbury.



Pictured: Jess and Barbara at the HCC Conference.

From March 24<sup>th</sup> through March 28<sup>th</sup>, Barbara was in Cleveland, Ohio attending NACCHO's National Preparedness Summit, where public health and emergency preparedness specialists from all over the country convened to network, learn, and share experiences. I attended the conference virtually.

CT Healthcare Coalition (HCC)

Public Health Representative & Voting Member

We continue to meet monthly. Barbara and I attended the CT Healthcare Coalition Conference that was held on March 18<sup>th</sup>.

ELC Grant: Surveillance & Outbreak Response Team (SORT)

- COVID-19 – Status: Endemic Response
  - *An endemic means a disease is spreading in a community at normal or expected levels*
- Mpox – Status: Response - Surveillance for cases and education
- RSV & Flu – Status: Monitoring case rates

The following update is provided by Paulina:

ELC staff has been updating existing COVID-19 guidance materials in accordance with CDC’s new respiratory virus guidance released on March 1, 2024, as well as creating new materials based on the update.

Jess and Paulina have invited personnel at Griffin Hospital regarding the Long COVID video project and are in the process of setting up a meeting to discuss the project further; we are hoping to feature a Griffin physician and patients who have experience with Long COVID.

Table 1. Adult Case Statistics (18+)

	February	March
Total Cases & Contacts Managed	204	48
Successful Phone Contact		
Attempted Contact: Left voicemail/invalid number/no voicemail available		1
Attempted Contact: Letters Mailed	182	42





Table 2. Youth and Teen Case Statistics (0-17)

	<b>February</b>	<b>March</b>
Total Cases & Contacts Managed	98	8
Successful Phone Contact	24	
Attempted Contact: Left voicemail/invalid number/no voicemail available	8	3
Attempted Contact: Letters Mailed	6	4

\*Please note that "Total Cases & Contacts Managed" also includes reports of self-tests originating from various sources such as schools, childcare centers, congregate living facilities, etc. and as such do not always come with contact information and/or do not always warrant further follow-up by NVHD staff.



**COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES**  
**Carissa Caserta, MPH**  
**Assistant Director**  
**March 2024**

**Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)**

Jess, Lisa T., Kristie and I continue to work on CHIP initiatives and attend monthly meetings. Our Sacred Heart University interns are currently working on creating a paper resource guide based on the resources collected by NVHD and CHIP workgroup staff. The guide will be published in our next CHIP iteration.

**Community Health Programs**

**A Matter of Balance**

A Matter of Balance program was completed at the Shelton Senior Center with 9 participants. The next program started on March 12<sup>th</sup> at Ansonia Senior Center and has 11 participants.

**Diabetes Self-Management Program (DSMP)**

Kristie and Lisa T. completed an in-person DSMP at Hutt Housing in Naugatuck with 7 participants. It was such a great program and they plan to go back soon!

The next DSMP program will be at the Shelton Senior Center in May.

**Chronic Pain Self-Management (CPSM)**

Kristie and I completed our first in-person Chronic Pain Self-Management program at the Naugatuck Senior Center! The class went so well and we are looking forward to teaching one again.



Pictured: Kristie and Lisa T. with the Hutt Housing DSMP participants.

**Question, Persuade, & Refer (QPR) Suicide Prevention Training**

Lisa T. has scheduled a QPR training for Griffin Health staff in April.

**Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)**

The MHFA training on February 13<sup>th</sup> was postponed due to weather and has been rescheduled to March 7<sup>th</sup> at the Meriden Health Department.

**Lead Poisoning Prevention Program**

Lead case management is a daily task that Lisa T. completes by reviewing an online database that shows any new testing results and updates needed.

**Immunization Grants & Clinical Services**

**Immunization Action Plan (IAP) Grant Program**

IAP: Elizabeth completed 2 IQIP visits and 1 in-person site visit for her program. She will also be attending the Griffin Baby Fair this Spring to provide vaccination information to our community members.



COVID-19 Immunization Action Plan (CAP) & Immunization and Vaccines for Children COVID-19 Supplemental Funding

- Ansonia Kick Off to Kindergarten Registration Fair:  
Vanessa and Nancy attended along with other NVHD staff and provided back-to-school immunization information for parents to stay up to date on their soon-to-be kindergarteners required school vaccines. (pictures attached)
- Mental Health First Aid Training:  
Vanessa and Nancy attended the Mental Health First Aid Training co-taught by NVHDs health educator, Lisa, to better understand how to assist people in our community struggling with mental health problems.
- Rapid Community Assessment (RCA) Planning:  
Community health has begun to plan and meet about doing another RCA in the towns of Ansonia and Derby at the end of April.
- Translation:  
Over the last month, there were multiple instances (11) where translation from English to Spanish was needed, and Vanessa assisted. Some examples of where translation was needed: were social media posts, flyers, making vaccine appointments, and during vaccine appointments.
- Outreach throughout the Valley:  
Have continued to go into the community on a weekly basis to provide information to community partners and their clients. Also attended the Trinity Church food giveaway, and the Derby Public Library to host an education table.



Pictured: Nancy and Vanessa at Prendergast School for Kindergarten Registration Day

Clinical Services

In March, Kristie provided 31 vaccines to children and 1 adult in the Valley.

Healthcare-Associated Infections & Antimicrobial Resistance & Infection Prevention & Control

DPH continues to host a monthly meeting with the CT DPH HAI-AR staff and local health departments/districts building capacity in Infection Prevention & Control (IPC). Jess attended the meeting on March 27<sup>th</sup>. DPH also hosts an infectious disease meeting every month related to prevention and control, and this month was focused on Measles. The call consisted of an overview of Measles and what the roles are of the state and local health departments.

Tuberculosis (TB)

Kristie continues to monitor one resident for Tuberculosis.

Miscellaneous

Community Health Staff Meeting

All community health staff met on March 4<sup>th</sup> to talk about upcoming events and grant deliverables.



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Radon

Lisa T. continues to hand out radon test kits while supplies last. All community members who have picked up a kit, were contacted and reminded to use the test. The DPH does collect the return rate information in their yearly reports, therefore we would like to have a high return rate percentage.

National Public Health Week

Every year, staff come together and plan events/educational opportunities for National Public Health Week which is the first week of April. Based on the topics that were chose from the American Public Health Association, we have planned community events or outreach for each day. See the flyer below for more information!

**NVHD promotes  
National Public Health Week!**  
April 1-7, 2024

**THE TOPIC OF THIS YEAR'S PUBLIC HEALTH WEEK IS:**  
Protecting, Connecting & Thriving.  
We are Public Health!  
JOIN US & FOLLOW ALONG AS NVHD CELEBRATES WITH WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

<p><b>MONDAY</b> CIVIC ENGAGEMENT</p> <p>Come meet NVHD staff at community locations! More information to follow.</p>	<p><b>TUESDAY</b> HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS</p> <p>NVHD staff will work together to clean up local walkways.</p>	<p><b>WEDNESDAY</b> CLIMATE CHANGE</p> <p>Come and learn about recycling! See our presentation on social media</p>
<p><b>THURSDAY</b> NEW TOOLS &amp; INNOVATIONS</p> <p>Check out our new restaurant inspection section on our website!</p>	<p><b>FRIDAY</b> SEXUAL HEALTH</p> <p>Help us, help our community! NVHD will be hosting a donation drive for personal hygiene products for March and April</p>	<p><b>SATURDAY</b> EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS</p> <p>Check our social media for emergency preparedness tips!</p>
<p><b>SUNDAY</b> FUTURE OF PUBLIC HEALTH</p> <p>Meet our student interns and why they chose public health!</p>		

Follow us on social media for more details!





**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**  
**Melanie Dokla, BS, RS**  
**Assistant Director**  
**March 2024**

**Food Service Establishments**

Seasonal permit applications are being reviewed and scheduled for an inspection.

Staff continue to conduct routine inspections, plan views and inspections for food service establishments that are new or changing ownership.

Glenda Buenaventura, per diem food inspector, continues to assist in conducting food service inspection after hours and on the weekend up to 20 hours a week.

Amy Durand, sanitarian, is awaiting field standardization with DPH Food Protection Program.

**Public Pools**

Applications to renew the existing public pool permits were mailed out. The permits expire on April 30<sup>th</sup> and must be renewed by then for year-round pools and before seasonal pools open for the summer.

**Body Care**

Staff continue to conduct plan views and inspections for body care establishments that are new or changing ownership.

**Subsurface Sewage Disposal Systems (SSDS)**

Staff continue to conduct SSDS inspections, B-100 visits, soil testing, B-100 plan reviews, new SSDS plans reviews, and issue permits to construct/discharge.

Laurel continues to train staff in the SSDS program.

NVHD's Subsurface Sewage Disposal System (SSDS) and Well Codes were reviewed and updated; a draft was sent to Attorney Stanik for comment. We are awaiting his comments to move forward with a public hearing to adopt these codes.

Shaun Duffy has paused assisting with septic work for a few months and may return in the summer months when he is available.

**Housing Complaints**

Environmental staff continues to investigate housing code violations and complaints.

**Emergency Responses After Hours**

	Date/Time	Location	Description of Event
1.	None		

