

ERIE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH (BOH)
JULY 28, 2014
5:00 P.M.
ERIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

PRESENT:

Richard A. Ortoski, D.O., Chair
Carolynn Masters, Ph.D., Vice-Chair
Reverend Nettie Smith

IN ATTENDANCE:

Melissa Lyon
Charlotte Berringer
Nicole Bolash
Karen Tobin
Claudia Woodard
Phil Fatica, County Council
David Bruce, Erie Times News

EXCUSED: Richard Dreyfus, M.D.

ABSENT: Carla Picardo, M.D.

- I. **Call To Order:** Chairperson, Richard A. Ortoski, D.O., called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.
 - Approval of Minutes: Board members accepted the minutes as recorded April 28, 2014, on a motion by, Carolyn Masters, Ph.D., seconded by Reverend Nettie Smith. All in favor.
- II. **Public Comments:** None
- III. **Director's Report:** Melissa Lyon, MPH, Director of the Erie County Department of Health (ECDH) discussed the following:
 - Hiring/Staffing Update: Erie County Department of Health (ECDH) is close to being fully staffed. The last position to be filled is the Public Health Preparedness Coordinator. The posting for that position is coming down Friday, 8/1/14.
 - Monthly Staff Meetings: Melissa reported that ECDH has started holding monthly staff meetings to promote teamwork and cooperation between staff for the benefit of public health. She stated that she wants all departments to interact more and for staff to get to know each other.
 - PA Dept. of Health Visits: PA Dept. of Health came to ECDH today (7-28-14) and awarded Laura Beckes for her work in tracking a congenital syphilis case. The PA Department of Health is also initiating a new program to invite community partners to participate in an STD testing program, where people can have STD testing for gonorrhea and chlamydia at various locations in their local communities—places like roller rinks, bowling alleys, bars, housing authority—places that are not medically based. People can be tested right on site. The state reports that usually, when asked to participate, 10% of community locations respond positively. This is a pilot program—trying to reach people by thinking “outside the box”. Char Berringer stated that neighborhood community centers would be first on the list to be asked to participate in this program.
 - Melissa Lyon stated that the Erie County Prison is presently only testing for gonorrhea and chlamydia. She has requested that they now also test for syphilis.
 - Accreditation: Melissa Lyon commended all ECDH staff on how well the accreditation site visit went. Erie County will be the first county in the state to have an accredited health department. Carolyn Masters, Ph.D., stated that she felt ECDH was very well prepared for the visit.
 - Nicole Bolash reported on the overall comments from the site visit—on the need for improvement, especially in the area of responding to infectious disease, environmental, and technical emergencies. Protocols and after action reports need to be standardized and completed in a more timely fashion. These AAR's serve as opportunities for revision of response process, identification of training needs, and documentation for corrective actions.
 - Out of 97 measures, only one was not demonstrated; one was slightly demonstrated; thirteen were largely demonstrated and eighty-two were fully demonstrated. There were twenty-one standards of noted areas of excellence.
 - ECDH has 30 days to correct any factual and/or grammatical errors once the report has been received from PHAB.
 - ECDH has been receiving calls and inquiries from other health departments in PA asking for our help in the accreditation process.

- Dr. Ortoski commented that the community partners gave very positive feedback to the site visitors about ECDH.
- Melissa Lyon reported that Val Bukowski was in training today for “best practices” in order to become a site visitor for other Health Departments applying for accreditation.

IV. Old Business: Melissa Lyon reported on the Albion Apartment Complex Meth Lab.

- The Health Department was notified on Monday afternoon, May 12, 2014, by Dale Robinson, County Emergency Management, that there was a fire at a Section 8 housing complex (Erie County Housing Authority) in Albion. This building houses approximately 60-100 people. There was no official head count at the time. The building had been evacuated. State Police clandestine crime team was dispatched to verify that there was a possible meth lab. The scene was handled as a possible criminal meth lab.

Managers and Supervisors worked with Dale to determine what role the Health Department would fill. Possibilities included: assisting with relocation of displaced residents, air flow safety and safety of residents, exposure to muriatic acid fumes, etc.

The follow up on May 13, 2014: At 9:35 p.m. the event was closed. Meaning all hazards had been assessed and mitigated. The scene was secure. This event did not end up needing Public Health assistance. Each unit had individual heat, cooling and airflow. This minimized the potential exposure to other residents.

Char Berringer, Director of Nursing, and Ron Salisbury, Environmental Supervisor, prepared on-call staff with information regarding the incident so that they could properly field the calls and/or make referrals to appropriate agencies.

V. Board Updates:

- Environmental Division Updates (ENV): Karen Tobin, Director of Environmental Health Services reported on the following:
 - Rabies Baiting: Rabies baiting will be done towards the end of August thru the beginning of September, 2014. A vaccine packet is coated or placed inside a fishmeal block, which is very tasty to raccoons. The baits are dropped from low-flying airplanes or helicopters. The area of concern this year has been narrowed to a 5-7 mile area along the Ohio line in Erie and Crawford Counties. The packets are labeled with ECDH phone number if someone finds the bait and has questions or concerns.
 - Body Art and Tattoo Licensing: Pennsylvania is in the process of legislating body art and tattoo licensing. Sen. Sean Wiley was sent ECDH comments on the proposed legislation. If legislation takes place at the state level, there are questions about whether or not ECDH will continue to license and inspect tattooing facilities, or if this will be done at the State level.
 - West Nile Virus: The first pool of positive WNV mosquitoes was found in Harborcreek recently. It was found later in the season than last year—a positive sign.
 - Summer Food Programs: There are 68 sites in the county for children to receive free meals during the summer months. The food inspectors are busy inspecting those, plus, camp grounds, swimming pools and hundreds of temporary food events in the county. The Environmental Division is also responsible for testing the beach waters of Presque Isle and Freeport Beach. Many ticks have been dropped off at the Health Department for identification. The Sewage Enforcement Officers are also very busy during the spring/summer months with increased soil testing, permitting and environmental complaints.
- Community Health Services (CHS): Charlotte Berringer, Director of Community Health Services, discussed the following:
 - The majority of funding for six grants has been renewed, or is in the process of being renewed. Five of the grants received flat-funding. The sixth grant, for Maternal-Child Health, is good through June, 2015.
 - Staffing: CHS has just filled two nursing positions. There is also a new clerical employee in the division.

- Immunizations: The immunization clinic is now only seeing clients who are uninsured. ECDH has been renting space in the Corry office for immunization clinics; with budget changes in the grant that has been paying the rent, monies are no longer available to rent clinic space in 2015. ECDH will locate alternate clinical space in the Corry area.
- Rabies Control Program: CHS is currently working on educating the public about bats and what to do if a bat is found in a home. If a rabies vaccine is needed, ECDH directs clients to a local ER for treatment.
- Health Promotion & Quality Improvement Division (HPQ): Nicole Bolash, Manager of Health Promotion & QI discussed the following:
 - Health Education: The Tobacco grant is back to level funding, in the second year of the 3 year grant. A Tobacco Control manager has now been hired. A new health educator has been hired and started work today; another new health education staff is starting in another week.
 - Highway Safety: The Highway Safety grant is proceeding with negotiations, with the award amount to be determined. Nicole is the point person on that grant.
 - Phil Fatica reported that he heard something about the PA State Legislature being called back to Harrisburg to vote on raising the tax on a pack of cigarettes by \$2.00. He was unsure if this tax will be used to fund just the endangered Philadelphia Pubic Schools or schools across the state.
 - Nicole added that Erie County does not tax loose tobacco, cigars or chewing tobacco and that this was one of the reasons the Tobacco Control Program received a significant funding decrease in 2013-2014; the state of PA is failing to comply with all conditions of the agreement.
 - The topic of regulating e-cigarettes was brought up by Mr. Fatica as well. Nicole informed everyone that Philadelphia just passed a law to regulate and enforce age restrictions on the purchase of e-cigarettes but there is no current regulation or enforcement for the rest of the state. This topic remains a high priority for the FDA. Historically, Philadelphia has been the champion in tobacco control and usually the first to implement any positive change or regulation.
- Public Health Preparedness: Melissa Lyon reported on the following for Val Bukowski:
 - An email was sent out to our community health partners to request they participate in a survey concerning the community's health needs. Twenty-six partners agreed to participate.

VI. Other Business: Dr. Richard Ortoski wanted to thank the Department of Health for the work completed on the accreditation process.

VII. Adjournment:

- The meeting was adjourned at 5:59 p.m. on a motion by Carolyn Masters, Ph.D., and seconded by Reverend Nettie Smith.

Respectfully submitted,
Claudia Woodard, Recording Secretary

The next Health Board meeting is scheduled for MONDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2014 at 5:00 p.m.