



Miscellaneous

We welcomed Meghan Gallagher, Operations Manager, and David McSergi, Relationship Liaison, for the Hospital for Special Care to present about Autism and their Autism Center. Thank you to Bea for coordinating this training and establishing this new partnership.



CT Association of Directors of Health (CADH)

Positions held: Member; Elected to Board of Directors; Emergency Preparedness Committee Chair; Advocacy Committee Member

The CT Association of Directors of Health continues to co-host bi-weekly statewide local health calls with DPH. The CADH Board of Directors meetings are held monthly.

de Beaumont Foundation 40 Under 40 in Public Health

The monthly leadership development was a presentation on CityHealth: Lessons from CityHealth & Navigating the Political Landscape. It spotlighted their policy package to inform public health professionals how to create and identify policies for better adoption. The in-person leadership summit will be held August 13-16 in San Antonio.

Workforce Development

Lisa continues to chair the NVHD Workforce Development Committee. Staff continue to work on completing the required two online training courses this quarter. The Workforce Development Committee conducted the required bi-annual staff competency assessment in May. The results of the assessment will be presented at the June staff meeting and are used to inform the training priorities for fiscal year 2024-2025 while also evaluating the effectiveness of this year's training plan. The 180 question assessment aligned with the national Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals, a consensus set of foundational skills for the broad practice of public health, as defined by the [10 Essential Public Health Services](#). The Core Competencies, and the assessment, are organized into eight skill areas or domains that cut across public health disciplines and include:

Domain One: Data analytics and assessment skills
Domain Two: Policy development and program planning skills
Domain Three: Communication skills
Domain Four: Health equity skills

Domain Five: Community partnership skills
Domain Six: Public health sciences skills
Domain Seven: Management and finance skills
Domain Eight: Leadership and system thinking skills



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Quality Improvement

The QI Committee is scheduled to meet for its quarterly meeting on June 13, where the annual QI Plan review will be conducted.

Air Quality and Climate Change

Please welcome Liliana Restrepo, an undergraduate at Bowdoin College majoring in Environmental Health Studies and minoring in Biology. Liliana is our newest intern who started on May 29th and will be working on an air quality and climate health related project this summer under my supervision.

Grant: EPA Air Quality Monitoring Grant

Status: Application Approved! Awaiting Approved Revised Budget and Sub-Contract from CT DPH;

Phase: Training and Planning Meetings Spring & Summer 2024; Expected Contracts in Fall 2024

I met with project colleagues from DPH, DEEP, Yale and UConn on the evening of May 2nd to discuss revisions we had to make to our Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) that the EPA needs to approve. We expect to begin this project in late summer/early fall.

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Anti-Racism (IDEA) Committee

Bea attended a webinar hosted by the New England Public Health Training Center on Working towards Equitable Access to health Care for People with Disabilities.

The committee did not meet in the month of May; however, the committee continued reviewing existing assessment tools for NVHD's internal IDEA Assessment. Paulina has compiled members' notes and is drafting a sample assessment.

May's "Idea of the Month" was "Intersectionality." Please see definition below:

"A framework or approach for understanding how classifications and identities such as race, gender, class, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and others interact and intersect with one another, rather than considering each classification in isolation.

Exposing [one's] multiple identities can help clarify the ways in which a person can simultaneously experience privilege and oppression. For example, a Black woman in America does not experience gender inequalities in exactly the same way as a white woman, nor racial oppression identical to that experienced by a Black man. Each race and gender intersection produces a qualitatively distinct life."

Naugatuck Valley Overdose Prevention & Education (NOPE) Program

ODMAP is an electronic database I use that provides near real-time suspected overdose data across jurisdictions to support public safety and public health efforts to mobilize an immediate response to a sudden increase, or spike, in overdose events. I attended a training hosted by the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) on updates to ODMAP, specifically a new naloxone saturation layer feature on May 2nd.

Grant: Academic Detailing on Opioids Safety (ADOPS)

Status: Contract Executed with CT Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS)





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I attended the UConn School of Pharmacy and DMHAS-led training for Academic Detailers in CT on May 14th. We continue to share prevention education materials online and at health education events.

Grant: Overdose Data to Action: Limiting Overdose through Collaborative Actions in Localities (OD2A)
Status: Application Approved! Awaiting sub-contract from New Haven Health Department

Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP)

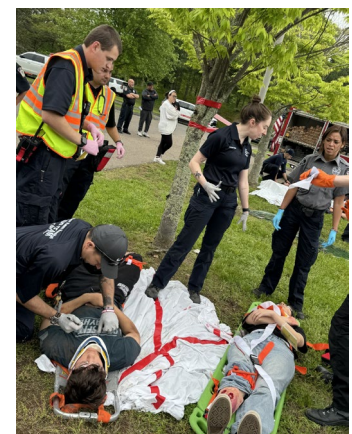
Barbara conducted a Call-Down Drill on May 9th to test our emergency notification system. She attended the Region 5 PHEP workgroup meeting for program staff and health directors hosted by the Region 5 CRI Lead, Torrington Area Health District, on May 14th.

Barbara and Kristie attended a Measles Tabletop Exercise hosted by the West-Hartford Bloomfield Health District on May 10th.

DPH hosted the seventh session of their Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Capabilities Training Series on May 22nd. The topic was Responder Safety and Health (Capability #14).

The CT DPH Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response (OPHPR) is re-establishing a Medical Countermeasure (MCM) Workgroup to serve as a forum for members to share lessons learned from the COVID-19 response and exchange best practices to inform MCM plans. Each of the 5 planning regions in the state were allowed to have 5 representatives; Barbara volunteered for Region 5.

I attended several planning meetings and then evaluated and hosted the hot wash debrief for the Seymour Mass Casualty Exercise on Saturday, May 18th at Seymour Middle School. This was a great exercise that tested communication, initial response, triage, transportation, and patient tracking among other capabilities. Participating organizations included Seymour Ambulance (host), West Haven High School EMT students, Seymour Fire, Naugatuck EMS, Beacon Hose Co. No. 1, Derby/Storm Ambulance, Valley EMS, Yale New Haven SHARPS Team, Northwest Public Safety Communications, NVHD and Seymour PD.



ESF 8: Public Health & Medical Services, Chair

I facilitated the Region 5 ESF 8 meeting on May 3rd and Barbara attended. The Region 2 ESF 8 meeting was held on May 15th. I attended the Region 5 Regional Emergency Planning Team (REPT) Steering Committee meeting on May 13th and both the Region 2 REPT Steering Committee & full REPT meeting on May 17th.





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Medical Reserve Corps

Barbara coordinated a First Aid training for NVMRC volunteers that was held on May 3rd from 1-4pm and a CPR/BLS training for the NVMRC on May 31st from 1-4pm in the Community Health Annex. Both trainings required formal activations for Title 28 coverage. I conducted a Loyalty Oath Ceremony at the May 3rd training. These training courses were provided in partnership with the Capitol Region MRC with funding provided by the CT Health Care Coalition.



Barbara attended the MRC National Summit in Chicago, Illinois from May 21-24th. The entire Summit was held at no cost for more than 600 local and state unit leaders from across the country and US territories. The MRC National Summit provided leaders a place to learn from their peers based on the foundation of the MRC Factors for Success, explore topics that support the diversity of the network, advance skillsets, and takeaway practical strategies to support our local MRC program. In addition, this Summit allowed unit leaders and MRC state coordinators to connect with colleagues, share peer to peer best practices from the COVID-19 pandemic, and share resources that enhance unit capabilities to prepare for, respond to, and recover from future pandemics, disasters, and emergencies. Pictured below is the Federal Region 1 MRC Unit Leaders at the Summit (Barbara is pictured in the middle, 3rd row).







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Table 1. Adult Case Statistics (18+)

	April	May
Total Cases & Contacts Managed	30	34
Successful Phone Contact		2
Attempted Contact: Left voicemail/invalid number/no voicemail available		
Attempted Contact: Letters Mailed	28	21

Table 2. Youth and Teen Case Statistics (0-17)

	April	May
Total Cases & Contacts Managed	5	4
Successful Phone Contact	1	3
Attempted Contact: Left voicemail/invalid number/no voicemail available		1
Attempted Contact: Letters Mailed	3	

*Please note that “Total Cases & Contacts Managed” also includes reports of self-tests originating from various sources such as schools, childcare centers, congregate living facilities, etc. and as such do not always come with contact information and/or do not always warrant further follow-up by NVHD staff.

Paulina, Vanessa, and Nancy met with Stephanie Weirsmann, Director of Business Development for Yale Pathology Labs, Yale School of Medicine on May 20th. Together with SalivaDirect Inc, their team is working with local community partners to offer no-cost COVID-19 testing. To do this, they deploy a mobile lab-in-a-van at pop-up and recurring community events. Their funding was extended through July and will be coordinating with NVHD to bring their testing van to the Valley. Once dates and locations are confirmed, we will help promote.

Please visit the CDC webpage dedicated to H5N1 Bird Flu updates here: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/avian-flu-summary.htm>.





COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES
Carissa Caserta, MPH
Assistant Director
May 2024

Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)

Jess, Lisa T., Kristie and I continue to work on CHIP initiatives and attend monthly meetings. Our Sacred Heart University interns completed the community resource guide, and it will be published in our CHIP.

Community Health Programs

A Matter of Balance

A Matter of Balance program was completed at the new Ansonia Senior Center and had 10 participants.

Diabetes Self-Management Program (DSMP)

A new DSMP class started at the Shelton Senior Center on May 24th and has 5 participants. This is my first time co-facilitating this program!

Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP)

Kristie and I completed our first CDSMP program at the Seymour Community Center with 8 participants. This program went very well and was well received among the participants.

Mental Health Programs

Lisa T. and I attended the Region 5 Suicide Advisory board meeting at the Heritage Hotel which included a training called L.E.T.S (Listening, Empathy, Trust, and Support) which focuses on suicide prevention in the Black community. It was an excellent training, and we have since used the materials given to update our QPR training resources list.

Question, Persuade, & Refer (QPR) Suicide Prevention Training

Lisa T. completed two QPR sessions for Griffin Hospital Medical Assistants and had a total of 32 participants. She also held a QPR session for the CT Public Health Association members which had 34 attendees.

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)

Lisa worked with NVHD staff to plan and coordinate another MHFA on May 13th. Barbara (PHEP & MRC Coordinator) will be taught her first class in partnership with the Meriden Health Department. Lisa and Barbara will be teaching a class on Saturday, July 20th from 8-4pm. This is open to the public and registration is online:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FVNSG6R>.

Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

Lead case management is a daily task that Lisa completes by reviewing an online database that shows any new testing results and updates needed. Lisa, Melanie, Jess, and I have been working closely to review the lead cases since the actionable blood lead level decreased, causing a lot more cases to the Valley. We discussed ways to better help these families and use funds to elevate some of the burden lead issues have caused. For example, we can provide better cleaning products such as a HEPA vacuum which may be too expensive for some families.

Immunization Grants & Clinical Services

Immunization Action Plan (IAP) Grant Program

IAP: Elizabeth completed 4 virtual/phone IQIP visits and 3 in person site visits at local pediatricians' offices for her grant deliverables. Elizabeth attended Griffin Hospital's Baby Fair to promote our programs and immunization efforts. This is the first time this fair has been back since the start of COVID in 2020. It is always well attended and brings through hundreds of families looking for services and resources.

COVID-19 Immunization Action Plan (CAP) & Immunization and Vaccines for Children COVID-19 Supplemental Funding

Nancy continues to work on the CAP grant (ending June 30, 2024) whereas Vanessa is working on the Immunizations and Vaccines for Children COVID-19 grant (ending June 30, 2025). They continue to work closely to meet grant deliverable objectives but do not overlap or do redundant outreach.

Rapid Community Assessment (RCA): Ansonia and Derby Results

NVHD, in collaboration with the Yale-Griffin Prevention and Research Center (PRC), set out to identify key barriers affecting routine childhood vaccine confidence in the towns of Ansonia and Derby. After analyzing the quantitative and qualitative data it was found that community members would like improved access to immunizations, enhanced vaccine information dissemination, and increased healthcare provider engagement within the community. Attached is the 1-page summary for the board to review.

I spoke at the Spring Adult Immunization Coalition meeting at the Lyceum in Hartford to give an overview of our RCA process and the strengths/weaknesses. It was a very well attended meeting and Kristie and I learned about some new ideas to try within our community.

2024 Social Determinants of Health Summit, Achieving Health Equity Together:

Nancy and Vanessa attended the convening of community-based and healthcare organizations, local and state agencies, and legislative partners to discuss and promote collaboration and alignment on efforts to address social determinants of health and improve health outcomes at the Chrysalis Center in Hartford. Opening remarks were made by Deidre Gifford, Commissioner of the CT Office of Health Strategy and Governor Lamont. Many state agencies and organizations presented on a number of important initiatives and approaches to addressing health disparities by addressing social determinants of health throughout individual's lives. A recording of the Summit is available online: <https://ct-n.com/ctnplayer.asp?odID=23169>.



Outreach: Month of May

The immunization team continued community outreach throughout the Valley during May. They spoke with different community organizations and providers about the importance of immunizations as well as the possibility of partnering with an organization to provide COVID-19 testing for free at different community events/locations. They also continue to strengthen our community partnerships through connecting with Team, Inc. Community Health Manager, Salvation Army Social Workers, Ansonia CT Foodshare host, the Director of Life Health and Wellness Center, Inc., and The Abundant Life Fellowship Ministries INC staff this month.



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Derby Public Library: 5/15

They attended the Derby Public Library to table and provide immunization resources to parents in Derby. The Derby Public Library has requested that NVHD staff table on a recurring basis (biweekly).

Clinical Services

In May, Kristie provided 21 vaccines to children in the Valley.

Kristie created a "Welcome Packet" for incoming students and their families related to vaccinations and a resource guide to local pediatricians. She delivered them to Ansonia, Derby, Naugatuck, and Seymour Board of Educations, and e-delivered to Beacon Falls and Shelton. This will be a great opportunity to give parents what they need to call us to schedule back to school vaccines. A lot of times families who are new to CT don't know where to go for medical care that is affordable. This packet will help guide them in the right directions, especially to us for free or low cost vaccines.



Infection Prevention & Control (IPC) & Healthcare-Associated Infections & Antimicrobial Resistance (HAI-AR)

DPH continues to host a monthly meeting with the CT DPH HAI-AR staff and local health departments/districts building capacity in Infection Prevention & Control (IPC). Jess attended the quarterly meeting on May 1st.

The DPH-led monthly meeting related to prevention and control was focused on Measles. The call consisted of an overview of Measles and what the roles are of the state and local health departments.

Jess also attended the DPH Infectious Disease Meeting for local health departments on May 29th that was focused on foodborne disease surveillance and outbreak investigations. The meeting covered reportable diseases, surveillance activities, outbreak detection and investigation, and the partnership between state and local health as well as the Yale FoodCORE/FoodNet program.

Tuberculosis (TB)

Kristie continues to monitor one resident for Tuberculosis. overseeing 3 residents pending for latent Tuberculosis treatment.

Miscellaneous

Conferences

Kristie attended two conferences related to infectious diseases/control: CT Infectious Disease Conference on May 2nd and the Infection Control conference on May 30th with state partners at the Aqua Turf Club.

Kristie also attended a Measles tabletop exercise on May 10th with the West Hartford-Bloomfield Health District.

Valley Council

I have been nominated to be on the Executive Committee of the Valley Council which will oversee the new Valley Council Director's position. We had our first meeting in May to discuss the Director's 12-month plan and review the by-laws of the Council.





ANSONIA/DERBY RAPID COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW AND FINDINGS

In partnership with the Yale-Griffin Prevention and Research Center (PRC), Naugatuck Valley Health District conducted a rapid community assessment in Ansonia and Derby to identify barriers affecting routine childhood vaccine confidence, as recent data showed a decline in vaccine uptake, prompting a comprehensive assessment.

Findings from the surveys, intercept interviews, and key informant interviews highlighted both barriers and facilitators to vaccination. Lack of access was prominent, with issues like limited appointment availability, transportation difficulties, and financial constraints. Language barriers compounded the problem, hindering access to information for non-English speakers. Lack of information prompted vaccine hesitancy, alongside concerns over safety and skepticism fueled by misinformation.

Personal beliefs and experiences influenced attitudes towards vaccination, with some expressing skepticism towards the inconsistent number of vaccines required and their safety. Fear of side effects and negative experiences also impacted acceptance, particularly for newer vaccines like COVID-19 and HPV.

Facilitators included school mandates, access to healthcare providers, and personal beliefs in vaccine efficacy. It was found that trusted messengers like healthcare providers and public health agencies played a crucial role in disseminating vaccine information, along with online and social media platforms.

Addressing the barriers to vaccination in Ansonia and Derby requires a multifaceted approach to improve access, increase information dissemination, and build trust in vaccines. Solutions include, but are not limited to:

1. Improving Access:

- Expand vaccination clinic hours to accommodate working parents, including evening and weekend appointments.
- Increase the number of vaccination sites in the community, including schools during back-to-school season.

2. Enhancing Information Dissemination:

- Launch a public awareness campaign tailored to address common misconceptions and concerns about vaccines, utilizing various communication channels. While doing this, provide culturally and linguistically appropriate materials in multiple languages to overcome language barriers.
- Update and disseminate the welcome packet to the board of education in both towns. The welcome packet contains information and resources to help families enroll their children in Valley schools, such as necessary vaccines, provider information, and required immunization forms.

3. Increasing Healthcare Provider Engagement:

- Encourage healthcare providers to actively promote vaccination during routine healthcare visits and well-child check-ups and provide brochures and educational material to provider offices (for patients).

By implementing these solutions in collaboration with community stakeholders Naugatuck Valley Health District can effectively overcome barriers to vaccination and promote vaccine confidence in Ansonia and Derby.



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ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Melanie Dokla, BS, RS

Assistant Director

May 2024

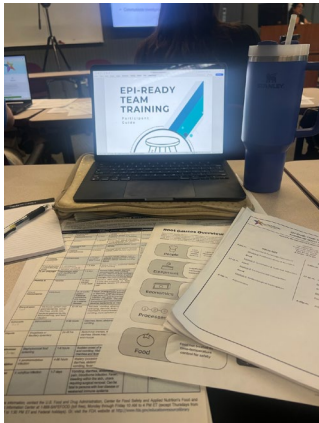
Food Service Establishments

Seasonal/temporary permit applications are being reviewed and scheduled for an inspection.

Staff continue to conduct routine inspections, plan views and inspections for food service establishments that are new or changing ownership.

Glenda Buenaventura, per diem food inspector, continues to assist in conducting food service inspection after hours and on the weekend up to 20 hours a week.

Amy Durand, Sanitarian, completed her field standardization with DPH Food Protection Program and is now a Certified Food Inspector! She has performed 50+ food service inspections with all NVHD certified staff and has dedicated many hours to achieving this certification.



Laurel attended an Epi-Ready Team Training on May 22-23, 2024. This training focused on how to respond to a foodborne outbreak efficiently and effectively. Enrollment was capped at 40 attendees (statewide) therefore only one person from NVHD was approved to attend. Staff will hold a meeting so Laurel can summarize what she learned.

Body Care

Staff continue to conduct plan views and inspections for body care establishments that are new or changing ownership.

Subsurface Sewage Disposal Systems (SSDS)

Staff continue to conduct SSDS inspections, B-100 visits, soil testing, B-100 plan reviews, new SSDS plans reviews, and issue permits to construct/discharge.

Laurel continues to train staff in the SSDS program.

Housing Complaints

Environmental staff continues to investigate housing code violations and complaints.





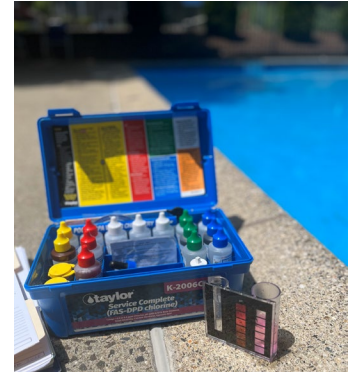
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Public Pools

All pool and spa renewal applications were submitted on time. Inspections for the outdoor pools/spas are currently being conducted and we will continue to follow up on problematic pools throughout the season.



Lead

An on-site inspection is conducted by NVHD staff when a child under the age of 6 has a blood level ≥ 5 ug/dL but < 10 ug/dL (effective 1/1/2024). 3 were completed this month.

A comprehensive inspection is conducted by NVHD staff when a child under the age of 6 has a blood lead level ≥ 10 ug/dL. 1 was completed this month.

Laurel attended DPH's Annual Lead Inspector/Risk Assessor refresher training at the West Hartford Town Hall in West Hartford on May 8th.

Jess, Lisa T., and I met with Stephanie Brzostek of the CT DPH Lead Program to discuss our lead investigation protocol and readiness for the mandate changes in 2025 and expected increased workload.



Miscellaneous

Congratulations to John Mucha, Sanitarian, who graduated from Southern State University with his master's in public health on May 17th.

Emergency Responses/Temporary Events After-Hours

	Date/Time	Location	Description of Event
1.	5/9/24	Coleman Bros. Carnival, Shelton	Temporary FSE 10 vendors
2.	5/17/24	Shelton, food service establishment	Food worker exclusion
3.	5/31/24	Food Trucks on the River, Shelton	Temporary FSE 25 vendors

