

**Montgomery County Office of Public Health**  
**Montgomery County Board of Health Meeting**  
Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services Center  
1430 DeKalb St., Norristown, PA 19404-0311  
Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2019, 10 a.m.

Board of Health (BOH) Members - Present

Michael B. Laign, Chair  
Francis Jeyaraj, MD  
Steve Katz  
Martin Trichtinger, MD  
Barbara A. Wadsworth, DNP

Montgomery County Office of Public Health (OPH)

Brenda Weis, MSPH, PhD, Health Administrator  
Ruth Cole, Director, Clinical Services  
Monica Giacomucci, Supervisor, Communicable Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)  
Pam Lawn, Director, Environmental Field Services (EFS)  
Richard Lorraine, MD, Medical Director  
Michel Masters, Director, Communicable Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)  
Tori McQueen, Community Environmental Health Coordinator  
Janet Panning, Supervisor, Maternal Child Health  
Kyle Schmeck, Director, Water Quality Management (WQM)  
Rhonda Stanek, Supervisor, Clinical Services, Pottstown  
Toyca Williams, Health Program Office Coordinator

Montgomery County

Teresa Harris, Public Affairs Manager  
Lauren Hughes, Senior Assistant Solicitor

Guests

Uendy Garcia, Graduate student, MPH at Benedictine University

**Meeting Minutes**

Welcome/Chair's Report
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Mr. Laign called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. He welcomed all in attendance and asked each attendee to introduce themselves. He also congratulated Dr. Jeyaraj on his recent retirement as a North Penn pediatrician. Dr. Jeyaraj has been practicing medicine for more than 40 years. Dr. Weis announced that OPH, in collaboration with the Office of Housing and Community Development, was awarded a \$1.5 million grant from HUD's Lead Hazard Control and an additional \$300,000 Healthy Homes funding. She thanked Janet Panning,

Supervisor for the Maternal Child Health Program, for her assistant in writing and submitting the 18-page letter of intent.

Guest Presentation: *Maternal Child Health and Healthy Homes*

Presenters: Janet Panning, Supervisor, Maternal Child Health; Tori McQueen, Community Environmental Health Coordinator

Ms. Panning gave an overview of the maternal child health program. She explained that the health of our mothers and children are crucial to the overall health of the county. OPH continues its collaboration with the Montgomery County Maternal and Early Childhood Consortium (MECC) to look at the disparities in fetal and infant mortality, the impact of legal as well as illegal substances on infants and the impact of children being poisoned by lead in Montgomery County. She shared that in Montgomery County, babies born to black women are 2.7 times as likely to die as babies born to white women. In Montgomery County, there are 10 fetal and infant deaths per 1,000 births. Ms. Panning invited the board to the next MECC Community Meeting on Nov. 20, 10 a.m., Health and Human Services.

Ms. Panning also gave an update on Montgomery County's response to Plans of Safe Care (PoSC). The Child Abuse and Prevention Treatment Act (CAPTA) and Act 54 requires each county to develop a multi-disciplinary team to develop protocols to address infants exposed to legal and illegal substances. PoSC would provide prevention tools, substance use screenings and referrals to treatment, coordination of care for the infant and family, plans of safe care for the infant and the tracking of referral outcomes. The county must implement a plan by January 2020. Dr. Jeyaraj said he was concerned that the multidisciplinary team did not include community groups such as places of worship or schools. Several board members asked about universal screenings and whether the medical providers were receiving the adequate education on the topic or adequate screening especially during the first prenatal visit. Mr. Laign said they need a core group of physician champions to inform their colleagues about this issue.

Ms. McQueen provided an overview of the Montgomery County Lead Task Force. The goals of the task force are to increase the number of children tested for lead and reduce the number of lead-poisoned properties. The task force is a subcommittee of the MECC. According to the 2017 Childhood Lead Surveillance Report, only 30 percent of children under two were tested in Montgomery County. The task force plans to work with targeted municipalities that have potential lead-poisoned properties, houses built before 1978. The targeted townships are Abington, Lansdale, Norristown and Pottstown.

Although targeted areas were identified, the task force was still unclear why more children aren't being tested. So, the task force developed the Montgomery County Pediatrician Lead Screening Practices Survey to better understand child lead screening. Ms. McQueen shared the findings from the survey. The board agreed that there should be universal testing. The board asked staff to prepare a resolution stating that healthcare providers in Montgomery County should test or refer for blood level testing all children in Montgomery County ages 12 months and 24 months

regardless of insurance or perceived risk. The board also suggested that a fund is established to handle lead abatement expense. This would be an opportunity to seek out public-private partnerships to share in the expense. Dr. Jeyaraj also said that medical providers need to be educated on the pros and cons of capillary blood testing versus venous blood testing.

#### Health Administrator's Report

Dr. Weis shared that OPH has engaged in collaborations with a number of program offices within Health and Human Services and has secured grant funding to address ongoing public health challenges in the county such as the opioids epidemic. Dr. Weis said OPH has been successful in bring several partners to the table to get the work done. Mr. Laign recommended that OPH create a public relations campaign to promote these efforts to the community. The board commended OPH for the work it is doing.

Dr. Weis also discussed the upcoming regional medical countermeasures exercise, Oct. 28-Nov. 1. This emergency preparedness exercise allows for Southeastern Pennsylvania public health and emergency management partners to test their emergency response systems and their ability to use those systems and resources to respond to an emergency.

Dr. Weis gave an update on the OPH Adolescent Sleep Survey initiative. She shared two final reports prepared by OPH staff for two school districts -- School District of Springfield Township and Upper Merion Area School District. The school districts will use the findings in its continued evaluation of later school start times and distribute as they see fit. OPH offered to conduct an adolescent sleep survey to participating middle and high schools in Montgomery County's 22 school districts. Two more schools – Hatboro-Horsham School District and Norristown Area School District - have requested that OPH conduct the sleep survey. Staff will work with school district leadership to review survey instrument and determine the method of distribution and time of distribution.

#### Healthcare Associated Infections (HAIs)

Ms. Masters discussed OPH's role and level of response provided during site visits at healthcare facilities that are experiencing a disease outbreak. In recent months, there has been an increase in OPH staff time and resources to assist the state regulatory agencies in evaluating affected Montgomery County skilled nursing and independent living facilities. OPH questioned whether it should be the lead agency to provide recommendations to the facilities. Ms. Masters pointed out that facilities may or may not adhere to the recommendations. The local health department has no enforcement power to handle non-compliant facilities. Often times, she said, subsequent site visits show little has been done to comply with recommendations. With PADOH serving as the subject matter experts, OPH is also concerned about its level of liability in these site visits/infection control assessments. The board understood the heightened concern and agreed that OPH and PADOH leadership need to have additional conversations. They were also concerned that if a facility is not following infection control recommendations, patient care is compromised. The Board and the county solicitor should be a part of the conversation as well.

#### Old Business

An update to the STD/HIV response plan was tabled to the next meeting.

New Business

The 2020 Board of Health meeting dates were approved – Feb. 5, May 6, Sept. 8 and Nov. 4.

Public Comments

The next BOH meeting is Wednesday, Feb. 5, Human Services Center, Norristown, 9:30 a.m.

**Motion:** Dr. Trichtinger motioned to adjourn the meeting at 11:55 a.m., seconded by Mr. Katz. The motion passed.

Mission

*To provide public health services and foster collaboration actions that empower our community to improve its health and safety*

Vision

*To optimize the health and wellness of individuals and families through innovative practices*