

Director's Corner

Amy Atkins, MPA, Director



The Center for Local Health (CLH) hosted several successful initiatives over the past month including launching the first in a series of webinars through the CHANGE Program and hosting public health leadership training for the Public Health Association's Administration Section. In addition, based on feedback from representatives from the Association of Local Health Departments, the CLH will create meeting summaries of each Public Health Partnership meeting and post these summaries on our website. Each of these initiatives is highlighted in detail in this newsletter.

The CLH has also made progress in our work to support Bureau for Public Health (BPH) partners responsible for each of the basic public health services. CLH staff met with each member of the Basic Public Health Services Support Team to assess current reporting practices by local health departments and support BPH's partners in developing options to assure consistent and standardized reporting requirements and methods are in place for local health departments. Bureau leadership is also working with the Public Health Impact Task Force (PHITF) to document and describe the current system and propose a future model for PHITF to discuss. BCF leadership will attend the West Virginia Association of Local Health Departments November meeting. The CLH looks forward to working collaboratively with state, local and national partners as we move forward with both the assessment and the model development processes. As a reminder, we encourage you to participate in PHITF meetings by providing feedback during the public comment period. All materials related to the PHITF, including upcoming meeting dates, can be found on the CLH website: www.dhhr.wv.gov/localhealth.

Local Health Department Leadership Lunch & Learn Orientation Webinar Series

Lisa Thompson, Public Health Financial Coordinator

On September 16, 2015, the CLH hosted a Local Health Department Leadership Lunch and Learn Orientation Webinar as part of the CHANGE Program (Connections for Health Administrators: Networking, Governance and Education). The webinar was a presentation on Basic Public Health Standards by Brian Skinner, General Counsel for the Bureau for Public Health.

During the webinar, Mr. Skinner provided an overview of 64 CSR 73, standards for local boards of health and the public health performance standards. Fifty-four participants attended the webinar including local health department administrators, local health officers, board of health chairs and Bureau for Public Health staff. A post evaluation survey revealed the majority of the participants found the webinar to be informative and that they would share this information with other local health staff in their jurisdiction.

Webinars on Infectious Disease Epidemiology and Environmental Health Services held in October will continue throughout November. These webinars are intended to provide guidance and orientation to local health departments regarding statutory authority and responsibilities specific to the relationship between the Bureau for Public Health and local health departments. The Center for Local Health welcomes any feedback to improve and develop additional training sources.

Public Health Leadership Education Program

Linda Lipscomb, Public Health Administrative Coordinator

On September 23, 2015, the CLH, in partnership with the Health Administration of the West Virginia Public Health Association (WVPHA), sponsored an education program at the WVPHA Conference. There were more than 40 attendees at the event which included local boards of health members, local health officers, local health department administrators and Bureau for Public Health staff.

The education program consisted of two sessions designed to offer public health leaders an opportunity to receive information on topics in the areas of personnel and governance. The first session, presented by Joe Thomas, Assistant Director of Employee Relations with the WV Division of Personnel, was "*Fair Labor Standards Act: The Least You Need To Know.*" The session provided an



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Public Health Leadership Education Program, *continued*



overview of the aspects of the *Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938*, as amended, which are most commonly encountered in the course of business. The second session, presented by Sharon Lansdale, President/CEO of the Center for Rural Health Development, "*Why Care About Ethics and Accountability*," focused on ethics, conflict of interest and confidentiality in the areas of board governance and business operations.

The evaluations and feedback the CLH received from this event and the governance forum held in May indicate the education sessions are of value and meeting the need for specific topics requested by public health leadership. The CLH will continue to explore educational opportunities designed to benefit public health leaders.

The CLH wishes to express our appreciation to the members of the Health Administration Executive Committee: Boyd Vanhorn, Jackie Huff and Linda Sanders and to the local health leadership which promoted and attended this educational program.

The Heart of Public Health

Brett Armstrong, Office of Epidemiology and Prevention Services

In the arena of public health, the people behind the programs can make all the difference. For the past five years, the State of West Virginia has been fortunate to have a dynamic and dedicated pair of individuals as the driving force behind its Division of Tuberculosis Elimination (DTBE). At the end of October, however, that will sadly change as DTBE's Director, Carmen Priddy, and Surveillance Nurse, Libby Boggess, are planning to retire. With their departure, the DTBE will lose a wealth of knowledge, experience, and passion for public health.

Tuberculosis (TB) is a complex issue to tackle. It is a disease that has the potential to affect anyone but most often strikes those segments of the population who have the least potential for protection: the poor, elderly, and immune compromised. Complicating the matter further is co-morbidity with other illnesses. To properly manage TB, Director Priddy feels, "You have to understand diabetes, HIV and all of the other diseases that go with TB." She went on to say, "TB is a true public health disease." TB encompasses a broad spectrum and knowledge and an even more robust scope of action. DTBE staff help coordinate tracing of contacts as well as patient testing and treatment long after the initial diagnosis is delivered. While the outcome is rewarding, the journey there can be trying. Hence, the need for a healthy sense of humor and a passion for caring for others. "If you don't have the heart for public health," Director Priddy observed, "you don't have the heart for TB."

With the challenges still facing TB, both women noted patience and persistence as key elements future DTBE employees will need. Along with a sharp mind and heart deeply concerned over people for whom they cared, Director Priddy and Ms. Boggess exemplify the traits they described as being essential for the future. Their examples are providing a steady thrum to the heartbeat of those working to end TB in West Virginia, and with those aforementioned attributes, the next generation of DTBE staff may well live up to the legacy left by Director Priddy and Ms. Boggess.

WV Public Health Impact Task Force: Update

Amy Atkins, MPA, Director



The West Virginia Public Health Impact Task Force (PHITF) convened on October 14, 2015, at the Holiday Inn & Suites in South Charleston, West Virginia. Drema Mace, PhD, MSP, Executive Director, Mid-Ohio Valley Health Department (MOVHD), and Patricia H. White, MPA, MPH, former Executive Director of West Virginia Health Right were the guest speakers.

Dr. Mace delivered a presentation entitled "Mid-Ohio Valley Health Department: A Regional Model of Public Health Service Delivery." The presentation included a summary of the history of the MOVHD, including how the regional health department was formed and the services it currently provides. Dr. Mace highlighted the enhanced services provided by the health department, as well as the administration and financial efficiencies, linked to MOVHD's regional model. She also estimated administrative cost savings associated with a hypothetical, statewide regionalization of local health departments.

Ms. White discussed the role of the legislature in structuring and funding the public health system in West Virginia. She recommended that the PHITF and local

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WV Public Health Impact Task Force: Update, *continued*

health departments consider the need for change to West Virginia's public health system in response to changes in the structure and funding of the health care system. She also highlighted the link between West Virginia's current economic outlook and the need to improve effectiveness in public service delivery and efficiency in the use of public dollars.

All meetings of the PHITF are open to the public and include a public comment period for anyone wanting to share ideas or comments. The PHITF continues to actively request comments, ideas or suggestions for helping to redefine the mission of public health in West Virginia. Ideas may be submitted by email to the Center for Local Health at: dhrbphclh@wv.gov. Logistics are being finalized for the next meeting which will be held in Charleston on December 9, 2015 from 1 p.m.—3 p.m.

Culture of Success at Cabell-Huntington Health Department

Linda Lipscomb, Public Health Administrative Coordinator



On Thursday, September 27, 2015, the Center for Local Health Director and Public Health Administrative Coordinator visited the Cabell-Huntington Health Department (CHHD) and met with Dr. Michael Kilkenny, Health Officer, Tim Hazelett, Administrator, and Jack Mease, Accountant. During the meeting with the agency's Executive Team, they shared their experiences in creating what they termed a "culture of success." By empowering staff and engaging community partners and the board of health, the Cabell-Huntington Health Department is promoting accountability, improving transparency and better utilizing resources to improve the health of their community.

The Executive Leadership Team at CHHD is using data to improve operations and services at every level. The Team conducted a culture assessment of their organization, published an annual report for the board and community, and conducted a community health needs assessment through their Regional Health Connect. All of these efforts are intended to position the agency to best meet the needs of their community and strengthen community partnerships. This information allows the board, staff, community partners, and public to be informed and provide input into how the health department can be an effective partner. The agency is also using the information to implement needed improvements that align with the changing health care environment.

A real sense of community dialogue was described with questions being discussed regarding who could best provide certain services, what resources are available for certain services and what other community resources could be leveraged. Plans to improve health, services and operations are based on the data collected and the robust discussions with the board, the community and partners. Tim Hazelett stated that this work takes time; but the products are clearly changing the way the agency does business. For more information, contact Tim Hazelett, Administrator for CHHD, by phone at 304-523-6483.

Upcoming Events

November 18, 2015

BPH Lunch & Learn Webinar series: Environmental Health Program, 12 p.m. to 1 p.m.

November 19 - 20, 2015

West Virginia Public Health Symposium, Charleston Marriott Town Center

December 10, 2015

Threat Preparedness Orientation, Center for Threat Preparedness, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Register on WVTRAIN using Course ID 1037306