

**Skokie Board of Health
October 12th, 2017**

Present

Dr. Drachler
Ms. Nickisch Duggan
Ms. Jones Thorne
Dr. Shim
Dr. Sood

Dr. Topouzian
Dr. Usman
Dr. Varma
Dr. Vernon

Absent

Mr. Nidetz
Mr. Pandya
Dr. Prince

Excused

Mr. Abbasi
Ms. Black
Dr. Dave
Dr. Gaynes
Ms. Urbanus
Dr. Werner
Dr. Williams

Dr. Catherine Counard, Director of Health
Mr. David Clough, Staff

Dr. Edward McCarron, Family Services Commission

Call to Order - The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Dr. Drachler, Chairman.

Approval of Minutes – Minutes from the September meeting were reviewed and approved with one minor correction.

Infection Prevention and Control: Protecting and Improving Patient Safety at NorthShore

Michael O. Vernon, DrPH, CIC, FAPIC, Director, Infection Prevention & Control, NorthShore University HealthSystem (A copy of the presentation is attached)

Dr. Michael Vernon gave a fascinating presentation on the history of infection control, important developments over the last five decades, and changes in infection control practices and regulations that have been implemented as a result. The history began with the *Germ Theory* developed by Ignaz Semmelweis in 1847 and carried through to the Ebola outbreak of 2014 and 2015. Major events over the timeline included the H1N1 flu pandemic of 1918, the development of antibiotics in 1941, the discovery of legionnaire's disease in 1976, the AIDS outbreak in 1981, and the SARS scare in 2003. New precautions developed over this time include hospital screenings for clostridium difficile at admission, contact precautions such as wearing gloves and gowns, and negative air pressure rooms in hospitals for airborne infectious diseases. The most recent precautions are enhanced personal protective equipment and isolation procedures that were developed in response to the Ebola outbreak.

Dr. Vernon stressed the importance of hand hygiene and regular hand washing and alcohol gel cleaner usage when entering and exiting hospital rooms to prevent the spread of infection. He also stressed that tuberculosis, measles, and chicken pox are the only true airborne infections so contact and droplet precautions can prevent the spread of the majority of diseases.

A current major issue in infection control is the emergence of antimicrobial resistance. More conservative use of antibiotics is needed to prevent the germs from developing resistance to antibiotic treatment. The microbiome also is an area of new research. For example, *C. difficile* is being treated by introducing a healthy microbiome to recolonize the unhealthy microbiome. Restoring the healthy flora brings the microbiome back into balance.

Dr. Vernon suggested future directions for infection control should include global infection control surveillance, screening patients for travel history, emergency preparedness for high risk bio pathogens, and developing newer and better antimicrobials.

Interventions at NorthShore brought by Dr. Vernon include alcohol based hand gel dispensers on every wall, MRSA screening for patients undergoing surgery, hand hygiene education poster campaign, and using 2% chlorhexidine gluconate skin cleansing for ICU patients.

Dr. Drachler, who is a practicing obstetrician on staff at NorthShore, added that since introducing the 2% chlorhexidine gluconate skin cleanser prior to performing C-sections, infection rates have dropped significantly. The current procedure calls for a double scrub for patients with a BMI over 30.

Dr. Topouzian asked for the reason behind this procedure. Dr. Drachler informed her that it was meant to ensure complete coverage of the greater surface area of the body.

Dr. Topouzian asked if immigrants from certain countries are still required to receive an x-ray to screen for tuberculosis. Ms. Reisberg answered in the affirmative, that many of the new immigrants she sees in clinic had x-rays as part of their admission to the U.S.

Dr. Usman brought up the issue of exposure to germs building up the immune system vs. protecting children from exposure. Dr. Vernon replied that we should avoid the germs as much as possible.

Dr. Drachler mentioned the practice of using a vaginal swab to coat babies born via C-section.

Dr. Vernon said he supports this practice as it provides important healthy flora that the infant would not otherwise receive.

Chair's Report

Dr. Drachler thanked Bruce Jones for the amount of work he put into preparing the previous month's Board of Health meeting.

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

1. City of Evanston terminates drinking water testing program
The City of Evanston gave just 72 hours' notice that they would no longer provide drinking water sample testing for the Village of Skokie. The action came as a result of the ongoing dispute over the new contract and proposed rate increase for Evanston to provide Skokie with drinking water. Mr. Bruce Jones, Environmental Health Supervisor, was able to quickly arrange for all of the necessary testing services through a private company.
2. Nurse Susan Reisberg promoted to Personal Health Supervisor
Nurse Susan Reisberg received a well-deserved promotion to Personal Health Supervisor, where she will oversee all clinical and nursing duties, the new SAHELI project, the school vision and hearing program, and the vital records program. This promotion reflects her genuine dedication and contributions to the team. Congratulations Sue!!

3. Interviews begin for new SAHELI Community Health Specialist

The Department received 17 applications for the new South Asian Healthy Lifestyle Initiative (SAHELI) Community Health Specialist position. We were very pleased that many well qualified individuals applied, and began interviewing the top candidates.

Old Business:

Dr. Counard reported that the draft proposal for Tobacco 21 was resubmitted to Village Manager John Lockerby on October 11. Dr. Shim brought up the issue of the proximity of vape shops to the schools. Dr. Counard responded that since vaping was not regulated as a tobacco product when the shops opened, their location could not be controlled. One shop opened in close proximity to Lincoln Junior High School. The Village Code has since been modified to include vape products as tobacco products, and this will not be a problem going forward. She also reported that raising the age for purchasing tobacco and vaping products to 21 would reduce access significantly for teens.

New Business:

Ms. Jones Thorne identified the need to ensure that the Board discusses obesity and affected individuals in a compassionate and respectful manner during the course of Board meetings. She reminded the group of Dr. Sonu's presentation showing the correlation between adverse childhood experiences and obesity and the difficult paths that often lead to unhealthy behaviors. Dr. Drachler thanked her for the gentle reminder.

Dr. Counard invited suggestions for speakers for future board of health meetings. Ms. Nickisch Duggan suggested inviting a representative from rotary to present on polio eradication and their role in the process. Dr. Drachler agreed and discussed the history of polio and the Salk vaccine. Dr. Drachler proposed a presentation on new water purification processes for the Chicago River or possibly the opioid epidemic. Mr. Clough proposed the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill could speak on mental illness in Skokie.

Dr. Drachler brought up the issue of isolation for senior citizens and wondered if any programs existed to address this issue. Ms. Nickisch Duggan suggested possibly having a service project each year where the Board could attempt to address issues such as isolation. Dr. Counard mentioned that a number of potential initiatives had been identified in the *2017 Skokie Community Health Plan* that could be worked on. After some discussion of possible service projects the meeting adjourned at 8:56 PM

Next meeting:

Thursday, November 9 at 7:00 PM

Skokie Village Hall

2nd floor Conference Rooms D & E
