

**Skokie Board of Health
October 8th, 2015**

Present

Mr. Abbasi	Mr. Pandya
Dr. Dave	Dr. Sood
Ms. Nikitsch Duggan	Ms. Jones Thorne
Dr. Drachler	Ms. Urbanus
Dr. Gaynes	Dr. Usman
Ms. Langguth	Ms. Varma
Dr. Luka	Dr. Vernon
Mr. Nidetz	Dr. Williams

Absent

Dr. Polin
Dr. Prince

Excused

Ms. Topouzian
Dr. Werner

Guest, Michael Fiore

Guest, John Frankey

Dr. Counard, Director of Health
David Clough, Staff

Call to Order - The meeting was called to order at 7:31 p.m. by Dr. Drachler, Chairman.

Approval of Minutes – Minutes from previous meeting were approved with one grammatical correction from Dr. Drachler.

Mike Fiori, Director of NorthShore University Health System “Green Team”

NorthShore University Health System is attempting to push the health care system upstream by improving the environment in which patients live. This is being done through the “Green Team” an advisory committee convened to guide environmental efforts across the system.

The three primary goals of their mission statement include:

1. Improving the health of the communities they serve.
2. Doing things in an environmentally responsible, economically viable, and efficient manner.
3. Aspiring to improve through new initiatives at every opportunity.

Conserve Energy and Water

Each hospital is like a small village. They are always open and always operating so they must be very efficient in their energy use. To monitor energy efficiency, the green team has initiated two types of studies. Retro commissioning energy studies attempt to find out if energy systems that are already in place are operating efficiently. Tier 2 energy studies look for new energy saving opportunities within the system. This year NorthShore has invested 1 million dollars in their Strategic Energy Management Plan (SEMP) with an 18 month payback. These initiatives have saved 3.85 million kilowatt hours annually, enough electricity to power 370 homes for a year. For greenhouse gas emissions they have saved 550,000 btu annually, the equivalent of taking 550 vehicles off the road. They have converted to more efficient LED lighting, which has the added benefit of generating less heat in operating rooms. Improvements in the kitchen area include smart hoods on the ovens which only activate when smoke is being generated.

Water plant optimization has improved water conservation. As minerals accumulate in a cooling tower the water must be cycled and flushed out. By increasing the cycle and adding an acid feed program roughly 831,600 gallons have been saved across the hospital system.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

The general recycling program was initiated in 2010. In 2013, operating room recycling and commingled recycling programs were added. Operating rooms are usually one of the most wasteful work environments. Through strict segregation of materials NorthShore has created a program where they recycle while maintaining strict infection control protocols. This has been recognized nationally and NorthShore hosted a “Greening the OR” symposium in Chicago last year. In 2014 they began distilling and reusing solvent in their laboratories which makes it continuously reusable. Their most recent effort includes a food digester system which uses a natural enzyme to biodegrade food waste into grey water. This is being piloted at Highland Park Hospital with plans to expand to the other three hospitals as well. The long term goal is to reach 30% recycling which will equate to over 2 million pounds a year.

Preserve our Environment

NorthShore currently utilizes energy credits to maintain 21% wind power. They also utilize a pharmaceutical waste management program to keep expired medications out of landfills. They have diverted about 5000 lbs. a month from the waste stream. They have also made all hospitals mercury free including their laboratories.

Community engagement efforts include two pharmaceutical take back events each year, global environment day at the Chicago Botanical Gardens, and employee engagement to get ground level recommendations on how to make the organization less wasteful. Overall the green team has been successful in showing that environmental responsibility can also make good business sense.

Dr. Williams asked about the storage costs for all of their recycling materials. Dr. Fiore reports that there are none. Lake Shore waste picks up comingled recycling twice a week. A comingled recycling compactor costs significantly less than a solid waste compactor.

Dr. Williams expressed interest in developing a collective recycling pick up for dentists in the area. Dr. Fiore said he would be happy to discuss it after the meeting.

Dr. Counard asked how many people were on the green team. Dr. Fiore reports that 30 people are on the team. The group is intentionally small as it is meant to be a guiding committee to recommend initiatives for all employees to enact. There are 11,000 employees at North Shore and presentations are made to them through their department heads.

Dr. Drachler asked how much money they saved by recycling. Dr. Fiore reported that in the first year it was \$420,000. Going forward it has been defined as “cost avoidance” due to their non-profit status.

Dr. Drachler pointed out that these efforts show that businesses in Skokie could save money by recycling. Dr. Williams asked if Dr. Fiore would be willing to present to Skokie businesses. Dr. Fiore agreed stating that they have made numerous presentations to other hospitals.

Open Discussion

Next the community health survey was reviewed. Sara Waller, a Master of Public Health Student, reported on adaptations made to the 2012 Community Health Survey based on previous surveys and surveys from surrounding health departments.

An extensive discussion about the survey ensued with numerous recommendations. Major recommendations included:

- Narrowing opinion questions to be about self and family rather than Skokie as a whole.
- Adding a “Don’t Know” option in some opinion questions so respondents don’t feel forced to guess about an issue that doesn’t apply to them.
- Ensuring that numbering and formatting conventions were consistent.
- Reporting age ranges instead of having open entry.
- Narrowing ages for questions about children to “school aged” children.
- Add clear descriptions so people at home can visualize serving sizes (i.e. One cup equals a cupped handful).
- Sectioning respondents by whether they work, live, or attend school in Skokie.
- Making sure questions are not led by negative tone (i.e. How much of a problem is this?)

Dr. Counard discussed the effort that was done to ensure the 2012 Community Health Survey was distributed widely, seeking input from people who live, work or attend school in Skokie. She also mentioned that the survey was just one piece of the information used to establish the priorities of the *Skokie Community 2012 Health Plan*. The Health Department conducted focus groups and key informant interviews with organizations serving the needs of people who were unlikely to complete the survey. For example, the Turning Point Behavioral Health Care Center, the Niles Township Food Pantry and the Niles Township School ELL Parent Center. Dr. Drachler agreed that the survey was an excellent start but needed to be shortened to increase response rate. Mr. Clough stated that he would send copies of the survey to each Board member so they could make their recommended edits and send them back.

Director’s Monthly Report

The monthly report will be e-mailed to all Board Members.

Old Business

No old business.

New Business

No new business.

Adjournment The meeting adjourned at 9:04 p.m.