

HEALTH SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD  
03/18/10

**Draft minutes**

The Health Services Advisory Board met on Thursday, March 18, 2010 in Classroom A of the One Stop Career Center located in the Human Services Center Building in Canton at 3:00 PM.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Dr. David Dunn, Medical Representative; Benjamin Gruda, Pharmaceutical Representative; Brian Gardam, Hospice Director; Tedra Cobb, County BOL Representative, and Dorothea Badenhausen.

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:** Susan Hathaway, Director; Sandra Worden, Director of Preventive Services; JoAnn Pfeil Quality Assurance/Corporate Compliance Officer; Myrna Barney, Public Health Sanitarian, Brandi Wells, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator and Sherry Cryderman, Administrative Assistant.

**INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBER:** Dr. Badenhausen was introduced by Ms. Hathaway and welcomed by those in attendance.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** Ms. Hathaway reported that we received an approval letter this week from the New York State Department of Health to proceed with the formation of a Board of Health for St. Lawrence County. She noted that once the Board of Health is established this committee will be disbanded. This is because the countywide BOH will be the governing authority over the Public Health Department. She reported that letters were mailed out today to the municipalities notifying them about the County Wide Health District. She anticipates many communities will want to come under the governance of the County rather than retain and pay for a local health officer. She met with the Mayors Association earlier in the month; has a meeting set up to meet with Gouverneur officials and been speaking with the City of Ogdensburg on the phone. They may elect to remain independent of the BOH (Board of Health) with their own local health officer. However if a conflict situation decisions, the County has authority over local government. Ms. Hathaway explained the makeup of the BOH, sections of the PH law relating to the BOH were distributed to members present. Ms. Hathaway encouraged members interested in serving on the BOH to submit a CV to her along with the bio-data sheet distributed. The bio-data sheet must be presented to the board of legislators for board membership assignment. She has been requested to assemble a list of members for presentation to BOL. She explained that the BOL is required to meet only quarterly by PH law. She feels this BOH will need to meet monthly for a while to establish by-laws, sanitary codes, how it will operate, etc. She explained the BOH has the power to quarantine, levy fines, etc.

**ETHICS LAW:** Ms. Hathaway reported that the County Attorney is still researching the question if every member of a board/committee has to sign the ethics law, just the chair or exactly who must sign. She wanted to point this out to folks considering coming on BOH that they may be required to sign disclosure statements in the future.

**WELLNESS COMMITTEE:** Ms. Hathaway reported that she has recently joined the membership of the county wellness committee. The committee is looking at the county cost for medical expenses (estimated at \$16 TO \$17 million dollars annually) and how they might be able to have a cost saving. The committee members are exploring the option of starting a medical clinic where county staff could go when not feeling well. Perhaps come to clinic and go back to work if possible rather than utilizing a whole day to go to the doctor. Public Health could apply to NYS under Article 28 to house the clinic. Sue has spoken with both Dr. Dunn and Kim Richards, NA regarding the possibility of holding a clinic 2 days a week; Dr. Dunn one day and Kim Richards the other day. It wouldn't cost the employee any co-pay. This idea is just beginning to be explored and she requested those present to share their thoughts and/or reactions to this idea. Comments received included:

- How the public would react when they hear “county employees getting free medical”. Why do they have to pay and not county employees.
- Confidentiality concerns with employees wanting to keep health issues private.
- One big issue when Potsdam tried to do this, the community said they were taking away from the physicians and interrupting continuity of care.

**2011 BUDGET:** Copies of the proposed 2011 budget reductions with a total savings of \$503,421 were distributed. Ms. Hathaway explained that each department has been charged with findings savings within these difficult economic times. She explained that the following are to capture savings, through attrition with no lay-offs.

- **Reduction of staffing – Attrition/Redeployment:** 2 Key board Specialist are retiring and the positions will not be filled. We can't share services with either Community Services or Probation in these offices as they have not staff to share. We will ask personnel to assist us in a job assessment for these two positions to determine how they can be staffed and or reassigned. The two salaries and half of fringe benefits for these positions will save \$44,044.
- **Maximize the Use of Part-Time LPN's – Redeployment:** It has been determined that it would be a cost savings to utilize LPN's who can provide some skilled nursing where Home Health Aides can not. Anticipated additional skilled nursing revenues vs. HHA revenue would be \$193,833.49.
- **Close Gouverneur Office:** Ms. Hathaway explained the clerical staff would work out of the Canton Office and nurses would work out of their homes utilizing county vehicles to eliminate mileage costs. The department is exploring options to make this project work. For example purchase of fax machines at \$100.00 each for the nurses to have in their homes for data and other documents to be sent to the main office. We will need agreements with hospitals or offices for access to confidential fax machines. This is a Beta project to test for trying this with Massena and Ogdensburg in the future if it works well. Mr. Gardam stated that

hospice nurses work from home and it has worked well. He said he would be glad to speak with Sue or she could phone Sue Kaplan and talk about some of the problems they encountered and have worked through. There is a lease with the property and it is hoped can sub-let. With cost savings in electric, cleaner, heating, phones, ect., we believe we could see a savings of \$42,111 with this project.

- **Eliminate 3 Home Health Aide Positions:** to retirement in the future. This leaves just 6 HHA's. It is advantage to the department to contract out for HHA services, rather than pay a part-time salary with full benefits. No HHA would be terminated, just as the positions become empty due to retirement, etc they will not be filled. We will maximize the use of our part timers as much as possible giving them more hours and the department getting more hours for its dollars. Savings of \$121,420.
- **Reduced Services for Dental Sealant Program:** There will be a reduction of salaries from retirement of first team. One two-person team will retire in December 2010 and early 2011. This will result in one team doing all schools but two grades instead of four in each school. The Coordinator is planning to retire August 2010. The Emergency Preparedness (EP) Coordinator will take over Coordinator duties in August 2010 as the EP grant will be greatly reduced at that time. Savings of \$100,223.
- **Eliminate Scholarships:** Due to the economic times the BOL has voted to eliminate scholarships that were used to encourage professional student to return to the county to practice. We will continue to honor the current scholars we have made commitments to, but will not award any new ones at this time. Savings of \$11,000.

**CQI Report:** Ms. Pfeil reported the CQI committee continues to meet on a monthly basis with the next meeting scheduled for April 22, 2010. The topic of that meeting will be program quality. They have a template they will try utilizing for all programs. This is the first time they have tried this. Each program is to select one program segment and work through it and then a power point will be put together and reviewed.

**Corporate Compliance:** Ms. Pfeil reported that she is now working 75% for Public Health, 25% Community Services, Drug & rehabilitation programs. She has been busy training employees in corporate compliance and has 50 people through the training with more scheduled. It is a challenge balancing between the two agencies but it will work out. At the PH 01/26/10 meetings 2 new reviews were undertaken. HHA training and State Home Care Registry. The review found the HHA training was excellent. We are mandated to document certification of each HHA and have them placed on the NYS Home Care Registry by 09/10/10. The review found we have information on all HHAs and they are certified. The state system is having problems not recognizing some of the training sites and therefore the system doesn't show the aide as certified. This State system gives private individuals a site to go to so they may verify that their personal aide has been certified to provide care. The

system is similar to LPN and Nursing systems now available to the public. Ms. Pfeil anticipates being able to be in compliance by 09/10/10.

**Emergency Preparedness Coordinator:** Ms. Wells explained that the H1N1 campaign has come to an end for the time being at least; unless there is another outbreak and we need to hold more clinics. Overall, Public Health administered approximately 11,500 vaccinations. Private physicians' offices, clinics and pharmacies administered another 5,500 vaccinations in St. Lawrence County. We held vaccination clinics at every school in St. Lawrence County (43 total), including the Catholic Schools. We went to all of the elementary schools twice to give children under age 10 a second dose of the vaccine. We also held private vaccination clinics for first responders at four locations in the county. We had several clinics at the Canton Public Health office. We held clinics in all the major townships and many of the smaller townships including Hopkinton, Helena, Heuvelton, Morristown, Brasher, etc. We also offered the vaccine at WIC clinics and at DSS, but had little success. By the time we made our way to those agencies, the demand for the vaccine was low. Unfortunately, the demand for the H1N1 vaccine was very high in the fall, but the supply was very low. By mid-winter, we had an over-abundance of the vaccine, but the demand had begun to wane because we were no longer hearing about outbreaks in the community.

Right now, St. Lawrence County Public Health Department has on hand approximately 21,000 doses of the vaccine. That is because the State Health Department has mandated that we collect and store any surplus vaccine for hospitals, colleges and physicians in the community. This vaccine is being stored at the county correctional facility and will remain there for the time being. At some point, the State Health Department plans to pick it up, but that may not happen until fall, when the seasonal flu vaccine arrives. The seasonal flu vaccine is going to contain the H1N1 strain next fall, so people will not have to receive two vaccinations like they did this year. We have been encouraged by the State Health Department to give children under 10 one dose of the H1N1 vaccine in the fall, if the seasonal flu vaccine takes longer than expected to arrive. But so far, that is the only guidance we have received so far from the State Health Department concerning the left-over H1N1 vaccine. We are still encouraging anyone who has not yet received an H1N1 vaccination this year to call our main office or any of our satellite offices and make an appointment to get vaccinated. We are also still offering the H1N1 vaccine at all our regular Immunization Clinics.

In mid-April, we will be conducting a Hotwash to gather feedback from everyone who was involved in the H1N1 planning and implementation efforts. The lessons learned from this exercise will be used to guide future responses.

**Jail report:** Ms. Worden reviewed the nursing history and how we have moved from 5 part time nurses and 2 full time nurses to 5 full time nurses. We have also done cross-training with 2 prevent nurses who are being oriented at the jail to be able to fill in if a regular jail nurse should call in. This is more cost effective.

**H1N1 & Seasonal Flu:** Ms. Worden reported 2,234 vaccinations of the seasonal flu were given. All H1N1 and seasonal flu clinics have come to an end. We have vaccine available for both and are encouraging any one who wants either vaccine to phone any of our satellite offices and make appointment or attend any of our monthly clinics. The State mandated that colleges, physicians, etc turn their unused vaccine in to the Public Health Department. We have approximately 16,000 of H1N1 in storage. We even did pick-ups at providers. There are expiration dates on the vaccines that we are tracking. We had approximately 700 seasonal flu vaccine left, but after yesterday over 400 expired (flu mist) so we will only have injectable vaccine left.

**Rabies:** Ms. Wordon distributed copies of the 2010 13 scheduled rabies clinics to be held in St. Lawrence County. She noted that clinics in smaller communities are being eliminated from the schedule. This is another cost savings measure that is being put in place. Please note on the schedule there are more clinics being held at the Canton facility as well as the larger surrounding communities (Gouverneur, Potsdam, Massena, Ogdensburg). This is being done because some of the remote areas had poor attendance, so are not worth the cost of the manpower, mileage, vet fees, etc. Winthrop will remain on the schedule as it is one of the largest clinics. We have treated only one person to date this year for rabies as the person was bitten by a stray cat in Potsdam and it was not possible to locate the cat.

**Regular Immunization Clinics:** Ms. Worden reported that she noted a decrease in numbers from 1,525 people in 2008 to 1,217 clients in 2009. **Blood pressure clinics** have increased from 691 clients in 2008 to 763 in 2009. Currently reviewing cost and attendance at sites to determine value of this service. **Travel clinic** up to 408 injections in 2009 from 358 injections in 2008. People are traveling to China, Mexico, Uganda, Thailand, Equador, and El Salvador.

**MOM's Program:** Ms. Worden reported during a 2008 survey it was noted there is a need to increase visits. 2009 visits did not increase but decreased. It was discovered new referrals were coming in but no follow up because the mom only wanted insurance. We have invested energy on increasing MOM's numbers and working with DSS to improve access to maternity care. Referrals are coming in from hospitals and doctor's office now that they know the MOM's Program provides services such as nutritionist, medical social workers, teaching.

**Minutes of Previous meetings.** Mrs. Cryderman noted that the 09/10/09 minutes need to reflect that Dr. Ormand is the new Health Services Advisory Board member not Dr. Scruggs. The 12/17/09 minutes need to reflect that Brian Gardam was present at the meeting. Mrs. Cobb moved that the minutes be approved as corrected. Dr. Dunn seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**NEXT MEETING** – June 17<sup>th</sup> at 3 PM in Classroom A of the One Stop Career Center, Human Services Building, Canton, NY.

