

# ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING

## April 18, 2023

The St. Lawrence County Board of Health (hereafter known as SLCBOH) met on Tuesday, April 18, 2023, in the Large Conference Room, Human Services Center, Canton, New York 13617.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Rita Curran, Mark Deavers, Dr. Gregory Healey, Nancy Potter, Dr. Jessica Scillieri Smith, Dr. Kathleen Terrence

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Dr. Andrew Williams

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Jolene Munger, Director; Shannon Beldock, Administrative Assistant; Pam Charleston, Principal Fiscal Officer; Renae Johnson, Supervising CHN; Anne Marie Snell, St. Lawrence Health Initiative

### CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Kathleen Terrence, Vice President, called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Upon motion by R. Curran, and seconded by N. Potter, the minutes from the March 21, 2023 meeting were approved.**

### PUBLIC COMMENT

No Public Comment.

### **1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Financials:** Pam Charleston

Handout was provided for members to review.

- Preschool Program has (3) high contractual expenses: transportation, tuition, and related services.
- First Student is currently transporting only (13) students (\$4500/per student/per month).
- Some school districts have contracted to transport their own students (\$900/per student/per month).
- We are advocating for all districts to provide transportation, as this is a school program (NYSACHO and NYSAC agree). Schools would receive State Aid reimbursement. This would drop the county's cost for transportation.
- If districts decide not to provide transportation, students will not be transported, as we will not have the means to provide it.
- Preschool Program reimbursement for Medicaid would be shifted if taken over from the County.
- A resolution was submitted urging the Governor and NYS Legislature to gradually eliminate the County fiscal responsibility for Preschool Special Education and Summer School Special Education programs (Res. 168-2022).
- Grants are usually good with reimbursement.

We currently have (7) NYSPHC Fellow positions and are looking to go up to (9). Some positions are working with the St. Lawrence Health Initiative and currently (4) are with the Public Health Department.

A resolution will be submitted in May to accept funds for a grant that has been awarded to local health departments (LHDs) through the Center for Disease and Prevention (CDC) titled *Strengthening U.S. Public Health Infrastructure, Workforce and Data Systems*. This will replace the current NYSPHC Fellows grant ending June 30, 2024.

If you have any questions, please email Jolene.

**Early Intervention Program Discussion:** Renae Johnson

Handouts were provided for members to review:

- Comparison of the Early Intervention Program (EIP) and Preschool Special Education
- Transition Information for Parents/Legal Guardians.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding the State required timeframes the program is required to meet and the process for children transitioning from the Early Intervention Program to the Preschool Program.

- Upon receipt of a referral, depending on the age of the child, information is shared with the parents on what their options are – if parents choose to proceed with Preschool, then the contact information is provided to them for follow up.
- Children are eligible for the Preschool Program prior to turning age 3 years.
- An explanation is provided to the parents regarding this.

It was noted some parents are unable to make contact with another provider.

- We do contact families when we receive a referral and feedback is provided back to provider.

It was noted information could be shared more clearly with the provider making the referral.

- This information is provided to the individuals who contact her with referrals (Provider office staff, etc.)

Timeframe for EI and Preschool processes discussed. It was noted that we should do this process more quickly.

- There is currently a shortage of providers and meeting required evaluation timeframes is difficult.
- Early Intervention evaluation requirements are different from those for the Preschool Program.
- Transportation methods are either parent, district, or private.
- Billing is for evaluators and providers.
- There are some differences in Evaluation components and services because the Early Intervention Program is through the NYSDOH and Preschool Program is through the State Education Department.

A Fact Sheet/Education Sheet was discussed and what would be the best way to get this to providers.

- Is Public Health able to email? Yes.
- Should go to Providers and Nurses.
- Rebecca Hall would be the best contact for SLH.

**Lead Update:** Jolene Munger

**March, 2023**

- (157) lead tests conducted
- (72) Active cases as of April 7, 2023.
- (1) discharges – (2) new cases

Graphs were printed and added to member's folders.

There were (4-5) new cases for April, 2023 and about (60) more tests this month. Miranda will track the increase in tests. Dr. Terrence noted St. Lawrence Health System has posted lead flyers. Also noted they still do not have Point of Care testing in her office. Jolene will check on the machines.

The (1) high lead level case was retested, and although their level is still high, it is trending down. The majority of lead cases are in the 5 ug/dL – 10 ug/dL range.

A bill has been proposed in the Senate to lower lead levels to 3.5 ug/dL. NYSACHO stated if the level is lowered, they will be seeking additional funding as more staff will be needed to handle the larger caseload.

Public Health continuously provides education on lead testing via press releases, social media, webpage, etc. Dr. Terrence asked about getting the screening questions and resources out to providers earlier. It was noted this information could also be a part of the detailing kits (HUD Funding).

HUD funding for home renovations: we need (12) more units by October. Some individuals have signed up and started the process – they will have (3) months to finish. This information goes out to parents of children on the Lead lists – also education is provided for daycares, schools, etc.

Nancy asked about the parent’s realization of the seriousness of these tests. It is unknown of their comprehension. Education is given and monthly contact is made for the higher level cases. Any action to be taken around the house falls to the district office of the NYSDOH. Miranda accompanies the NYSDOH on home visits to establish rapport.

**Sanitarian Update:** Jolene Munger

The Sanitarian position is now vacant. The test is being offered with a deadline of May 3, 2023, to apply and a scheduled test date of June 10, 2023. Once the test is given, it has been taking 6-8 months to receive results. We will probably be without a Sanitarian for another year.

**Calls for March:** (24) total calls

**Garbage:** (4) **Water Quality:** (5) **Septic:** (3) **Living Conditions/Housing Complaints:** (6) **Indoor Air/ Quality (Mold):** (1) **Insects:** (2) **Indoor Air Quality (Carbon Monoxide):** (1) **Food Quality:** (1) **Environmental Information:** (1)

The (2) garbage complaints are related to the same location in Norwood which had multiple complaints received in February. There was a visual inspection made of the property and the issue has not been resolved following a cease and desist letter. There was a second notice sent with Code Enforcement included. May need action from the Board of Health.

Currently reviewing Civil Penalties. Legislators and Mayors are involved because it deals with lots of code issues. We have contacted the County Attorney to see what Public Health’s involvement will be.

Resolution was submitted for an upcoming Local Code Enforcement lead hazards training. This will also include information on bed bugs, nuisance, and rodents.

Ongoing septic issue in Richville with a failing septic system. We are going to schedule a dye test to see if it is leaking sewage or gray matter. Code Enforcement is the lead on this issue, but Public Health is going to provide support.

An Attorney’s Office was requesting information on a parcel of land – instructed to submit a FOIL request for this information.

**Walk with a Doc Update:**

The last Walk with a Doc meeting was held on March 23, 2023. Meetings take place on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month after the Nutrition & Physical Activity Committee meeting. Next meeting is scheduled for April 27, 2023.

The committee is working on having a walk scheduled at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Spring Fling event on May 24, 2023 (Gouverneur or Ogdensburg). Walks for the remainder of the year will be scheduled on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of each month at 10:00 am when possible. More finalized schedule at next meeting.

Public Health had social media posts promoting National Walking Day on April 4, 2023 and also for the Great 8 Challenge for Physical Fitness Month in May, 2023.

**OTHER ITEMS AND QUESTIONS**

N/A

**OLD BUSINESS**

N/A

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### Dental Health in St. Lawrence County:

Dr. Oseghale asked to share information on the issue of dental health among North Country residents. There aren't enough dentists and dental hygienists in the county to properly attend to oral health for the community.

A Coalition of county stakeholders including dentists, dental hygienists, public health representatives, legislators, and other primary care providers was created in 2022 to address this issue (123 SMILE Coalition). It is based on the success of the Keep the North Country Smiling Coalition created in Jefferson County. They were able to coordinate bringing a mobile dental clinic to the area last year, but they are struggling to bring it back this year due to payment issues. Dr. Terrence stressed we need to recruit pediatric dentists.

Dr. Oseghale is trying to address poor dentition with her patients, offering to apply fluoride varnish to all children under age 6 at their regularly scheduled annual exams. She has had some success and has received reimbursement for supplies and time from insurance companies.

This activity aligns with the NYS Academic Detailing goal of increasing the number of primary care providers who apply fluoride varnish in-office. Currently one of the Public Health Nurses and Public Health Fellow are working on creating a fluoride varnish detailing program for the county. This PHN will reach out to Christine at Dr. Healey's Office regarding a vendor for needed supplies.

Dr. Oseghale is asking the Board of Health to consider assisting in this effort in any way available. Also invites any interested providers within the county to join the 123 SMILE Coalition. If you, or a colleague are interested, she can give contact information of the individual who organizes the meetings.

Rita suggested it might help if the County could aim at getting money towards paying loans for training of pediatric dentists and veterinarians. Dr. Scillieri-Smith noted St. Lawrence County is an underserved county for veterinarians and she has submitted an application. Noted Franklin County is an underserved county as well.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding the No Dogs Left Behind Sanctuary recently opened in the county. This sanctuary will be accepting dogs from other countries (Ukraine, Afghanistan, etc.) so they are not euthanized. Jolene was tasked by the Board of Legislators last night to review their plans. It was noted next year this individual plans on having a cat sanctuary and he will take animals from the SPCA in Ogdensburg. You can go to the County YouTube to listen to his presentation to the Services Committee last night.

Dr. Scillieri-Smith noted Ag & Markets does not regulate this sanctuary. They do need to be registered with them as rescue (5013C) and currently is not. The individual was given 30 days to register on March 14, 2023. If they do not register, they will be considered a pet dealer and will have to follow specific regulations, to include inspections and record keeping. Beginning in 2025, Ag & Markets will be inspecting all shelters. It was noted Canton Dog Control has received numerous noise complaints from this property – currently has (25) dogs on the premises.

Jolene asked that members respond to either the Board of Health meeting invitation or email with agenda/minutes sent out by Shannon so we know who will or will not be attending.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

No Executive Session.

## **ADJOURNMENT/NEXT MEETING**

**Meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm. Next meeting is scheduled for May 16, 2023 at 6:00 pm.**

## **ACTIONS ITEMS FOR FOLLOW UP**

N/A