

WEST VIRGINIA PUBLIC HEALTH PARTNERSHIP

2/3/16 Meeting Summary

Legislative Update – Amy Atkins, Brian Skinner, Brad Cochran

- The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, Bureau for Public Health (BPH) announced legislation on 2/2/2016 that will: 1) maximize local health department's ability to bill insurance companies, 2) ensure public health programs administered by local health departments are evidence-based with measurable outcomes and that they are administrated in a cost-effective manner; and 3) permit the Commissioner to assist local health departments during public health emergencies when the provision of basic public health services in the community are threatened.
- A press release concerning this legislation is available on the Department's website at: www.dhhr.wv.gov/News/2016/
- A report published by West Virginia University, Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER) referenced in the press release is available at: www.be.wvu.edu/bber/pdfs/BBER-2015-12.pdf funded. The report was funded by the Bureau for Public Health, Center for Local Health in response to a request for an independent validation of the cost-savings associated with regionalized health departments, based on the Mid-Ohio Valley Health Department model presented by Dr. Drema Mace at the October 14th Public Health Impact Task Force meeting.
- Several pieces of legislation related to environmental health services have also been proposed, including SB387 and HB2449 which allow a person/s to participate in a herd share as a means to obtain raw milk for consumption and SB434 which would permit home based micro processed foods and farmers markets with inspections and permits conducted by local health departments. The Office of Environmental Health Services is also monitoring three carryover bills from the last legislative session.

Preparedness Update – Jerry Rhodes

- Zika Virus: The CDC EOC activated at least a week ago. The primary concern is about pregnant women and the development of birth defects. 1 in 5 people have flu like symptoms. There are travel advisories in place to affected countries but no travel restrictions.
- Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Planning: There was a significant outbreak last year that affected a number of states. WV was the only high poultry producing state not to be affected. USDA, WVDA and BPH are working on response plans. There are 3 primary planning areas from the Bureau's perspective: 1) responder health and safety/monitoring, 2) human illness response and 3) incident coordination. There is a draft executive order that the Governor has in place and can be immediately executed. Local health support will be critical and local health departments in the areas of potential impact are being engaged in planning efforts.
- State Emergency Operations Plan (EOP): The State's EOP describes the roles and responsibilities of all state agencies in emergency response and is maintained by the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM). The plan has not been updated for many years and is being transitioned from an annex structure to an emergency support function structure. An initial revision has already occurred and a more in-depth review is currently being conducted. The Bureau's main emergency support functions fall under ESF-8, Public Health and Medical Services, and ESF-6, Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing, and Human Services. The State Public Health Response Plan will need to be revised based on edits to the State EOP.

Winter Storm Jonas Response – Jerry Rhodes and Rebecca Schmidt

- The State EOC activated at 7am 1/22, the Governor declared state of emergency at 9:30am and State Health Command activated at 8am. Health Command stood down 1/24 at noon. The Center for Threat Preparedness and Center for Local Health collaborated to assess local health departments and provide information out in daily update briefings for leadership and for local health departments.

- We will be doing some internal planning to determine better processes for coordinating information requests from local health departments around continuity of operations and provision of essential public health services.
- The Center for Local Health maintained the Local Health Department Emergency Response SharePoint Site by uploading the following documents: WVDHSEM Morning Reports, State Weather Briefings, LHD Emergency Contact Report, Winter Storm Advisories, Press Releases, Conference call information. First time the SharePoint site was used this way and it was very effective from CLH standpoint.
- 14 local health departments did not participate on the conference calls or did not provide a status report electronically (by email) and were contacted directly by CLH staff to provide information and assess status.
- 100% (49) of LHD's were engaged either through electronic reporting, participation in daily conference calls or through direct contact by the CLH staff.
- The Center for Threat Preparedness and Center for Local Health are looking forward to getting feedback from local health partners at the March Public Health Threat Preparedness Oversight Committee (PHTPOC) meeting on what went well/what could be improved upon.

Center for Local Health Updates – Amy Atkins and Rebecca Schmidt

- Staffing: the Center is experiencing several changes in staffing and continues to look for ways to supplement our staffing. Debbie McGinnis has been temporarily assigned to the Center to assist with some financial analysis and reporting. The Center applied for two CDC Public Health Associates and has also been working with a WVU MPH student. The Center is receiving many questions from local health departments. In order to be responsive to these requests, we encourage you to copy the dhhrbphclh@wv.gov e-mail in your communications, which all staff have access to. We also appreciate your patience as we work to develop answers to your questions that may require input from other Offices and Centers within the Bureau and, at times, other state departments.
- Reporting: We have revised the fees report so that we can collect some basic billing information. The fees report has been reviewed and vetted by three local health departments. It was distributed on 2/8 to all administrators and will be due on 2/22. Reports should be sent to dhhrbphclh@wv.gov. The mid-year financial report for 2016 is now open. As in the past, if you are not able to submit data into the tool, you will send in profit and loss statements. The financial report is due on 2/26.
- Local Health Officer Summit: The Local Health Officer Summit will take place April 8th and 9th at the Charleston Marriott Town Center. Letters with the tentative program agenda went out on 2/3 to local health officers and board chairs and have been sent to administrators via e-mail. The Program includes the acting director for CDC's Office of State, Tribal, Local and Territorial Support (OSTLTS), the Deputy Commissioner for Indiana State Department of Health as well as speakers from one of the two accredited health departments in Virginia. Health officers are **strongly** encouraged to attend.
- Annual Clinical Spring Teaching Day: Scheduled for March 16-18, 2016 at the Stonewall Resort.
- Threat Preparedness Orientation: Scheduled for March 10th at the Center for Threat Preparedness in Charleston.
- Try This Mini Grants: In the past two years, Try This has awarded \$184,000 to 99 community teams statewide. 2016 applications will be available on their website in March 2016. The website includes sample projects/costs to help you apply. These grants provide a good opportunity for implementing activities tied to Community Health Improvement Plans. Additional information is available at: <http://trythiswv.com/conference/>

Office of Epidemiology and Prevention Services – Loretta Haddy

- There are funds available through the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant for T-spot testing of high risk populations. Will be providing individual county information according to risk factor to help you in increasing your testing of at-risk groups. BPH TB staff will be reaching out to local health departments soon.
- Stephanie McLemore has been hired as the TB Surveillance Nurse in the Bureau's Division of Tuberculosis Elimination and Suzanne Wilson is the new Director for Division of Tuberculosis Elimination.

- There are some ongoing challenges with the epidemiologist on-call number. As a reminder, if you cannot reach the epidemiologist on-call, you can always call the answering service: 304-925-9946.

Medicaid Billing Project – Amy Atkins

- Late December a meeting was convened by Deputy Secretary Samples and included local health representatives, BPH representatives, BMS, BPH, MCOs to discuss the opportunities for local health specific to billing for clinical services. As a result of that meeting, a webinar has been scheduled as an important step in improving the ability of LHDs to enroll in and bill Medicaid for services.
- Webinar on February 12, 2016 2pm – 3:30pm
 - The Center is working with Deputy Secretary Samples, Commissioner Beane and Deputy Commissioner Young from the Bureau for Medical Services on the agenda which will be sent out as soon as it is finalized.
 - This initial webinar will not include Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) but they are included in the planning.

Please note: Agenda items from the Association of Local Health Departments are strongly encouraged. The Partnership is intended as a forum for local health and Bureau leadership to share ideas, resources and feedback. We are particularly interested in health departments that would like to share an evidence based practice or program that they have implemented in their community.