



**Delaware County Health Department  
Board of Health Meeting  
December 7, 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 6:03 p.m.
- II. Chair Announcements
  1. Announcement there was a Board of Health Executive Session held November 16, 2023.
  2. The Board of Health held a two-day workshop on Strategic Planning September 15-16, 2023.
  2. Announcement that the Maternal and Child Health program will be held December 19, 2023.
- III. Public comment on the agenda items:

Cariss Croaker, 335 Concord Rd. wanted to know subject of the Executive Session. J. Lichtenstein, County Solicitor remarked that it was a litigation matter. Community Health Assessment (CHA) attended the meeting in Glen Mills. Regarding public health updates and emergency plans, she had great concerns in view of things that took place 2-3 years ago. Stated the Covid experience was the greatest trampling of human rights. Masks scientifically did not make a difference.
- IV. Approval of minutes: Rosemarie Halt made the motion to accept the September 7, 2023 meeting minutes, including Divisional Reports. Approved by P.J. Brennan, MD and seconded by Annemarie Hirsch. Motion pass unanimously.
- V. Director Updates
  1. Accreditation Pillar Plans

The county pursued and wanted a public health department to be accredited. This requires the pillar documentation to establish, implement, and demonstrate engagement building a foundation to show DCHD is following the plans and achieving desired outcomes.

    - a. Automatic timekeeping demonstrates how staff is accountable for time using UKG/Kronos; in test phase.
    - b. Performance management planning where all plans are uploaded and keep work on target for KPI (key performance indicators). Took time to evaluate systems and chose AchieveIt as it is the most user friendly for staff to benchmark and dashboard routinely indicating “Here’s what we said we’d do and here’s how we’re doing it”.
    - c. The Board of Health had their strategic planning workshop in September, surveying staff and government stakeholders and expectations from county government and stakeholders. Director Lyon discussed the Board of Health one-pager. CHA is on track and will be available for the public in early 2024; quarterly epidemiology reports are on the county website.
    - d. Community Health Implementation Plan (CHIP) and Community Health Assessment (CHA) locations were strategically chosen represent all geographic regions of the county. Results will be included in the Community Health Assessment report.
    - e. Communication plan is in progress.

f. Public Health Emergency Preparedness Plans (PHEP) are well underway. The Medical Countermeasures Plan is well established.

2. Respiratory Illness

a. DCHD participates on CDC calls during the month. The CDC has explained that respiratory season is in full swing.

b. Delco is higher than some other counties with increased flu and will be higher in January and February but is better than last year.

c. Low levels of Covid in county and nationally. There were 350 Covid hospitalizations last week and exceeded 100 Covid deaths in calendar year.

**Question: Any influenza deaths?** Victor Rullan reported the PA DPH said it was the same level as last year.

**Question: Any RSV hospitalizations?** Epi center provides RSV, flu, and can provide data from hospitals in Delco.

d. CHA goal was reached; received over 300 responses with a good cross-section of residents. Director Lyon was commended on her job. Speaks volumes that residents want to be heard; striving for DCHD to have community members engaged.

VI. New business

1. CHIP/CHA information is available to the public. Director Lyon reviewed CHA handout noting that 3 health priorities reported by the results. CHIP is designed to create action plans to achieve the 3 priorities. DCHD identified community partners, stakeholders, and residents.

2. Personal Health STI/HIV presentation. State site visit today; very pleased with their findings.

**Question: Have you thought about going into high schools?** Trying very hard; feedback from community is there, but Chester High is not ready yet. Learned today that the state has decided Cheyney University is Delaware County, so DCHD can go bring program to them.

**Question: What about DCCC?** DCHD has spoken with those that reached out to us; DCCC has not. Difficult to get into school districts for any health issues; that's why we have school nurse liaison to have them feel comfortable working with DCHD. Universities have not frequently requested assistance.

**Question: How are you treating HIV?** Dr. Kahal leading nurse run clinic is standard to continue soft handoff to AIDS care group for HIV Patients.

The Epi team is looking forward to arrival of the mobile unit; will identify hot spots in the county. Partnering with AIDS groups. Epi presentation looks at rates in the area and Delaware County has high rates for Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, and Syphilis. Delaware County has higher rates of chlamydia than Montgomery and Chester counties.

3. Questions on Division Reports:

a. **Question: Information on babies born in hospitals with STI?** DCHD is notified and mother receives a call from DCHD. State keeps the data and will share with us.

b. **Question: Interesting to look at screening rates; patients that are positive; should be screening more?** One of our performance measures is successful with getting residents tested for HIV. When you screen more, you get an uptick, but more residents are being treated. HIV testing requires consent for testing ages 15+.

c. **Question: for teenagers getting tested for STI/HIV;** You don't need consent from parents at age 12 and up. They may have been named as a contact by someone that was tested.

d. **Question: Contact tracing?** Each conversation is kept confidential. 12+ not need consent under minor's rights having access to these services.

e. **Question: Is data deeper than county level to identify hot spots?** We do, but confidentiality limits what we can find; HIV and STI data is protected. DCHD can do heat mapping, then we can target a particular area. Heat mapping is a standard public health practice, but DCHD is not there yet.

f. **Question: Food borne outbreak with 2 possible causes at a large event and 24 gastrointestinal symptoms.** Inconclusive. Some individuals did not cooperate, no stool samples taken, state helped coordinate. Coordinated effort within DCHD.

4. Additional Item

a. Board of Health calendar for 2024 to be approved. Chair Rosemarie Halt read the proposed dates: January 18, March 21, June 20, September 29, and November 21. When approved by the Board, they will be published with each location.

VII. Public Comment

1. Dr Patricia Bleesdale, Glen Mills. Requested a graphic description of how DCHD collaborates so public can see scope and charter. It could be developed and put on the website. Director Lyon state slides will be available after the next BOH meeting along with meeting minutes and presentations.
2. Cariss Croaker, 335 Concord Rd. Had concerns with DCHD and believes the individuals have a compassion for the residents of the county. Mentioned data collection; she is following data from Zen City for the collection of data.

VIII. Motion to adjourn approved by Lily Higgins, seconded by PJ Brennan.

Next meeting is January 18, 2024 at the County Council Room, Government Center. There will be public notice of the location.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa C. Lyon, MPH, CPH  
Board Secretary