



Miscellaneous

Valley Council for Health & Human Services

The VCHHS meeting was held on August 5th.

CT Association of Directors of Health (CADH)

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

The CADH Board of Directors meeting was held on August 26th.

Statewide DPH & Local Health Meetings

I continue to attend the monthly meeting held for local health and DPH staff (co-hosted by CADH). NVHD staff also attend if their schedule permits. The meeting was held on August 13th.

Seymour Food Coalition

Under the leadership of First Selectwoman Drugonis and to make Seymour a more sustainable community, we have formed a small working group to address food accessibility and reducing food waste in Seymour. This initiative aligns with the outcome of our community health needs assessment and our new 3-year community health improvement plan. Thank you to the First Selectwoman for convening this group!

Quality Improvement

To make relicensing for Body Care more efficient, Laurie, Judi, Rose, Melanie and I had a workshop meeting and came up with solutions to improve relicensing data entry and recordkeeping.

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.

I attended a key stakeholder Public Health Training Academy of Connecticut (PHTAC) meeting on August 11th.

Air Quality and Climate Change

Grant: EPA Air Quality Monitoring Grant

Status: Contract is fully executed!

The contract period is May 2025 through March 31, 2027, and the total contract is \$113,608.44. Intern Liliana Restrepo has completed her summer 2025 internship. Liliana developed grant materials, attended public health outreach events over the summer, performed water sampling with Vanessa, and assisted me with updating our webpage: www.nvhd.org/airquality.



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Naugatuck Valley Overdose Prevention & Education (NOPE) Program

Grant: Overdose Data to Action: Limiting Overdose through Collaborative Actions in Localities (OD2A)

Status: Year 2 Sub-contract Executed with New Haven Health Department; Carryover funds approved

I attended the quarterly OD2A meeting hosted by CT DPH and local health OD2A recipients on August 6th. Austin and I attended the monthly OD2A partners meeting hosted by New Haven; Austin provided updates for NVHD.

Austin joined the Region 5 Breathe Easy Workgroup, which met on August 7th and is a coalition focused on combatting youth drug and vape use. Participating in this working group supports regional initiatives to reduce adolescent substance use through education and prevention programming. General street outreach was conducted in all towns within the service area, targeting high-need populations and distributing educational materials and essential goods.

Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP)

I attended the 90-minute Enhancing Public Health Preparedness for Chemical and Radiation Emergencies: A Resource Showcase from NACCHO and ASTHO on August 27th. The webinar featured practical tools such as NACCHO's Chemical Preparedness Handbook, Tabletop Exercise Toolkit, ChemPrep Connect, along with ASTHO's radiation preparedness resources including the NARR Clearinghouse and Community Reception Center eTool.

ESF 8: Public Health & Medical Services, Chair

I facilitated the Region 5 ESF #8 meeting on August 1st. I attended the virtual REPT & REPT Steering Committee meeting for Region 2 on August 15th. I attended the Region 5 REPT meeting on August 18th and provided the ESF 8 updates.

Statewide Training and Exercise Workgroup (STEW)

I attended the meeting on August 13th.

CT Healthcare Coalition (HCC)

Public Health Representative & Voting Member; Elected to the Executive Committee

I attended the bi-monthly meeting on August 20th and provided the update on behalf of Region 5.

NACCHO Preparedness Policy Advisory Group (PPAG)

Connecticut Representative

I attended the PPAG meeting that was held on August 20th.

Surveillance & Outbreak Response

After a short break, we are excited to welcome back, Paulina, SORT Coordinator, as she works remotely from Chicago while attending graduate school.

If you need a COVID-19 home test kit, please arrange pick up or delivery with Paulina by calling 203-881-3255 x 118 or emailing pcherkasov@nvhd.org.





COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES
Carissa Caserta, MPH
August 2025

Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)

Now that our community health needs assessment, The 2025 Valley Index, is published, our next task is to set workplan priorities for the next 3-years to address some of the top concerns of the community based on the data.

Community Health Programs

Diabetes Self-Management Program (DSMP)

Kristie and Lisa continue taking turns leading the one-hour evening phone DSMP.

Chronic Disease Self-Management (CDSMP)

Kristie and Lisa concluded the Chronic Disease workshop at the Naugatuck Senior Center on August 5th.

Mental Health Programs

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)

Congratulations to Austin for becoming certified to teach Mental Health First Aid! Austin completed the training program August 5th-7th. He and Lisa will be teaching an in-person MHFA on September 12th at NVHD.

QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer Suicide Prevention)

NVHD offered two QPR Suicide Prevention training sessions in August; one virtual session on August 14th with 4 participants (Austin and Lisa) and one in-person session on August 22nd (Lisa) for 18 incoming Yale MPH students (pictured below).



Immunization Grants & Clinical Services

Clinical Services

Kristie ran vaccine clinics at Naugatuck High School on August 11th and August 14th. She vaccinated 15 students and administered 30 vaccines. On August 19th and 26th, she ran vaccine clinics at APEX in Derby where she vaccinated 9 international students and administered 26 vaccines. In addition to the school clinics, Kristie continued to see patients at our office clinic. She administered 105 vaccines to 49 children this month. Vanessa attended the offsite clinics to provide registration support.

We scheduled 24 private and public flu clinics for the Fall and will be starting clinics at the end of September this year to help space them out. See the flyer at the end of this section for the public clinic dates.





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August is National Immunization Month. We were able to launch two media campaigns, our updated immunization webpage: www.nvhd.org/immunizations, updated fact sheets, launch our 2nd annual library book donation program, and introduce Tuck the Tiger, our new mascot to the community! Protecting our community’s health starts with education and awareness.

National Immunization Awareness Month is a vital opportunity to highlight the importance of vaccinations in preventing serious diseases and protecting public health. Vaccines are a safe and effective way to safeguard individuals and communities from preventable illnesses. They not only protect those who receive them but also help create herd immunity, which is essential for those who cannot be vaccinated due to medical reasons. This month’s awareness campaign serves as a reminder for families to stay on schedule with vaccinations and to discuss any questions or concerns with their healthcare providers.

Introducing Tuck the Tiger!

With funding from the CDC Immunization Grant, the Community Health team partnered with Conceptual Communications to create media and marketing materials for NVHD’s back-to-school immunization campaign. These materials are being used at events and across digital platforms to increase awareness and reach families throughout the Valley.

Tuck the Tiger, both animated and in “real” life, has become NVHD’s immunization mascot and continues to be featured in educational and family-friendly outreach, strengthening engagement with parents and children.



We also gathered 5 trusted messengers in the Valley to participate in videos expressing the importance of staying on schedule.

- Kristie D’Averso, RN, NVHD Public Health Nurse
- Dr. Frederick Browne, MD, MBA, FACP, FASAM, NVHD Medical Advisor and Chief Medical Officer for Griffin Hospital
- Dr. Nicolas Mongillo, MD, FAAP, Pediatrician and Co-owner of Pedi-Care Pediatrics, Shelton
- Dr. Joseph DiBacco, Superintendent of Ansonia Public Schools
- Shannon Bullard, Executive Director of Julia Day Nursery and Kindergarten

Tuck the Tiger (Vanessa, Public Health Specialist) was a big hit during a visit with the children at Julia Day Nursery too!





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To further support our commitment to public health and education, NVHD has donated new immunization children's books to all eight libraries in our district. Vanessa was able to utilize the immunization grant funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), for the second year, to donate 80 children's books across the 8 Valley libraries during NIAM. These books are designed to educate children and families about the importance of immunization in a fun and engaging way. By fostering an understanding of vaccines from a young age, we aim to inspire informed conversations about health choices and encourage a culture of proactive health management.

It was great having our library partners create display shelves with these books to encourage readers. Some took it a step farther. For example, the Huntington Branch Library in Shelton encouraged even more children to check out these books as doing so would enter them into a raffle to win a Tuck the Tiger stuffed animal (also provided by NVHD)!



**August is
National Immunization
Awareness Month**

Check out one of these books to be entered to win this super cute plushie!

Fill out a ticket at the Children's or Circulation desk when you check out one of these books!

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Huntington
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Infection Prevention & Control (IPC) & Healthcare-Associated Infections & Antimicrobial Resistance (HAI-AR)
Jess attended the quarterly HAI-AR Advisory Committee meeting on August 6th.

Tuberculosis (TB)

Kristie is actively monitoring and performing daily Directly Observed Therapy (DOT) for 2 cases of TB. Both patients will complete treatment in early September.

Immunization Action Plan (IAP) Grant Program

Elizabeth attended the 2025 Vaccines for Children (VFC) / Immunization Quality Improvement for Providers (IQIP) Annual Consultant Training on August 11th and 12th. IQIP site visits are conducted both virtually (2) and in-person (2) for a total of 4 visits per 12-month period for each VFC-enrolled provider in the IAP jurisdiction (NVHD 6 towns plus Stratford, Trumbull, Monroe and Oxford). She also completed 6 month IQIP site visit with Optimus (Stratford) on August 19th and a 12 month IQIP with Mercy Pediatrics on August 22nd.





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On Saturday, August 16th Austin and Lisa attended the Pound Tha Ground Backpack giveaway at Nolan Field in Ansonia. This annual event is organized by the Pound Tha Ground motorcycle club, provides backpacks and schools supplies to Ansonia families. NVHD provided personal care items and information for back to school mental health care.





ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
Melanie Dokla, BS, RS
August 2025

Food Service Establishments

Seasonal 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.

Public Pools

Outdoor/ seasonal public swimming pool inspections and follow-up inspections were completed.

Body Care

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

The renewals for all existing Body Care Establishment (248) were sent out in mid-August, and the process will continue until the end of September when the current permits expire. A call-down will be sent out to notify establishment owners that renewals were sent out via mail.

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 have issued permits to discharge.

Housing Complaints

Environmental staff continue to investigate housing code violations and complaints.

Lead Education & Action Program (LEAP)

As expected, we have seen an increase in elevated blood lead (EBLL) cases, which require a comprehensive lead inspection. This inspection consists of X-ray fluorescent (XRF) readings of all components in each room and components on the exterior of the property, dust wipe samples in each room, 2 water samples and any bare soil on the exterior of the property. If the residence is a multifamily dwelling the other units are required to be tested if there is a child under the age of six.

Lead abatement plans submitted by lead abatement contractors are reviewed and property owners are issued written orders from this office. Once the project has received approval and work is completed, a final inspection is conducted to ensure work was done as specified in the plan.



Lead case management continues to be up to date, with no new cases requiring comprehensive inspections. There were two new cases added that had levels below the 5v required for comprehensive inspections, which were handled through discussion with parents about remediation, cleaning and nutrition as solutions. We also closed three cases, as levels dropped below 3.5v so we are now monitoring 53 cases.

Lead Stats

Open environmental lead cases (properties)	20
New environmental	-
Active case management (children)	53
New case management	1

Fresh Water Sampling

Water sample collections from the Derby Recreation Camp on the Housatonic River have been taken weekly since mid-June. The swimming area was not closed all summer for water quality issues. Collection ended the week of August 11th.

Miscellaneous

Congratulations to John Mucha, MPH, RS! He has been promoted to Head Sanitarian, effective 8/4/25. I have all the confidence in his knowledge and skills to take over this position with success.

After-Hours Emergency Responses

	Date/Time	Location	Description of Event
1.	None		

After-Hours Temporary Events

	Date/Time	Description of Event	Location
1.	Thursday 8/7 – Saturday 8/9/25	Holy Rosary	Ansonia
2.	Saturday 8/23/25	Naugatuck Food Truck Festival on the Green	Naugatuck

