Legislative Updates

I presented with NYSACHO members at the New York State Association of County Health Officials (NYSACHO) 2019-20 Budget and Legislative Priorities in Albany to State Legislators on 2/27/2019.

NYSACHO members included: Paul Pettit – Public Health Director, Genesee & Orleans (President) -Dan Stapleton – Public Health Director, Niagara County (Vice President) -Frank Kruppa –Public Health Director, Tompkins County (Board of Directors) -Larry Eisenstein – Commissioner, Nassau County Department of Health (Board of Directors) Linda Beers –Public Health Director, Essex County (Board of Directors) -Sarah Ravenhall – NYSACHO Executive Director

NYSACHO’s mission is to support, advocate for, and empower the 58 local health departments (LHDs) in their work to prevent disease, disability and injury and promote health and wellness throughout New York State. The Essex County Health Department is a partner and operational extension, working in the forefront of our community, addressing public health issues and serving as the first line of defense against all public health crises.

Local health departments have reached a tipping point. To adequately maintain core public health services and address emerging threats, we respectfully request:

1. **Article 6 State Aid**: Article 6 of the Public Health Law provides statutory authority for state aid for general public health work and reimbursement for expenses incurred by LHDs for core public health services.
   a. Restoration of the proposed cut to State Aid Reimbursement for NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, which would reduce the percent of reimbursement above the base grant from 36% to 20%. This will result in a nearly $60M revenue loss to essential public health programs. A cut of this magnitude will have a direct impact on the health and wellbeing of all New Yorkers and reduce or fully eliminate meaningful prevention programs.
   b.Allocation of necessary resources to Article 6 base grants to ensure public health services are eligible for full reimbursement of local expenditures:
      i. From $650,000 to $750,000 in full services LHDs;
      ii. $500,000 to $550,000 in partial service LHDs;
      iii. In addition, in per capita reimbursement amount from 0.65¢ to $1.30.

2. **Adult-Use Regulated Cannabis**: Consideration of a slow and cautious approach to legalization of an adult-use cannabis program with the interest of public health and mental health at the forefront of decision making by:
   a. Ensuring local health departments receive flexible funding to expand workforce capacity. Protecting public health must be the first major pillar of a regulated cannabis program and must be funded sufficiently to ensure harm reduction.
   b. Inclusion of statutory language, which will fortify State requirement to deliver funding to local health department for surveillance, education and inspection/enforcement activities.
   c. Guaranteeing local health departments, through NYSACHO, have a seat at the table as regulations and policies are developed.

3. **Tobacco Control**: Your support and reinforcement of the statewide Tobacco 21 policy and all components of the tobacco control package, which will protect millions of New Yorkers from exposure to dangerous tobacco products.
Local health departments are committed to supporting and carrying out strong public health policy, but the success of new or expanded policies can only be achieved with investments within flexible grant programs to allow for effective implementation at the local level. **Public health responses require public health resources!**

1. **Early Intervention:** NYSACHO supports the proposed 5% rate increase for targeted service providers and recommends:
   a. Extension of rate increase to include all EI providers, evaluators and service coordinators.
   b. Reflection of rate increase within enacted budget.

We were able to meet with the following members and staff, covering a lot of territory through our divide and conquer strategy!

1. Assemblyman Dick Gottfried
2. Assemblymember Solages
3. Senator Robert Ortt
4. Senate Finance & Counsel – Health Team
5. Senator Gustavo Rivera & Kristin Sinclair
6. Assembly Ways & Means – Health Team
7. Assemblymember McDonald
8. Assemblymember Fahy
9. Assemblymember Rosenthal
10. Senator Brooks
11. Senator Gaughran
12. Senator Thomas
13. Senator Benjamin
14. Senator Carlucci
15. Assemblymember Dan Stec (Betty Little was not in)
16. Assemblymember Billy Jones
PUBLIC HEALTH UNIT ACCREDITATION UPDATE

On February 22, ECHD received feedback from the Site Visit Team in preparation for the Site Visit, scheduled for April 3 and 4. A total of 35 measures (out of 100) were reopened by PHAB allowing ECHD to submit additional documentation for the Site Visit Team to consider. Submitting additional documentation helps ensure that measure requirements are fully met. Questions were asked on an additional 8 measures, giving ECHD the opportunity to clarify items already submitted. The department has 30 calendar days from receipt of the feedback to reply. Responding is optional; however, doing so greatly increases the chance of a successful visit.

COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT

Community Resident Surveys Are Pouring In
The Health Department continues to collect community survey data as part of its comprehensive assessment. Public notification methods include strong partnerships with towns, county departments, community-based organizations, and print & social media.

To date there are 414 survey responses. This response equals approximately 1% of the population and is comparable to the participation used for the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC)’s Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS). BRFSS has been used for generations to collect US resident information & has been referenced regularly in community health assessments.

Survey results will be compiled in March when this data will be paired with Stakeholder Survey and other data sources to help paint the picture of real and perceived needs of Essex County residents.

FINAL CHANCE! Board of Supervisors Call-to-Action---
Provide your input:
1. Take the Stakeholder Survey [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2019stakeholder](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2019stakeholder) and

FAMILY HEALTH PROGRAM

The Opioid Crisis - Babies in Withdrawal
Our Family Health programs feel the direct impact of pregnant moms who use drugs (prescribed or illegal) and birth babies that are going the process of withdrawal, or Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS). A multi-pronged approach is necessary to combat this issue:

1. **Education**: Family Health Nurses and the Director of Preventive Services (DPrevS) attend trainings and participate in webinars to learn as much as possible about the substance use effect on moms/babies.
2. **Services**: Pregnant women voluntarily enrolled in the MOMS program receive health education, substance use screening, and referral to appropriate services. Post-Partum program home visits include newborn assessment with a scoring system to determine the level of withdrawal and appropriate follow up.
3. **Collaboration**: Family Health Nurses and/or the DPrevs attend multi county coalition meetings for updates and enhancement of communication and referral. Case management of the family often includes referral to Social Services, mental Health, ACAP, WIC, and Early Intervention.
4. **Referrals**: Outreach is ongoing to make sure hospitals and agencies that see moms and babies facing this crisis are aware of our service and can refer to us.
Every March the Essex County Health Department runs a colorectal cancer screening campaign to raise awareness and encourage people to be screened! Colorectal cancer is the third most commonly diagnosed cancer and the second leading cause of cancer death in men and women combined in the United States. Approximately 140,000 people are diagnosed and more than 50,000 people die from colon cancer in the U.S. annually. Colorectal cancer is also the most preventable and treatable type of cancer.

This year, ECHD has called upon the local bars and restaurants across the county to help get the word out about the importance of screening! Keep your eyes out for these witty coasters that will be used throughout the month of March!

Through research, education, screening, and treatment, it is possible to end colorectal cancer in our lifetime.

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**EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE PROGRAM**

**Essex County Animal Response Team Certificate Training**
**March 8 and 9**

The Health Department and members of the Essex County CART Planning Committee are making final preparations for a CART Certificate Training. Anyone interested in serving as a CART volunteer was invited to attend. The training is structured as face-to-face classroom-style and participants should leave trained, certified and ready to serve Essex County. See the attached flyer for details – registrations were accepted through March 3.

At time of this report, there were 61 people registered to attend! Class limit: 35 attendees per day.

**Planning & Exercise Development**

The Department is finalizing the development of the Annex: Public Health Asset Distribution Plan.

This Plan will be the basis of the Annual Preparedness Exercise scheduled for April 11.

The exercise includes multiple objectives [related to an Anthrax scenario & response] including:
1. County Staging Site (Public Safety Building) Activation,
2. Staff Notification & Assembly,
3. Medical Emergency Response Inventory Tracking System Use for medical countermeasures,
4. Facility Set-up and
5. Internal & External Interoperable Communications.

This is a regional exercise meaning local health departments across the Capital Region are all exercising on the same day. The Department is excited to test its new Plan and its capabilities regarding public health asset distribution.
February Influenza activity remains the highest it has been all season. CDC recommends the following 3-pronged strategy to fight flu:

- Take time to get a flu vaccine
- Take everyday precautions to cover coughs to help prevent the spread the germs
- Take influenza antiviral drugs as recommended.

We are hosting the NYSDOH “Someone You Love – The HPV Epidemic” film debut at Lake Placid CSD on March 14 from 5 to 7 pm. See the attached flyer and look for media coverage in the Lake Placid News, Adirondack Daily Enterprise, and WNBZ and ECHD social media. Our target population includes local school and college educators and support staff, parents, high school students and community stakeholders and partners. Our expert panel of Dr. Mariani, Dr. Christensen and Danielle King, CNP are prepared to discuss the film and take questions from the audience.

Rabies
We are implementing the 2019 Rabies Clinic Outreach plan, including release of the 2019 rabies clinic schedule via print and social media, and public health detailing with Board of Supervisors, town clerks, health care providers, hospital emergency departments, veterinarians, community venues and schools. See the attached clinic schedule and check out our website at [https://www.co.essex.ny.us/Health/](https://www.co.essex.ny.us/Health/) and click on the paw for electronic registration!

We collaborated with the town of Moriah, DEC and Fish & Wildlife services to implement rabies control efforts for a raccoon that tested positive. There was no human exposure. A dog attack in Keeseville gained media interest. The dog tested negative for rabies.

ECHD collaborates with Safe Kids Adirondack on various injury prevention initiatives. Staff are busy coordinating the Fittin’ Ur Noggin (FUN) event for this spring. Each year, children at schools in either Essex or Clinton County receive FREE bike safety education, helmets, and a helmet fitting from representatives of Safe Kids. Schools in Essex County will be targeted this year. Stay tuned for more details!

The CHSC School District (ELCS, Moriah, and Ticonderoga) Wellness Committees were featured in a NYSDOH video highlighting efforts to increase access to healthy foods and physical activity for all students. Shared with school administrators and others in February CHSC e-news, the video can be viewed at [https://youtu.be/GM9Pe38MUz4](https://youtu.be/GM9Pe38MUz4)

February efforts included working with these three school Wellness Committees to identify resource needs to be requested when the CHSC grant budget becomes available (administered through Clinton County). Potential projects include fitness trail improvement; filtered water stations; new physical education and recess equipment and school garden expansion.

**Highlights**

With CHSC support: Moriah students taste-tested and were served February's locally-grown Harvest of the Month: yogurt from North Country Creamery; ELCS students are enthusiastic about introduction of new archery equipment and three PE teachers attended archery training; The Ticonderoga school garden has seedlings started in the greenhouse. ELCS has scheduled Wellness Committee meetings for 2/27, 3/27, and 5/7. Of note: DOH has determined that schools employees can benefit from the CHSC worksite policy support and grant. The CHSC Community Coordinator will reach out to school administrators.

The next Essex County Heroin & Opioid Prevention Coalition meeting is March 11 at 1:00PM in the DSS Training Room.
In February, WIC collaborated with Carly Summers from Cornell Cooperative Extension and Megan Brooks from Hub on the Hill for a food demonstration and tasting at the Lake Placid Ecumenical Food Pantry. The demonstration showed how to make a simple recipe with fresh local ingredients. Information was shared about how to use Adirondack Harvest and other websites to find local food vendors and farmer’s markets that accept SNAP, WIC, FMNP, and Fresh Connect. Twenty-five families took home a free gift bag with the ingredients to make the meal demonstrated thanks to funding from ANCA!

March is National Nutrition Month. WIC staff are preparing to share some new ways to plan weekly menus, save money, and shop locally. Participants who share a picture of a meal will be entered in a drawing for a fresh fruit and vegetable basket. Staff will be posting pictures of the meals made by participants on our Facebook page throughout the month of March.

Children’s Services Unit

Early intervention:
A new regulation has recently been passed requiring that claims be submitted into NYEIS within 90 days of the date of service. This is an effort to help reduce county escrow costs due to providers billing late, therefore having claims be rejected by insurance and Medicaid. This is effective for all dates of service on or after February 10, 2019. Any claim entered after 90 days of date of service without an extraordinary circumstance will NOT be reimbursed by the county’s escrow. In the past, the county would pay for these claims even though they were rejected by the child’s insurance for late claiming.

The state has recently approved a new Speech Language Pathologist to work with children in Essex County. She had applied in August of 2018 and was not ready to go for 7 months, as the process for independent providers is long and tedious. It involves filling out the application, waiting 8 weeks (or longer) for approval, and applying to Medicaid to be a billing provider, which can take several months. After reaching the approval list to be assigned in NYEIS, independent providers must then apply for a USER ID in the HCS and be trained in billing in the NYEIS system in order to submit their claims. They must also familiarize themselves with EI Billing site run by PCG to follow up on claims and manage insurance payments and rejections. She has taken two children off the waiting list that have been waiting for this service – one child for 6 months and one for a year!

Preschool:
Children’s Services is preparing for Annual Reviews coming up April-June and is consistently billing Medicaid for eligible claims.
80% of the Home Health Nursing Staff have received IV and Chemo Therapy Certification. The remaining 20% of staff are in the process of completing the 16 hour certification course.

HIXNY is ECHD’s RHIO (Regional Health Information Organization) which coordinates patient healthcare information from all NY (and Burlington VT) hospitals, Emergency Rooms and physician’s offices. Essex County Health Department Home Health Unit receives an alert anytime our patient’s go to the ER, are hospitalized or are discharged from the Hospital. Essex County Home Health Units is taking part in a national survey to provide US Department of Health and Human Services and CMS information about the quality of health care delivered to people in their homes. The survey results help people make more informed decisions when choosing a home health care provider. Results are publicly reported on the internet at Home Health Compare.

Essex County Health Department - Home Health Unit stats:
- 4 stars (out of 5) for patient satisfaction
- 100% timely initiation of care
- 100% Falls Risk Assessment
- 100% implementation of Diabetic Foot care and patient education during all episodes
- 100% Drug Education on all medications provided to patients during all episodes

Did you know we have a multigenerational staff?
We have 4 generations plus one - each who have values, attitudes and beliefs based on experiences and war time.

Last month, you were introduced to the oldest generation. They are “traditionalists” - the clients Home Health serves who lived through World War II and the Korean War. They are practical, watchful and careful. They lived to work, were dedicated and stayed with the same company for many years. Hands on training works best with traditionalists.

The next generation is the “baby boomers” - born between 1946-1964, consisting of 80 million people. The older 3rd of the baby boomers were traditionalist types. The middle third were social change agents, rock and rollers, and activists promoting peace. And the final 3rd are coat tailors with mass media learning.

The baby boomer characteristics include: being service-oriented, driven, team players; excelling at relationships and crusading causes; and having a desire for quality and efficiency in their work. They are optimistic. Their work = self-worth. This group suffers the highest rate of suicide due to retiring, expiring spouses and identity changes.

Liabilities with baby boomers: they are uncomfortable with conflict and going against peers, overly sensitive to feedback and put process ahead of results.

This group leads by consensus and works in cubicles. They invented casual Fridays which was originally no tie for men. Beatles were the top band and they performed in suit coats...a little different from the bands we see now.

Stay tuned for the Generation X, Millennials (Generation Y), and Generation Z!!