

Skokie Board of Health
June 11th, 2015

Present

Mr. Abbasi	Mr. Pandya
Dr. Dave	Dr. Sood
Dr. Drachler	Dr. Topouzian
Dr. Gaynes	Ms. Urbanus
Ms. Jones Thorne	Dr. Usman
Ms. Langguth	Dr. Vernon
Mr. Nidetz	Dr. Werner
Ms. Nickisch Dugan	Dr. Williams

Excused

Dr. Luka
Ms. Varma

Absent

Dr. Prince

Dr. Counard, Director of Health
David Clough, Staff

A group photo was taken in the first floor atrium before the meeting.

Call to Order - The meeting was called to order at 7:42 p.m. by Dr. Drachler, Chairman.

Approval of May 2015 Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the May meeting were approved. Dr. Drachler requested that the acronym SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistant Program) be clarified in the minutes for the online version.

Electronic Cigarette Ordinance Presentation (copy attached)

Dr. Drachler and Dr. Williams gave a summary of their presentation to the Village Board requesting that electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) and other electronic nicotine delivery devices be added as tobacco products in the Skokie Smoking in Public Places Ordinance. These devices can no longer be used in areas where smoking tobacco is prohibited. That includes a prohibition on smoking (sampling) the devices within shops where they are sold.

Reducing tobacco use, especially among teens, is a goal of the *Skokie 2012 Community Health Plan*. A goal of the plan is to prevent teen tobacco use. A new concern is the significant increase in use of e-cigarettes among high school students between 2012 and 2013.

Dr. Williams pointed out that finding ways around legal restrictions to existing products is an established business practice for the tobacco industry. The primary product in e-cigarettes is propylene glycol which is safe when ingested but unsafe when heated and inhaled. The main byproduct from heating propylene glycol in an electronic-cigarette is formaldehyde. E-cigarettes also contain insecticide grade nicotine rather than the pharmaceutical grade nicotine found in the patch. E-cigarettes have 10% the amount of other carcinogens found in regular cigarettes but other items are untested. There is also no safe level for any of these carcinogens.

Dr. Drachler reported on the chemical basis for nicotine as a gateway drug for a variety of other substances. Statistics show that a high percentage of alcoholics and users of other drugs started by smoking cigarettes.

Dr. Drachler discussed the Board of Health proposal to increase the age to purchase tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, to age 21 in the Village. The City of Evanston has already taken this step without pushback from the community or businesses. Dr. Drachler reviewed the Needham Massachusetts study showing that teen smoking rates fell by 50% in four years after the age to purchase tobacco was raised to 21. Youth between the ages of 18 and 21 are the primary source of tobacco products for younger teens. Dr. Drachler and Dr. Williams have requested that the Village Board join Evanston and increase the age to purchase tobacco to 21 years.

Dr. Williams asked about tobacco cessation assistance for youth trying to quit. Dr. Counard reported that Courage to Quit classes were available to everyone regardless of age. There are also a few under-age teens referred for tobacco cessation counselling to the Health Department each year through the court system. Dr. Dave asked if the classes would address chewing tobacco. Dr. Counard reported that all nicotine products are addressed in the class.

Dr. Williams pointed out that hookah use was another increasing trend. There are studies showing that hookah smokers can inhale the equivalent of one hundred cigarettes in a single evening of smoking. There is also increased risk of spreading germs due to the shared smoke chamber. Dr. Williams cited several instances of documented outbreaks of oral herpes from hookah smoking.

Dr. Drachler pointed out how much progress has been made in tobacco regulation and that these emerging tobacco products would be the next big challenge.

Chair's Report

Dr. Drachler reminded the board members of the Health and Human Service open house to be held on Sunday, June 14. Mayor Van Dusen will recognize volunteers in the lunch room at noon. Dr. Counard reported that the Animal Control vehicle would be on display outside as well.

Personal Statements

No new members at this time.

Director's Monthly Report Highlights (copy attached)

1. Employee Health Fairs – Every spring the Village Manager's Office, Health Department and Personnel Division collaborate to hold employee health fairs at Public Works and Village Hall. Employees enjoy the fairs, where they can receive services and learn more about healthcare options.
2. South Asian Health Initiative Update
During May we continued our work to address the high rates of heart disease, obesity and diabetes in the South Asian Community. With our colleagues from Northwestern Medicine, we met with representatives from the Weber Center, to discuss establishing a "Women Only" exercise class in an area without windows, and with the Talking Farm to explore options for educational programs promoting increased consumption of South Asian vegetables.

Dr. Dave added that the Women's Only exercise class will be offered in the Fall at the Weber Center.

3. Monitoring for West Nile Virus begins, seasonal intern hired
The Health Department has begun collecting mosquitoes for West Nile Virus testing from three traps in the Village. Ms. Sameena Mohammed, a Skokie resident and biology major at Oakton Community

College, has been hired to collect and test the mosquitoes this summer. This position is paid for with funds from an Illinois Department of Public Health grant. The North Shore Mosquito Abatement district is also collecting mosquitoes from two traps in Skokie this summer.

Community Health Plan Initiatives

1. Access to Health Care

Dr. Drachler reports that Erie Family Health Center has integrated with North Shore very well. We are planning to get hospital discharge data to see if opening the FQHC's has made a difference in emergency room visits. Dr. Williams pointed out that emergency dental services can be extremely expensive. Referrals for emergency dental services can lower costs significantly.

2. Obesity

Dr. Drachler brought in three articles on obesity. The first article argued that the challenge of obesity starts at home. Providing healthy drinks and avoiding sugary snacks at home encourages good habits that last elsewhere. The second article stressed the benefits of breast feeding for both mother and child. The third article reported that O'Hare was promoting breast feeding by providing private booths for mothers of infants.

Dr. Williams cited a study that reports women with higher BMI's have a higher risk of breast cancer. He also reported that many apps on the smartphone are helping people count calories and steps.

Mr. Abbasi proposed a community wide exercise challenge to encourage weight loss.

3. Tobacco

Dr. Drachler stated that tobacco was sufficiently covered by the first half of the meeting. He reiterated the importance of increasing the age to purchase tobacco products in Skokie to 21.

4. Healthy Environment

Dr. Counard reported that we are continuing to collaborate with the Community Development and Public Works departments to complete the environmental sustainability plan. The plan will mirror the Community Health Plan, with specific five year goals. Once completed, the draft plan will be reviewed by the Village Manager and Environmental Sustainability Commission prior to bringing it to the Board of Health

Old Business

The Board of Health Dinner will take place on August 13th. Health Department staff will reach out to the Talking Farm to see if we can organize a picnic on site for this event.

New Business

No new business.

The meeting adjourned at 8:51 PM.