

Skokie Board of Health
November 9th, 2017

Present

Mr. Abbasi
Ms. Bromberg
Dr. Dave
Dr. Drachler
Dr. Gaynes
Ms. Jones Thorne
Mr. Pandya
Dr. Prince
Dr. Shim
Dr. Catherine Counard, Director of Health
Mr. David Clough, Staff
Ms. Sue Reisberg, Staff

Absent

Ms. Nickisch Duggan
Mr. Nidetz

Excused

Ms. Black

Dr. Edward McCarron, Family Services Commission
Maggie Deanda, Student
Tarita Scurlock, Student

Call to Order - The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. by Dr. Drachler, Chairman. Dr. Counard proposed a toast (with sparkling grape juice and sweet treats) to celebrate the successful recertification of the Skokie Health Department by the State of Illinois for another five year period!

Approval of Minutes – Minutes from the October meeting were reviewed and approved.

History of the Skokie Health Department

Catherine A. Counard, MD, MPH

Dr. Counard provided an overview of the history of the Skokie Board of Health. The initial ordinance to create the Board of Health was proposed in 1907 when Skokie had a population of 560. The Board consisted of three members tasked with investigating nuisances, contagious diseases, and causes of illness. By 1931 the population had expanded to 5,000 people and the Board of Health was expanded to seven paid members and given powers to make and enforce rules deemed necessary to prevent the spread of disease. From 1940 to 1960 the population exploded from 7,000 to 59,000. In 1959 the new Village Manager proposed the creation of the Village Health Department which would carry out duties previously assigned to the Board of Health which had expanded to 15 members by this time. The role of the Board of Health became advisory with the power to issue orders, rules, and regulations. The Village Health Department became responsible for the execution and enforcement of those regulations and provision of direct public health services such as vaccinations and disease surveillance.

In 1964, the Skokie Health Department had three employees and the Village had reached a population of 65,000. A study was done that concluded that the existing health department was inadequate to meet the Illinois State Health Department requirements for state-certification. Based on this recommendation, the Village provided resources to enhance the health department, and by 1968 the health department was certified by the state for the first time. The health department staff was increased to 18 full-time

employees, similar to present day staffing levels. Dr. Counard then listed the previous Board of Health Chair's with their achievements such as initiating the Skokie blood donation program, establishing standards for licensing nursing care facilities, and regulating indoor tobacco use.

Dr. Drachler thanked Dr. Counard for the amount of work that went into the presentation and reflected on the similarity of some of the problems that needed to be addressed when the Board was founded and the issues faced today.

Dr. Counard added that while the Board of Health is primarily advisory, Board members have taken strong leadership roles, most recently with creating the *2017 Skokie Community Health Plan*. There was brief discussion regarding actions the Board of Health may undertake to begin fulfilling the plan.

Chair's Report

Dr. Drachler thanked Dr. McCarron for his presence and asked the visiting public health students to introduce themselves. Ms. Deanda and Ms. Spurlock introduced themselves as students from Benedictine University meeting their requirements to attend a Board of Health meeting. They found the meeting on the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) website.

Highlights of Health Director's Monthly Report – a copy of the report is attached

1. **Skokie Health Department Achieves State re-certification!**
Concluding two years of diligent effort by the Health Department, Board of Health, and IPLAN Committee, we successfully achieved State re-certification until 2022. Many, many thanks to the Skokie community and everyone who thoughtfully contributed to this project!
2. **Health Department annual flu shot program is off to a strong start**
Each year the Health Department administers 3,000 flu shots to the community, with the help of many partners and volunteers. The October events are listed below. During November we will go to all Skokie public elementary and middle schools to offer flu shots to students.
3. **County Health Department exercise testing emergency Cook employee vaccination plan**
Nurse Claudia Braden and UIC SPH student Amy Tomuta served as evaluators during a full day exercise that tested the Cook County Department of Public Health's ability to vaccinate Cook County employees rapidly during an emergency. Flu shots were given during the exercise.

Old Business:

Because half of the Board was not present at the prior meeting, Dr. Counard brought up a discussion from that meeting to ensure all Board members were aware of the issue. She reiterated that a Board member felt that some conversations about being overweight were not handled as sympathetically as other health risks. Weight gain may be connected to a variety of issues such as early childhood trauma. Dr. Counard encouraged Board members to keep this in mind as we discuss weight related health risks going forward.

New Business:

Dr. Counard stated that the two initiatives from the *2017 Skokie Community Health Plan* she felt might be good places to begin were exploring establishing a "Welcome Center" and conducting a health needs assessment for people with disabilities in the Village. Staff from the Skokie Public Library and the English Language Learner Center (ELL) have expressed an interest in these projects.

Dr. Williams reported that Asian Human Services is working on a software program that connects all of the resources within their organization. Asian Human Services provides mental health services, a charter school, and other services and the software program can connect individuals to all of the services at once.

Dr. Williams and Dr. Drachler discussed using a program like this to create a virtual “Welcome Center” that would tie in with the physical welcome center. Dr. Drachler felt that the issue of computer literacy for older residents would create a barrier to access. Ms. Urbanus pointed out that if the virtual “Welcome Center” was accessed through the library, library staff would be available to assist with computer access.

Dr. Williams mentioned the disparities he found at the food pantry during his oral health needs assessment. He suggested the food pantry might be a good location to provide outreach.

Dr. Dave discussed the lifestyle intervention associated with the South Asian Healthy Lifestyle Initiative (SAHELI) study. She also mentioned a healthy food guide for South Asians that she helped to develop for a clinic on Devon Avenue. She suggested that the healthy food guides could be modified for the general Skokie population.

Dr. Drachler asked about the status of Tobacco 21. Dr. Counard responded that we were waiting to meet with the Chamber of Commerce.

Dr. Drachler shared an article reporting that New York had just added e-cigarettes to their public smoking ordinance.

Dr. Counard reported that Dr. Sonu would be presenting to NorthShore University Health System physicians on Adverse Childhood Experiences. She promised to send the date and time of the presentation to the Board.

Dr. Prince asked if Skokie has any treatment program for people with opioid addictions. He had a patient who was clearly seeking opioid medications and was unsure of where to send her for help and what to do beyond refusing to write the prescription.

A lengthy discussion about opioid abuse ensued, including common prescription drug scams, the state-wide prescription reporting system, training for pharmacists to catch individuals using stolen DEA numbers, and best practices for first responders using the Narcan injection and nasal spray.

Ms. Urbanus mentioned the Niles Township Clergy Forum non-denominational service on Thanksgiving Eve and invited Board Members to attend. The meeting adjourned at 8:44 PM

Next meeting:
Thursday, December 14th at 7:00 PM
Skokie Village Hall
2nd floor Conference Rooms D & E

#525605