

# ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING

## April 20, 2021

The St. Lawrence County Board of Health (hereafter known as SLCBOH) met on Tuesday, April 20, 2021, in the Large Conference Room (via teleconference), Human Services Center, Canton, New York 13617.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** (via teleconference) Kevin Acres, Dr. Gregory Healey, Nancy Potter, Dr. Jessica Scillieri Smith, Dr. Kathleen Terrence, Dr. Andrew Williams

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Jessica Rafter

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Jolene Munger, Interim Director; Shannon Beldock, Administrative Assistant; Alivia Sheffield, PH Sanitarian; Jenesse Watson, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator; Kindra Cousineau, PHN; Renae Johnson, SCHN; Pam Charleston, Principal Fiscal Officer; Joseph Lightfoot, Legislator

### CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Andrew Williams, President, called the meeting to order at 6:06 pm.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Upon motion by N Potter, and seconded by J Scillieri Smith, the minutes from the March 16, 2021 meeting were approved.**

### PUBLIC COMMENT

**No Public Comment.**

#### **Lead Update: Alivia Sheffield**

- March 16 – April 19, 2021 there were (123) tests performed: (11) were elevated and (7) were retests (32.2, 5.3, 7.0, 6, 5.4, 5, 9.2 – (4) new ones: 6.8, 9.0, 11.1, 18).

She will begin reporting for the previous month instead of from meeting to meeting – April results will be reported at the May 18, 2021 meeting.

#### **Action Item from previous meeting:** Trends in lead testing.

Alivia provided the graphs below showing yearly lead test result comparisons for 2018-2021. She did note 2018 and most of 2019 (prior to October) was when the guidance for lead testing had changed to considering 5-10 µg/dL as elevated. The “pre 2019” numbers below reflect if we were considering this range.

Average Monthly Tests per Year				
2018	2019	2020	2021	
113.0833	122.3333	104	127.6667	
Percent Elevated per Year, Treating 5-10 µg/dL as elevated in 2018-2019				
	2018	2019	2020	2021
Not Elevated	91%	92%	92%	94%
Elevated	9%	8%	8%	6%

Percent Elevated per year. Treating 5-10 µg/dL as not elevated, to compare numbers prior to guidance changes in October 2019				
	2018	2019	2020	2021
Not Elevated	97%	98%	98%	99%
Elevated	3%	2%	2%	1%

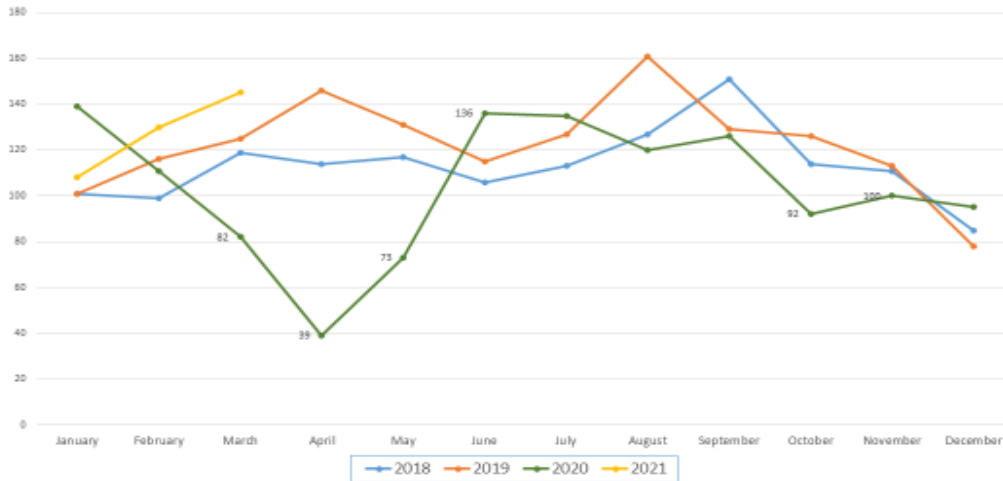
  

Monthly - Percent Elevated March 16-April 19, per year. Treating 5-10 µg/dL as elevated in 2018 and 2019				
	2018	2019	2020	2021
Not Elevated	94%	94%	93%	91%
Elevated	6%	6%	7%	9%

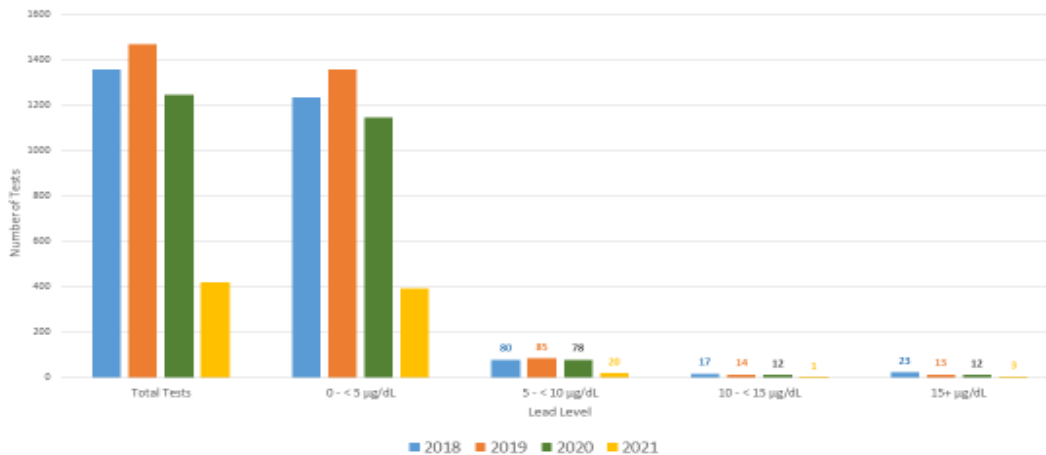
  

Monthly - Percent Elevated March 16-April 19, per year. Treating 5-10 µg/dL as not elevated, to compare numbers prior to guidance changes in October 2019				
	2018	2019	2020	2021
Not Elevated	99%	99%	98%	98%
Elevated	1%	1%	2%	2%

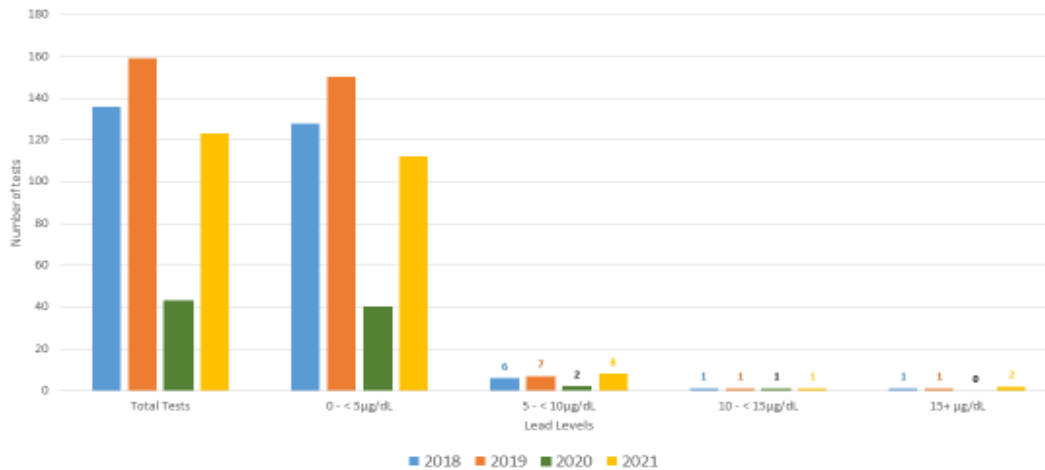
Total Lead Tests 2018-2021



Yearly Lead Test Results, 2018-2021



Lead Test Results, March 16-April 19, 2018-2021



There was a brief discussion on whether or not Amish children are being tested. Dr. Williams noted SLHS does do testing and he will check with Dr. Schuessler to see if he is offering testing to them at his office. Dr. Terrence noted they are not being tested in her office, but they are moving towards Point of Care testing in the pediatric offices in the next year or so. Kindra told Dr. Williams if there were an Amish family who agreed to lead testing, the PHD would pay for the testing if they are unable to. Dr. Terrence thanked Alivia for talking with families in the 5-10 µg/dL range and providing information and education. Alivia discussed the process from the initial lead testing through the interview and resolution of issues if there are any. Jolene noted Alivia has redone all letters going out to parents to make them more clear and understandable, from the initial letter, to the thank you for getting tested letters, etc.

**2020 Annual Report Public Health Department: Jolene Munger**

A copy of the 2020 Annual Report was emailed to members prior to the meeting. This report provides budget information, accomplishments and challenges for all programs within the Public Health Department and also each program’s focus for 2021, along with information on grants (Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Opioid Response) and the Community Health Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHA/CHIP). A new section was added for COVID. Jolene gave a brief overview of each section and asked if members had any questions.

Jolene noted we continue to struggle to fill (2) open Registered Nurse positions. The Coordinator of Quality Assurance & Improvement has been filled and the new person will start on May 18, 2021.

Dr. Williams thanked Jolene on behalf of the Board. We realize your department has done a tremendous job with the COVID-19 response and the annual report is a reminder that you are not the “COVID” department alone, there are all kinds of Public Health areas the department is juggling and COVID has been a large distraction. Noted it is great to hear she is keeping up on all the other important things and staff is probably looking forward to focusing on these things in the future. The Board of Health is very appreciative of the tremendous amount of work everyone is doing and it’s nice to have some of the department members who have been doing a lot of that work on the call tonight. Thank you so much!

## **COVID-19: Jolene Munger**

**Vaccines:** The North Country COVID Vaccine Dashboard was updated today.

<https://public.tableau.com/profile/adkaco#!/vizhome/Covid-Draft/Dashboard>

48.56% of the eligible population has received at least 1<sup>st</sup> vaccine.

39.82% of the total population have received both shots.

This number has jumped from last week. We are focusing our efforts on reaching different places. We have provided vaccines for agriculture workers over the last couple weeks. We are partnering with area businesses that have contacted us to provide vaccinations onsite – Alcoa in Massena is scheduled for tomorrow, April 21, 2021. We are also working with Arconic in Massena and Corning in Canton.

### **Cases:**

- 19 cases today.
- Total of 130 for this week.
- Average of 14.7 a day.

Our largest increase this week were the K12 cases (31), which is well above our March, 2021 average. The college cases have gone down from (58) to (20). We are helping to promote the State run vaccination sites who are able to vaccinate anyone ages 16+, anyone 18+ can go to any available COVID provider. Brigitte is taking the FAQ's from Dr. Williams' Board presentation last night and putting them in a format we can put on Facebook to get some of the vaccine hesitancy questions out to the public.

Dr. Williams noted the County and the PH Department team has done a tremendous job with vaccination and will continue to do so, and this has been essential to our effort. The BOH has previously talked about the role of primary care providers. At this point, most individuals who wanted to be vaccinated have been, with a few exceptions (transportation issues and homebound individuals), which the PH Department is doing a great job addressing. He believes the next phase are individuals on the fence about vaccination. He is working with SLHS and the CHC on assessing patients at the time of their appointments to see if they have been vaccinated. At the end of the visit, those who have not been vaccinated, and who would like to be, will be assisted in registering for an appointment within the hour, if possible, at the state site in Potsdam. Dr. Terrence would be willing to do this in her office as well. Renae noted some providers in Ogdensburg did make appointments for their patients and send them to the POD we were holding in Ogdensburg – said this does work.

Jolene noted she has brought up the idea of having vials with lower number of doses to the representatives. The PH Department staff is providing vaccination to individuals who are homebound with the extra doses at the end of a POD. Ogdensburg, Canton – Massena will be done on Thursday.

There was a discussion on vaccination being approved and provided to children ages 12-15 years. Jolene noted 17% of individuals age 15-19 have been vaccinated. She and Dr. Williams met with school superintendents last week. We mentioned promoting the vaccine throughout the school and also survey the students for when the age 12-15 population does become eligible so we can make sure to coordinate with the state system or through the regional hub or hospital system to get the Pfizer vaccine in so we can provide vaccination to these students. To attend

graduations, students need to be vaccinated or show a negative COVID-19 test. Being vaccinated is a way for them to be able to attend other events such as proms, etc. It was noted some colleges are requiring students be vaccinated prior to the start of the fall semester.

### **OTHER ITEMS AND QUESTIONS**

Kevin asked about a statistical analysis report of the (95) deaths – were comorbidities/BMI, etc., a contributing factor to the deaths. Jolene noted we have information on the age and sex – we don't usually receive other information. Kindra noted we gather as much information regarding medical issues, comorbidities, etc., at the time of the interview, but some individuals don't always share. For reporting purposes, it is unknown if the data collected would be accurate due to some individuals not always providing correct information. Dr. Williams noted it has been pretty consistent – older people (not always) with at least (1) comorbid illness, many were working people, which is consistent with what happens nationally. Kevin asked about the percentage of individuals who died solely from COVID. There was a brief discussion on patients who have been admitted to the COVID unit and how the primary cause of death is noted. Within the past month, it seems individuals may be admitted to the hospital for other reasons, but because everyone is being tested, more of the hospitalizations are incidentally found to have COVID.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

No executive session.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **ADJOURNMENT/NEXT MEETING**

**Meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm. Next meeting is scheduled for May 18, 2021 at 6:00 pm.**  
(via teleconference)

### **ACTIONS ITEMS FOR FOLLOW UP**

N/A