



Needham Board of Health



AGENDA

Friday January 12, 2024

9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Public Service Administration Building

Charles River Room

To listen/view this meeting, download the “Zoom Cloud Meeting” app in any app store or at www.zoom.us. At the above date and time, click on “Join a Meeting”.

Meeting ID: 871 0097 4812

Passcode:464589

Or click the link below to register:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87100974812?pwd=QWlsSFFIelpKODFsd2cxeU9rcVI1dz09>

	9:00	Welcome & Public Comment Period Community members are encouraged to inform the Needham Public Health Department in advance via email (healthdepartment@needhamma.gov), telephone (781) 455-7940 ext. 224, or in person by the end of the business day prior to the meeting of their intent to participate in the public comment period. The Chair will first recognize those who have communicated in advance their desire to speak for up to three minutes. If time allows, others wishing to speak will be recognized in an order determined by the Chair for up to three minutes.
1.	9:00	Review of Minutes: November 17, 2023, and December 8, 2023
2.	9:05	Regina Villa Associates – Opioid Funding Presentation • Regan Checchio, CEO • Matt Costas, Senior Public Participation Coordinator • Keith Sonia, Community Engagement Director
3.	9:30	Needham Public Health Division Strategic Plan Update • Tiffany Benoit, Assistant Director Public Health

4.	9:50	FY2023 Health and Human Services Annual Report • Timothy McDonald, Director of Health and Human Services
7.	10:00	Staff Updates • Accreditation – Lynn Schoeff • Shared Services (Public Health Excellence, Regional Field Training Hub, Contact Tracing/Investigating) – Kerry Dunnell, Samantha Menard, Kristin Scoble • Traveling Meals – Rebecca Hall • Nursing – Ginnie Chacon-Lopez, Hanna Burnett & Tiffany Benoit • Epidemiology – Julie McCarthy • Environmental Health – Sai Palani & Tara Gurge • Substance Use Prevention MassCALL3 – Carol Read & Lydia Cunningham • Emergency Management – Taleb Abdelrahim • Substance Use Prevention –Karen Shannon, Karen Mullen, Monica DeWinter, Angi MacDonnell, Vanessa Wronski
8.	10:50	Other Items/Updates • Public Health Division Staff List; Updated 12.27.2023

(Please note that all times are approximate)

Next Meeting: Friday, February 9, 2023, 9:00-11:00am
Public Service Administration Building, Charles River Room



NEEDHAM PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION



Board of Health Meeting Minutes DRAFT

Date: November 17, 2023

Location: via Zoom

Members: Kathleen Ward Brown, ScD, Member; Robert A. Partridge, MD, MPH, Member; Edward Cosgrove, PhD, Member; Stephen Epstein, MD, MPP, Member

Staff Present: Timothy Muir McDonald, Director of Health, and Human Services; Tara Gurge, Assistant Director of Public Health; Tiffany (Zike) Benoit, Assistant Director of Public Health; Sainath Palani; Karren Shannon; Kristin Scoble, Administrative Specialist; Michael Lethin; Samantha Menard; Julie McCarthy; Taleb Abdelrahim; Ginnie Chacon-Lopez; Carol Read; Lydia Cunningham; Lynn Schoeff.

Welcome & Public Comment Period

Dr. Brown called the meeting to order at 9:00AM and initiated a roll call. Present were Dr. Cosgrove – Y, Dr. Epstein – Y, Dr. Brown – Y, Dr. Partridge – Y.

According to Chapter 107 of the Acts of 2022, as an act relative to extending certain states of emergency accommodations, as passed by the General Court, and signed into law by Acting Governor Karyn Polito, on July 16 2022, revised Section 20 of Chapter 20, the Acts of 2021. In so doing, provided modifications to the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, which allow for flexibility to hold remote only, and hybrid meetings, while preserving public access and, where appropriate, public participation. Currently, that additional flexibility will expire on March 31, 2025, unless additional legislative action occurs. As part of today's hybrid meeting, all votes will occur via a roll call.

Review of Minutes – (October 13, 2023)

Upon motion duly made by Dr. Epstein, and seconded by Dr. Cosgrove, it was voted to approve the minutes of October 13, 2023, as submitted. Motion passed: Dr. Cosgrove – Y, Dr. Epstein – Y, Dr. Brown – Y, Dr. Partridge – Y.

Biosafety Regulation Changes

Ms. McCarthy reviewed the proposed changes to the Biosafety Regulations. She explained that one proposed change is under the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) makeup. The intention is to add a note that membership composition can vary from what is required in the NIH guidelines. Dr. Partridge noted that this may make it more difficult for members of the community who are interested to serve on the IBC. Ms. McCarthy

The Board discussed language regarding the IBC being responsible for implementation of this regulation, subject to guidance from the Committee and Board of Health. Mr. McDonald suggested that this language be reviewed by legal counsel.

Ms. McCarthy stated that the second component of the changes deals with confidentiality. Companies are required to submit specifics regarding their protocols in order to determine the scope of work. This information may be redacted to protect proprietary details.

The Board agreed to table this item to later in the meeting, in order to open the tobacco hearing.

Tobacco Hearing

Ms. Gurge explained that a compliance check was performed by Needham Public Health Division staff, per the Board of Health Article 1 Regulation Affecting Smoking and the Sale and Distribution of Tobacco Products in Needham. One of the checks resulted in a violation with the sale of a tobacco product to a minor. A compliance check was performed by an underaged student on October 23, 2023, with supervision of Public Health Division staff and a Needham Police Officer. The underaged student was instructed to use their own ID to attempt to purchase a tobacco product. At Speedway, the clerk asked for the student's ID and scanned it. The ID was rejected and then the clerk proceeded to override the scanner using their own ID to make the sale. NPHD staff, along with the Needham Police, spoke with clerk and the manager about the violation. Staff informed the manager of the likely repercussions of this sale, including a hearing with the Board of Health.

Mark Martins Viega, Speedway, explained that the company has policies that include a training program before employees are allowed to work the register. Annually, refresher courses are required. The employee in question did not follow the training. The employee was terminated and is listed as a non-rehire for one-year. The company has a 100% scan ID policy. Remaining employees have taken the refresher course. He apologized to the Town.

Dr. Cosgrove noted that this property has not had another sale-to-minor violation in the last three years.

Mr. McDonald explained that the current regulations do not allow for any alterations to the enforcement for this, regardless of the facts of the case. This is a uniquely challenging circumstance, where an employee was appropriately trained, technology was in place to determine whether the ID was accurate, and the employee still made the sale. It is unclear how the Board would like to handle this. Dr. Cosgrove stated that the regulations need to be followed, though some of the fees could be waived.

Upon motion duly made by Dr. Cosgrove, and seconded by Dr. Partridge, it was voted that the Board of Health implement the fine and suspension, per the regulation, waive the fine and, and give the Department the option to work with the vendor regarding the times and dates of the suspension. Motion passed: Dr. Cosgrove – Y, Dr. Epstein – Y, Dr. Brown – Y, Dr. Partridge – Y.

Biosafety Regulation Changes

The Board retook this conversation.

Staff stated that revised language will be sent to the Board for review prior to the next meeting.

Individual Serving Bottles of Alcohol

Ms. Benoit stated that the Board could discuss a Single Use Plastic Bottle Ban, to reduce the amount of alcohol use in teens. Ms. Shannon explained that there is no data regarding youth use of single-use alcohol bottles and there is little information on the public health side regarding these bottles. The School Resource Officer stated that use of these bottles has not been seen in the schools. Other communities have imposed bans dealing with environmental impacts or adult use. Most of the information is anecdotal outside of environmental impacts.

The Board agreed that there is not enough data at this point to pursue this further. If this seems to become a problem in the future, the Board can review it again.

Select Board Code of Conduct Discussion

Mr. McDonald explained that the Select Board is checking to see if any other boards are interested in adopting a code of conduct that is similar to the one it adopted. This relates to board members and their conduct and behavior, as well as the conduct expected in a public meeting.

Dr. Epstein suggested removing Sections 5-7. These sections deal with policies that are already in place and have little to do with conduct itself.

Staff agreed to send a redlined version of the document to the Board for review prior to a future meeting.

FY25 Budget Discussion

Mr. McDonald reviewed the Division's proposed FY25 budget. There is a request to reinstate the \$50,000 scientific expertise warrant article. The previously approved funding through this warrant article has been spent on the Claxton Field item. The Finance Committee previously discussed if this request was reasonable. Mr. McDonald suggested that the Board might lobby for this item, if it is interested in pursuing this warrant article. Six additional spending requests were also made as part of this budget. These items are important for the Division goals.

Staff Updates

Substance Use Prevention MassCALL3 grant

Ms. Cunningham explained that a Youth Engagement Intern was recently hired. The group recently created its own social media ad that reached 440 people and led to 22 new follows. The strategic plan will likely propose a social marketing campaign.

Ms. Read said that she is compiling information regarding litigation funds for each community and how public health and prevention can be brought to the table. A resource toolkit to capture all the settlement program information for the four communities has been created.

Nursing

Ms. Chacon-Lopez stated that the Town received 200 doses of the COVID-19 vaccines and is down to 30. A clinic was held, and individual appointments were also made. The Town's dosages of flu vaccine have all been given out.

Mr. McDonald explained that staff looked into getting RSV vaccines, but these cost \$275/dose. It is not possible to purchase these at this time. Dr. Epstein suggested focusing funding on flu vaccines at this time.

Emergency Management

Mr. Lethin reported that he attended North Hill's exercise of the Massachusetts Long Term Care Mutual Aid Plan, providing support and evaluation of the exercise. Also, the Town's Emergency Shelter Plan has been finalized and is in place. The Needham Local Emergency Planning Committee has received \$5,000 from the Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness Grant for an Emergency Operations Center functional exercise regarding a hazardous materials incident at the Rosemary Recreation Complex.

Emergency Preparedness

Mr. Abdelrahim stated that October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month. The group coordinated with the Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) to provide a Behavioral Science webinar regarding cybersecurity. 41 volunteers attended the training. The Junior MRC Program Plan has been reviewed. Staff continues working to create recruitment materials and set up registration to launch a successful recruitment campaign. Mr. Abdelrahim explained that the group wrote a proactive comprehensive needs assessment to outline a range of resources to support migrant families. Mr. Abdelrahim attended the Shelter Management and Emergency Mass Care training hosted by Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC).

Traveling Meals

Ms. Gurge reported that COVID test kits are being distributed, as requested. 977 meals were delivered in October, and two 911 calls were initiated.

Dr. Epstein requested a running five-year average of the meal deliveries to be included in monthly reports.

Environmental Health

Mr. Palani stated that the group wrapped up the four mandatory Food Establishment Food Safety trainings and is in the process of gathering and summarizing the post-survey evaluation data that was submitted by the attendees. There were only nine food establishments that were not able to attend at least one of the trainings, so staff is emailing the training links to them, both in English and in Spanish, and will be receiving confirmation that their staff have been trained on or before Friday, November 17th. Environmental Health staff will be initiating the pilot program for the Food Safety Excellence Program starting the week of November 1st. A random number of 30 food establishments were selected to give feedback over the next six months. J.P. Cacciaglia, the Town's newly hired Economic Developer, will be assisting with gathering the feedback. Feedback will be shared with the Board.

Mr. Palani explained that staff has applied for additional NEHA/FDA grant money to continue the FDA Voluntary Retail Program Standard work, including working towards adopting the last standard, FDA Standard 8, and also maintaining existing standards. Staff also looks to work

towards adopting the newest FDA 2022 Food Code, which would fall under FDA Standard 1. Staff should hear back early next year on whether funding was awarded.

Ms. Gurge stated that she and Mr. Palani attended the annual Massachusetts Health Officers Association (MHOA) conference in Falmouth, October 25-27th. Ms. Gurge presented on a panel with FDA and Food Code Pro reps on the status of the Needham Public Health Division's ongoing compliance and updates with the adoption of the nine FDA Voluntary Retail Program Standards.

Epidemiology

Ms. McCarthy reported that there were 41 confirmed COVID-19 cases in Needham in October. The weekly COVID-19 municipality vaccination report has been discontinued and COVID-19 vaccination data will appear as part of the Immunizations for Respiratory Diseases dashboard, which is not yet available. Interim available data is not municipality specific. MDPH has changed COVID-19 reporting. The Respiratory Illness Dashboard now contains data on hospitalizations due to COVID-19, RSV, and influenza.

Ms. McCarthy stated that she would like to present on the Community Health Improvement Plan to the Board at a future meeting. Staff lead the first Needham Biosafety Committee meeting on October 24th to review a Biosafety Permit application for Candel Therapeutics.

Substance Use Prevention

Ms. Shannon reported that there were many community engagement opportunities in October, including the SPAN quarterly meeting, the Harvest Fair, and Prescription Drug Take Back Day. During the Take Back Day, 73lbs of medicated were collected. The six-month total collected was 500lbs. This is a 30% increase per month over the previous year.

Shared Services

Ms. Menard stated that the team has been working to build collaboration and engagement. The group's FY24 initial budget and work plan were approved. The goal is to have an IMA with other shared service communities signed in the next couple months. One of the Town's part time inspectors, Roland Abuntori, resigned last month. Staff extended an offer for a full time Environmental Health Agent position and an offer for a Shared Services Nurse. There is another full-time Shared Services Nurse position in the works as well. Dover and Sherborn are finalizing a description for that job position. It is hoped that the Training Hub program will be up and running by late spring.

Accreditation Team

Ms. Schoeff stated that the Public Health Accreditation Board has recommended that NPHD move forward with accreditation application. The Strategic Plan, Community Health Improvement Plan and Comprehensive Communication Plan all should be completed by mid-January. The team offered a position to fill the role vacated by Cindi Melanson and this offer was accepted. There is a deadline of December 16, 2024, for all documentation to be submitted.

Upon motion duly made by Dr. Cosgrove, and seconded by Dr. Partridge, it was voted that the Board of Health supports the move toward accreditation of the Needham Health Department. Motion passed: Dr. Cosgrove – Y, Dr. Epstein – Y, Dr. Brown – Y, Dr. Partridge – Y.

Other Items

Ms. Benoit noted that the proposed opioid projects were passed at Town Meeting. Two contractors will be used for this project. The full report from the community engagement will be completed by the end of June and the full five-year strategic plan will be completed by the end of September.

- **1688 Central Ave Discussion**

Mr. Palani stated that the perc tests for this lot passed; septic plans were received but they are still being reviewed. Mr. McDonald explained that there is not much feasibility for this property to connect to the sewer, due to estimated financial cost. That determination is based upon information provided by Needham's Town Engineer and by the staff at the MA Department of Environmental Protection (MA DEP).

A resident in the audience asked to speak. The Chair, Dr. Brown, recognized the resident. Ms. Holly Clarke, 1652 Central Avenue, explained that her house is on sewer, not septic. A sewer connection was determined to be feasible for this project two years ago by the DPW. She asked how a leach field can be allowed on a property with this history.

Mr. Matt Borrelli, the developer for the site, was listening into the meeting on *Zoom* and asked that he be notified if his property is going to be talked about during a Board meeting. Mr. Borrelli stated that the cost to connect to sewer had increased in cost 2.5 times since the project was initially proposed.

Ms. Clarke asked that the Board consider the maintenance costs associated with a leach field on this property, along with potential cost to the Town if anything environmentally concerning occurs on the site again. In her opinion, the site must be fully cleared environmentally before use.

Mr. McDonald stated that anecdotal reports of previous uses at the 1688 Central Avenue site are not the same as documented spill information from a group or board, such as an environmental spill notification form from MA DEP or a report from the Needham Public Health Division or Fire Department about an investigation of a chemical spill or other contamination. Intervening to protect the public health on private property has to be based solidly on evidence. Ms. Clarke stated that, per the definition of knowledge, there is knowledge of a spill and contamination on this site.

Mr. McDonald stated that both Town Counsel as well as the Executive Director and General Counsel of the Mass Association of Health Boards have stated [at the Board of Health's September meeting] that there has to be clear documentation for the Board of Health to use its regulatory power to override personal property rights to protect the public's health. To do so without clear documentation/evidence is to open the Board up

to having its decision easily reversed in a legal proceeding. Ms. Clarke stated that the intention is to open this site to the public. She said that it is not clear if this Board is still concerned regarding potential contamination on this property. In her opinion, the ZBA will determine the legal authority to impose any conditions on the property, but it is waiting to hear from this Board regarding any potential conditions.

Mr. McDonald suggested that the Board take up this conversation again at a future meeting. Dr. Brown stated that she believes the Board can take up further discussion at a later meeting.

Upcoming BOH Meetings

- **Friday, December 8th from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.**

Adjournment

Upon motion duly made by Dr. Cosgrove, and seconded by Dr. Partridge, it was voted to adjourn the meeting Motion passed: Dr. Cosgrove – Y, Dr. Brown – Y, Dr. Partridge – Y.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:11AM.

Attachment:

November 17, 2023 meeting packet



NEEDHAM PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION



Board of Health Meeting Minutes DRAFT

Date: December 8, 2023

Location: Public Service Administration Building & via Zoom

Members: Tejal K. Gandhi, MD, MPH Chair; Kathleen Ward Brown, ScD, Member; Robert A. Partridge, MD, MPH, Member; Edward Cosgrove, PhD, Member

Staff Present: Timothy Muir McDonald, Director of Health, and Human Services; Tara Gurge, Assistant Director of Public Health; Tiffany (Zike) Benoit, Assistant Director of Public Health; Sainath Palani; Kristin Scoble; Michael Lethin; Natascha Nussbaum; Samantha Menard; Julie McCarthy; Taleb Abdelrahim; Ginnie Chacon-Lopez; Carol Read; Lydia Cunningham; Kerry Dunnell; Lynn Schoeff.

Welcome & Public Comment Period

Dr. Gandhi called the meeting to order at 9:00AM and initiated a roll call. Present were Dr. Gandhi – Y, Dr. Cosgrove – Y, Dr. Brown – Y, Dr. Partridge – Y.

According to Chapter 107 of the Acts of 2022, as an act relative to extending certain states of emergency accommodations, as passed by the General Court, and signed into law by Acting Governor Karyn Polito, on July 16 2022, revised Section 20 of Chapter 20, the Acts of 2021. In so doing, provided modifications to the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, which allow for flexibility to hold remote only, and hybrid meetings, while preserving public access and, where appropriate, public participation. Currently, that additional flexibility will expire on March 31, 2025, unless additional legislative action occurs. As part of today's hybrid meeting, all votes will occur via a roll call.

In response to a question from Joe Andruzzi, Mr. McDonald stated that there is no plan by the Board to discuss 1688 Central Avenue at this time. Mr. Andruzzi stated that he would contact staff to see if this item could be placed on a future agenda.

The Board thanked Michael Lethin for his time with the Town, as he moves onto a new position.

Public Hearing: Biosafety Regulation Changes

The Board opened the public hearing at 9:10am.

Ms. McCarthy discussed areas of proposed change to Biosafety Regulation, based on feedback from the first Needham Biosafety Committee meeting, first review of a Biosafety Permit application, and the November 17th Board of Health meeting.

There was no public comment at this time.

Upon motion duly made by Dr. Cosgrove, and seconded by Dr. Partridge, it was voted to approve the Biosafety Regulation. Motion passed: Dr. Gandhi – Y, Dr. Cosgrove – Y, Dr. Brown – A, Dr. Partridge – Y.

Community Health Assessment

Julie McCarthy presented some data from the Community Health Assessment (CHA). The CHA, which is required for accreditation, identifies key health needs in Needham through comprehensive data collection and analysis. Ms. McCarthy highlighted some limitations to the CHA, including missing data on the 18-59 population. Ms. McCarthy explained that the data shows that 85% of housing in Needham is owner-occupied and renters are more cost-burdened than are owners. This is not unique to Needham. Data from the last Housing Authority Assessment showed that many residents were not familiar with some existing transportation options. Needham adults reported binge drinking at higher rates than Massachusetts and the United States. There is not much data on chronic conditions, but data shows that these do not vary by census tract. Staff have identified the following priority areas specific to Needham: access to transportation resources, cost of living burden, mental health and substance use, and physical health. These items will be addressed via the upcoming Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP).

In response to a question from Dr. Brown, Ms. McCarthy stated that she believes the data likely underrepresents the prevalence of heart disease.

Ms. McCarthy stated that there could be a potential future project to dig deeper into the causes of death.

Dr. Partridge asked if people are unfamiliar with transportation and food options in Needham simply because they do not have a need. Ms. McCarthy stated that this is unclear. It is likely that some of the people reporting could use these services and were previously unaware. Staff and the organizations are reconsidering how these sources could be promoted.

Dr. Gandhi asked about support resources for single mothers with children under the age of 18. Ms. Benoit stated that Public Health and Youth & Family Services assist residents with the application for SNAP benefits. Ms. Benoit also noted that many of the requests for fuel assistance that the Public Health Division receives are from single mothers, so we are able to assist them in that way.

Rice Barn Restaurant Request to Reopen

Ms. Gurge stated that the owner of the Rice Barn, Charles Intha, submitted a letter to the Public Health Division requesting the re-opening of his restaurant. Staff will review with the Board the latest updates on the food permit plan review for this food establishment, including the latest updates on the status of the outstanding items noted by the Building Department inspectors. One

of the conditions of the food permit approval for reopening this establishment was that all items noted by the Building Department, specifically those items noted during the March 6, 2023, inspection, needed to be fully addressed and signed off. A follow-up joint inspection was conducted by representatives of the Building Department and Health Division on Wednesday, November 29th.

Mr. Palani stated that the owner has yet to hire a plumber but has found an electrician, who has done considerable work on the property. All electrical concerns have been addressed.

Joe Prondak, Building Commissioner, stated that the primary concerns from the report seem to be electrical and plumbing. The electrical work has been completed and signed off on. The owner has not yet been able to reach agreement with a plumber regarding the necessary work.

Mr. Palani reviewed the plumbing items which need to be addressed.

Mr. Intha stated that his business has been closed for one year and seven months and has used that time to fix all items of concern. His savings are running low, and he is struggling to find funding to fix the plumbing issues. This area could benefit from his business reopening. He asked the Board for permission to reopen at this time.

Mr. McDonald stated that there are no provisions in the Health Code or Building Code that would allow the Board to waive these provisions. The Board would like the business to succeed, but the restaurant cannot be allowed to open prior to these items being fixed in order to make the money needed to fix the items. The owner likely needs to decide if the money is available to make the necessary items meet code, in order to apply for a permit. The Board cannot allow the business to open prior to meeting the requirements.

Mr. Intha requested leniency at this time. As cold weather is coming, without being to open at this time, the building may freeze. Mr. McDonald stated that Staff and the Board want to encourage and support small businesses, but there is no mechanism to allow for leniency in these requirements. Dr. Gandhi agreed that the Board must follow the Health Code and is not able to offer flexibility on these items.

Mr. Prondak noted that the list of issues has been available for quite some time. Once the owner has decided on a plumber, staff are willing to continue to work with him through the process. Mr. Intha stated that he has been at this location for ten years and has not received inspections for plumbing previously. He stated that he will try to fix the problem and thus deserves leniency. Mr. McDonald stated that compliance must come prior to opening. The Board cannot grant a permit to a building that does not meet the Health Code.

Dr. Brown explained that the restaurant had multiple food code violations which triggered years of work and effort by staff, causing the business to eventually close. This reset the regulatory process on the restaurant. It was noted that the plumbing items have been identified since March.

Mr. Palani said that he made it clear to the owner that the Department cannot grant variances for health concerns.

The Board agreed that there was no mechanism to grant leniency at this time.

Code of Conduct

The Board reviewed an updated draft of the Code of Conduct that has been adapted from the Needham Select Board Code of Conduct Policy.

Upon motion duly made by Dr. Cosgrove, and seconded by Dr. Brown, it was voted to approve the Code of Conduct. Motion passed: Dr. Gandhi – Y, Dr. Cosgrove – Y, Dr. Brown – Y, Dr. Partridge – Y.

Public Comment Policy

The Board reviewed the draft Public Comment Policy.

Upon motion duly made by Dr. Cosgrove, and seconded by Dr. Brown, it was voted to approve the Public Comment Policy as discussed and amended. Motion passed: Dr. Gandhi – Y, Dr. Cosgrove – Y, Dr. Brown – Y, Dr. Partridge – Y.

Budget Discussion

Mr. McDonald reviewed a number of positions that were previously funded using ARPA money. There are still many mental health related concerns that can be addressed using these positions. There was discussion regarding how to support these positions to the Finance Committee. The Board agreed to hold a pre-hearing meeting with members of the Finance Committee to have this discussion.

Staff Updates

Traveling Meals

Ms. Gurge stated that there were no 911 calls initiated this month. The five-year average was added to the report, as requested.

Environmental Health

Ms. Gurge explained that the pilot for the Food Safety Excellence Program started the week of November 1st. The scores for grading were added to the Food Code Pro food establishment inspection software and now show up on inspection reports. Staff has started to educate food establishment owners and managers on the grading system and review with them how the grading works at the conclusion of inspections. Fines will be added next. The intention is to gather feedback from food establishments throughout the six-month pilot program. These feedback reports will be shared with the Board once available.

Mr. Palani stated that the Board recently held a hearing with Speedway due to a recent Tobacco Compliance Check. At the hearing, the Board voted to suspend the Tobacco permit for seven

consecutive days, and to issue a \$300.00 fine. The week-long suspension took place during the week of December 1-8.

Mr. McDonald noted that there have been some housing complaints regarding Housing Authority properties. The Housing Authority plans to move forward to try to get additional funding and bonding authority to renovate the property.

Substance Use Prevention MassCALL3 grant

Ms. Cunningham stated that the strategic plan has been completed and updates will be shared with the Board shortly.

Natascha Nussbaum, Youth Engagement Intern, presented information regarding the PhotoVoice project. It was noted that the project would be promoted via SALSA students as well.

Emergency Management

Mr. Lethin explained that the intention is that there will be a fully grant funded exercise sometime next spring or summer to reevaluate the Emergency Operations Center to determine how effective improvements have been. The exercise will be funded using both the Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness Grant, which has been approved by MEMA, and the Emergency Management Performance Grant, the application for which is still in process.

Emergency Preparedness

Mr. Abdelrahim explained that a comprehensive survey has commenced for the 2023 MRC training program to assess volunteer training experience, satisfaction levels, challenges faced, and suggestions for improvement. Staff also continue to work toward accreditation goals.

Epidemiology

Ms. McCarthy highlighted vaccination data for COVID-19, flu, and RSV.

Substance Use Prevention

Ms. Shannon explained that a new SPAN Policy Action Team for policy work will be formed. The SPAN Positive Community Norms Campaign involved 12 SALSA students canvassing the Needham community to distribute 72 copies of a Positive Community Norms poster to schools and community organizations. The poster promotes the message that most Needham High School students do not use electronic vapor products. Also, On October 30th, the Needham Special Town Meeting approved the use of a portion of Needham 's Opioid Settlement Funds to fund a peer recovery coach in the Needham Public Health Division. Planning is underway for drafting procedures for providing recovery coach services to the Needham community.

Shared Services

Ms. Menard explained that Needham hosted regional training hub has a new name - North Central & Metro West Field Training Hub. This name reflects the geographic area of the 39 municipalities we serve. Field Training Hub staff led the creation of a monthly meeting for staff from all ten Massachusetts field training hubs. The first meeting was held on November 27, 2023. Second round interviews for the Regional Trainer position were held on December 4, 2023.

Accreditation Team

Ms. Schoeff explained that the Public Health Accreditation Board has recommended the Division submit an application by December 16, 2023. Once accepted, there will be 12 months to submit all documentation.

Nursing

Ms. Chacon-Lopez stated that they are almost out of the purchased COVID-19 vaccine stock. All flu vaccine stock has been administered.

Other Items

- **Public Health Strategic Plan Update**

Ms. Benoit stated that the final meeting for this will take place Tuesday to finalize the plan. This will be presented to the Board in February.

There was discussion regarding staffing.

Upcoming BOH Meetings

- **Friday, January 12th from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.**

Adjournment

Upon motion duly made by Dr. Cosgrove, and seconded by Dr. Partridge, it was voted to adjourn the meeting Motion passed: Dr. Gandhi – Y, Dr. Cosgrove – Y, Dr. Brown – Y, Dr. Partridge – Y.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:48AM.

Attachment:

December 8, 2023 meeting packet



**Board of Health
Town of Needham
AGENDA FACT SHEET**



MEETING DATE: January 12, 2024

Agenda Item	Regina Villa Associates – Opioid Funding Presentation
Presenter(s)	Regan Checchio, CEO Matt Costas, Senior Public Participation Coordinator Keith Sonia, Community Engagement Director

1.	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF TOPIC TO BE DISCUSSED
	Regina Villa Associates will present on their work that they are doing with Needham Public Health Division and the timeline for the project. They will present background information about the use of the opioid funding and what the plan will be to elicit resident feedback.
2.	VOTE REQUIRED BY BOARD OF HEALTH
	None.
3.	BACK UP INFORMATION:
	a. None

Needham Public Health Opioid Settlement Funding Usage

January 2024



Agenda

- Brief Background
- Project Workflow Overview
- Phase Specifics
- Discussion Topic: Gaps in Coverage & Approach
- Your Questions

Background

- \$525 million dollars will be allocated to Massachusetts for opioid prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery services following a nationwide settlement with opioid distributors and manufacturers.
 - 40% of funding will be provided to Massachusetts cities & towns. The Town of Needham will receive a total of \$1,861,003 through disbursements into the 2030s, with the last due in 2038. (\$217,287.76 has been dispersed to date). These funds will allow the Town to engage with and strategize on issues, gaps, and services related to prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery.
- Abatement terms developed by the Commonwealth determined that communities should:
 - Fund projects consistent with six allowable spending categories:
 - Opioid Use Disorder Treatment
 - Support People in Treatment & Recovery
 - Connections to Care
 - Harm Reduction
 - Address the Needs of Criminal-Justice-Involved Persons
 - Support Pregnant or Parenting Women and Their Families with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome
 - Prevent Misuses of Opioids and Implement Prevention Education
 - Use community feedback and input from affected populations;
 - Address service disparities to increase access and equity in treatment and services for Opiate Use Disorder, prevention, and harm reduction relating to opiates;
 - Leverage existing state, city, town, and community opiate use disorder, mental health disorder and behavioral health disorder programming and services.

Workflow Overview

Step 1: Stakeholder Group Interviews

- Identify key stakeholders
- Draft interview guide
- Collect interviews

Step 2: Small Group Meetings

- Leverage previous interviews and identify participants
- Draft discussion guide
- Host meetings

Step 3: Large Community Forum

- Determine accessible date and location
- Draft accessible presentation
- Determine accessible feedback mechanisms
- Host forum

Step 4: Final Report

- Collate feedback and draft final report
- Translate executive summary
- Draft summary slide deck

Step 1: Stakeholder Group Interview – January 2024

- RVA will conduct multiple interviews with stakeholders from the Town of Needham and from its many community partners and/or partner organizations. Interviews will include a discussion from a pre-drafted guide that covers current strengths, gaps, and how opioid settlement funding might be used to meet substance use prevention & treatment, recovery, harm reduction, and mental health promotion challenges.
- Interviews will be held both virtually and in-person. Invitations have been sent to **27** stakeholders at Needham Public Health, Needham Youth and Family Services, Needham Police and Fire, Needham Town Manager's Office, Needham Public Schools, State Representative Denise Garlick's Office, Greater Boston Addiction Center, JSI, Moar Recovery, Sober in the Suburbs, SOAR-Natick, Becca Schmill Foundation, SPAN, and BIDH-Needham. **Seven** interviews have been scheduled to date with additional expected.

Step 2: Small Group Meetings – February 2024

- RVA will convene a series of small group meetings with stakeholders that have a substantial policy-setting role in the Town or who have significant lived experience with substance misuse. Invitees may emerge through recommendations received during Step 1. A summary report highlighting key insights will be produced. In addition to the Board of Health, proposed participants include:
 - Chairs of the Needham Select Board, FinComm, and others
 - Family and loved ones of substance addicted persons (as coordinated through Needham Public Health staff & partners)
 - Persons living in recovery (as coordinated through Needham Public Health staff & partners)

Step 3: Large Community Forum – March/April 2024

- RVA will arrange and convene a large community forum to assist the general public in understanding Needham's challenges with substance misuse and to solicit their feedback regarding priorities and focus areas. This forum will be held in person and RVA will work with Town staff on the following:
 - An accessible presentation
 - Mechanisms for feedback, including virtual options for those unable to attend the forum
 - A summary of the event highlighting key insights
 - The forum will take place in an accessible venue and interpretation services will be available on request
 - Cable or web broadcasting for those unable to attend the forum in person

Step 4: Final Report – June 2024

- RVA will produce a final report after initial feedback from Needham Public Health that incorporates qualitative & quantitative data received through stakeholder interviews, small group discussions, and the large community forum. The report will outline Needham's challenges with substance misuse and will present a streamlined summary of recommendations received during the engagement process.
- This step will yield the following:
 - A final written report
 - An executive summary translated into relevant languages
 - A summary slide deck translated into relevant languages

Timeline

	January	February	March	April	May	June
Interviews						
Meetings						
Community Forum						
Final Report						

Discussion Topic: Gaps in Coverage & Approach

Your Questions



**Board of Health
Town of Needham
AGENDA FACT SHEET**



MEETING DATE: January 12, 2024

Agenda Item	Needham Public Health Division Strategic Plan
Presenter(s)	Tiffany Benoit – Assistant Director of Public Health

1.	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF TOPIC TO BE DISCUSSED
	Ms. Benoit will present the finalized Division Strategic Plan.
2.	VOTE REQUIRED BY BOARD OF HEALTH
	None.
3.	BACK UP INFORMATION:
	a. Needham Public Health Division Strategic Plan



NEEDHAM PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION

2024 – 2028 STRATEGIC PLAN

APPROVED DECEMBER 12, 2023
FOR BOARD OF HEALTH REVIEW FEBRUARY 9, 2024

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CONTEXT

The Needham Public Health Division engaged in a comprehensive strategic planning process to support its application to the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). This strategic plan establishes the division's 2024 – 2028 priorities, provides a roadmap for the work, and is a tool to aid leadership and staff decision-making. The process was led by the Needham Strategic Planning Team and supported by the consulting team of [BME Strategies](#) and [Copper Strategic](#). It began in June 2023 and concluded in December 2023.

MISSION

The Needham Board of Health and its Public Health Division promote and protect the public health and social well-being of all Needham's residents, especially the most vulnerable. The division seeks to prevent and control the spread of disease, address environmental issues, promote healthy lifestyles, and embrace its role in regional health initiatives.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The following six priorities will guide the work of the division:

	1	Ensure equitable access to care.
	2	Address the impacts of social determinants of health on the Needham community.
	3	Use lessons learned during the pandemic to improve emergency preparedness and response.
	4	Collaborate closely with other Town departments and regional partners to address intersecting community needs.
	5	Prioritize responses to and prevention of mental health crises, substance use, and chronic conditions.
	6	Invest in workforce development.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND DELIVERABLES

A detailed set of measurable and time-bound targets has been established to operationalize the strategies outlined above. Each strategy is linked to an overarching Board of Health governance priority, broken down into defined tasks, and assigned to an owner.

IMPLEMENTATION AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Implementation planning began with an analysis of the division's strengths and weaknesses, an assessment of external trends, events, and other factors that may impact community health or the health division, and consideration of the division's capacity needs.

The first step upon formal adoption of the plan is to build out a detailed performance management plan. This will serve as the division's primary tool for managing workflow, driving accountability, and celebrating success. The Performance Management Plan will follow the fiscal year and be synchronized with the division's CHIP (Community Health Improvement Plan) timeline.

STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

Feedback and input from the Board of Health and division staff was sought throughout the process. In addition, focus groups were conducted with representatives of community and advocacy groups, other Town departments, partner organizations, and elected officials.

SECTION 1: THE PLANNING PROCESS

A. Participants

Needham's strategic planning process was directed by the Needham Strategic Planning Team (see below) and supported by the consulting team of BME Strategies and Copper Strategic. The planning team represented knowledge and perspectives from across the health division.

The group met monthly and conducted work in between meetings. The process began in June 2023 and concluded in December 2023.

Timothy McDonald and Tiffany Benoit were in frequent communication with the Needham Board of Health about the process. The strategic plan was discussed at the June 9, July 14, September 8, October 13, and December 8, 2023 Board of Health meetings. In addition, an in-depth discussion was conducted with Board Chair Tejal Gandhi, M.D., MPH, and Board member Kathleen Ward Brown, Sc.D., on November 27, 2023. In each case board feedback was solicited and incorporated into the development of the plan.

Strategic Planning Team:

Timothy McDonald, Director of Health and Human Services

Tiffany Benoit, Assistant Director of Public Health

Tara Gurge, Assistant Director of Public Health

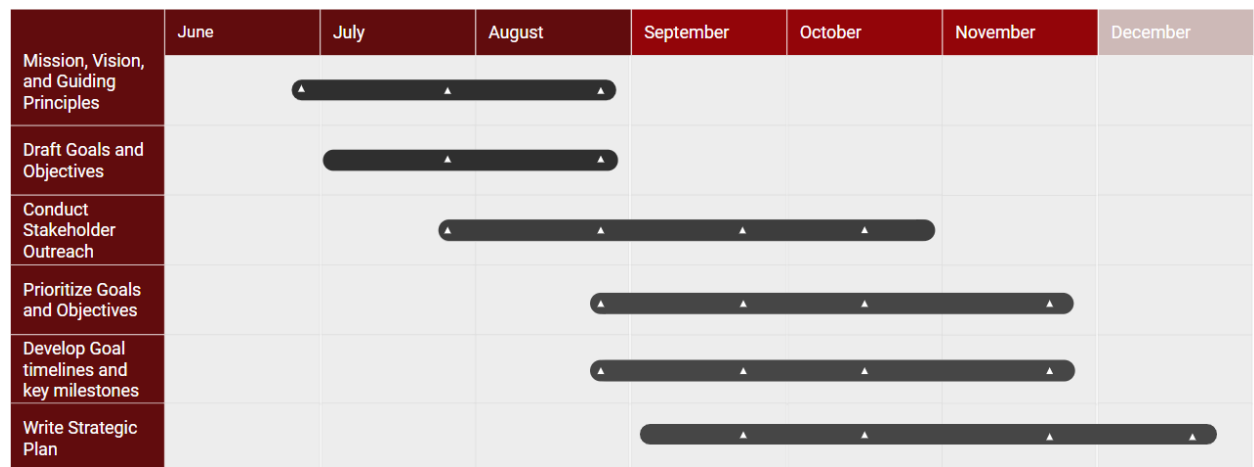
Lynn Schoeff, Accreditation Coordinator

Julie McCarthy, Epidemiologist

Kerry Dunnell, Program Manager

B. Sequence of the Process

The team began by crafting an outline informed by PHAB standards. From there, they built out iterative drafts in the following sequence:



▲ Meeting

C. Stakeholder Engagement

Key stakeholders were engaged throughout the process.

- As noted above, the Board of Health was kept apprised of progress regularly and was asked for input.
- In addition, focus groups were conducted with representatives of:
 - Community and advocacy groups
 - Other departments in the Town of Needham
 - Partner organizations
 - Elected officials
- Finally, the plan was developed to ensure it is widely understood by staff. In addition to informal discussions with staff throughout the process, an all-hands meeting was held on November 30, 2023, dedicated to discussion of the plan. The strategic plan was updated based on feedback generated during this meeting.

Please see the Appendix for stakeholder lists.

D. Board Approval

On February 9, 2024, the plan will be introduced to the Needham Board of Health for approval.

SECTION 2: OUR PRIORITIES & DIRECTION 2024 - 2028

A. Mission, Vision, Values, and Guiding Principles

Mission

The Needham Board of Health and its Public Health Division promote and protect the public health and social well-being of all Needham's residents, especially the most vulnerable. The division seeks to prevent and control the spread of disease, address environmental issues, promote healthy lifestyles, and embrace its role in regional health initiatives.

Vision

The vision of the Needham Board of Health and its Public Health Division is a community where all residents can live, work, play, and grow in an environment conducive to optimal health and well-being through all stages of life.

Values

- Integrity, Reliability, and Trust: We are a trusted resource, communicating accurate and concise information. We are professional, direct, honest, and flexible, listening and responding to community concerns with patience and respect. Our services are based on evidence and best practices. We are responsible stewards of limited resources.
- Dedication and Collaboration: We advocate for the health and well-being of the community. We demonstrate dedication, passion, and empathy while collaborating with community partners. We are motivated by the belief that people are empowered by knowledge that allows them to make informed decisions.
- Professional and Supportive: We provide a professional, collaborative, and respectful work environment. Staff members act as team players, supporting each other by sharing the work and being considerate of others.

Guiding Principles

1. We are guided by the fundamental belief that everyone has the right to live a healthy, safe lifestyle.
2. As public health professionals, we view it as our responsibility to:
 - Protect the public, especially the most vulnerable;
 - Prevent when possible, respond when necessary;
 - Contribute to individual and societal well-being;
 - Ensure people can live to their fullest capacity;
 - Make government work better, more efficiently, and more responsively.
3. We approach our work:
 - Acknowledging the social determinants of health, i.e., the conditions in the environments in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks, as defined in Healthy People 2030;
 - With a commitment towards advancing racial and health equity;
 - Promoting evidence-based health practices and data-driven program management;
 - In partnership with residents, community organizations, other Town departments, and federal, regional, state, and local agencies;
 - As good stewards of public resources, using Town operating funds, grant resources, and donations efficiently;
 - Striving to provide as many public health resources as possible to residents and community organizations.

B. Strategic Priorities

The division's priorities were selected based on a current understanding of community needs. They were developed to reflect Needham's Community Health Assessment (CHA) and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). In consultation with the Board of Health, governance and oversight priorities were established in alignment.

		Needham Public Health Division Strategic Priority	Needham Board of Health Governance & Oversight Priority
	1	Ensure equitable access to care	Utilize all legal and regulatory actions available to improve and protect the public's physical and mental health
	2	Address the impacts of social determinants of health on outcomes	Augment the knowledge and information staff has to help inform best approaches to addressing social determinants of health
	3	Use lessons learned during the pandemic to improve emergency preparedness and response	Build confidence and trust of public health officials within the community; act as a champion for the division
	4	Collaborate closely with other Town departments and regional partners to address intersecting community needs	Promote community activities that increase health and wellness, including building community partnerships
	5	Prioritize responses to and prevention of mental health crises, substance use, and chronic conditions	Support the strategic use of remediation funds as determined by the division's strategic planning process
	6	Invest in workforce development	Support the budget process with the Select Board; ensure the necessary resources for staff, services, and training

C. Goals and Objectives

To operationalize these strategic priorities, the Needham team will execute a detailed set of measurable and time-bound targets. These goals were developed to be:

Strategically cohesive, i.e.:

- Logically linked to the strategic priorities
- Developed through the lens of social determinants of health
- Consistent with our Community Health Assessment (CHA) and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)
- Specific, measurable, and time-bound
- Matched to an owner, with specific deliverables and deadlines identified

and anchored on:

- Closing gaps between residents' needs and the division's current efforts
- Connecting residents to physical and mental health care resources
- Refining standard operating procedures to respond to emerging needs
- Developing a Behavioral Health Emergency Response Plan in collaboration with other Town departments and community organizations
- Developing health promotion/health education campaigns with other Town departments and community partners
- Expanding training opportunities for NPHD staff

Board Priority	Divisional Strategic Priority	Goal	1-Year Strategies and Deliverables (additional years to be developed by NPHD as the strategic plan is implemented)	Deadline (subject to change)	Owner (subject to change)
1. Utilize all legal and regulatory actions available to improve and protect the public's health.	Ensure equitable access to care	Conduct a gap analysis of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)/protocols to identify missing and outdated plans or protocols that do not reflect the current procedures of Needham Public Health	Update existing insurance enrollment and school vaccine protocols with Needham Public Schools (NPS) to prepare for large numbers of migrant families/children	Late summer 2024	Nursing Staff working with Needham Public Schools (NPS)
		Better connect residents to physical and mental health care resources	Host "health fairs" at various community locations with access to an interpreter to educate and connect residents to physical and mental health resources Promote local shuttle services that can help decrease barriers to healthcare access such as the Needham Community Council and Aging Services Division amongst others	Late summer 2024	NPHD Staff with Community Based Organizations (CBOs)
		Develop SOPs and educational materials to respond to migrant family public health needs (mental and physical health) from notice to referral	Develop an SOP to respond to arriving migrant families and their needs Develop a "welcome" one-pager prepared in different languages that can be distributed to new arrivals.	Early summer 2024	NPHD Staff with community-based organizations (and NPS)
2. Augment the knowledge and information staff have to help inform best approaches to addressing social determinants of health (SDOH).	Address the impacts of social determinants of health on outcomes	All goals will be developed with the SDOH in mind	As determined in other strategic planning goals	-	NPHD staff
3. Build confidence and trust within the community in NPHD; act as a champion for the division.	Use lessons learned during the pandemic to improve emergency preparedness	Develop a Behavioral Health Emergency Response Plan by working with other Town of Needham departments and community organizations	Identify training needs that can help Needham Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) to respond effectively to community mental health needs during an emergency.	Late summer 2024	NPHD/HHS mental health staff, emergency management personnel / leadership, Riverside - mental health clinicians

Board Priority	Divisional Strategic Priority	Goal	1-Year Strategies and Deliverables (additional years to be developed by NPHD as the strategic plan is implemented)	Deadline (subject to change)	Owner (subject to change)
4. Promote community activities that increase health and wellness, including building community partnerships.	Collaborate closely with other Town departments and regional partners to address intersecting community needs	Develop health promotion/health education campaigns with other Town departments and community partners	Continue and expand partnership with Police for tobacco product and substance use prevention Advocate for the hiring of another clinician to work with Needham youth in various community settings to connect to resources, such as the interface referral system, and perform screenings	Winter 2024	NPHD Staff, HHS, community-based organizations, other Town of Needham departments, Charles River Regional Staff
5. Use remediation funds strategically as determined by the division's strategic planning process.	Prioritize response to mental health, substance use, and chronic conditions	Design opioid-specific programming using public engagement feedback from various ongoing outreach efforts.	Connect with members of the community to identify which community resources or interventions would make the most impact on residents to address the opioid crisis	Starting in spring 2024	NPHD leadership
6. Support the budget process with the Select Board; ensure the necessary resources for staff, services, and training.	Encourage and facilitate workforce development	Expand training opportunities for NPHD Staff and equip NPHD staff with Mental Health-specific skills	Update the Workforce Development Plan Offer Adult Mental Health First Aid training to NPHD staff and offer the training to municipal partners.	Winter 2024 Winter 2024	NPHD leadership

D. External Factors

External trends, events, or other factors that may impact the health division include:

- Reliability of funding streams
- Statewide efforts to transform local public health infrastructure in Massachusetts through the Public Health Excellence grant program and additional legislation pending in the Massachusetts State House
- Lingering impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of residents' perception (positive and negative) of public health officials as trusted messengers
- Tight job market, impacting recruitment and retention
- Imperfect tools to ensure all community members are aware of the range of services provided by the division
- Nationwide mental health and opioid crises and their impacts on Needham residents
- The tight housing market and increased cost of living make it difficult for elderly residents to stay in their homes and increases the support needed from NPHD
- Due to the recent influx of migrants to the state of Massachusetts, hotels across the state have been used as temporary housing. While no hotels in Needham are in use right now, the NPHD needs to prepare for this eventual likelihood and the public health needs that will arise from it.

Other constraints exist within the Town but are outside the purview of the Health Division:

- Capacity of Town-wide services that the division does not have control over, such as human resources and information technology
- Restrictions on the use of indirect grant funding
- Lack of data, and access to and ease of use of data collected by other Town departments and local hospital partners

E. Divisional Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths / Key Assets

- Degree of commitment and mission-alignment across leadership and staff
- Staff capabilities and skill level; depth of experience and subject matter expertise
- Team culture and cohesion
- Strong foundation built over time to access a breadth of funding sources
- Political and policy-maker relationships
- Relationships and collaboration with other Health and Human Services (HHS) divisions and Town of Needham departments
- Orientation toward long-range planning, transparency
- Dual assistant directors' structure which increases capacity and continuity
- Established infrastructure to bring in grant funding, increase the division's resources and capacity

Gaps to address / opportunities for improvement

- Staff capacity – people are stretched across multiple projects
- Inconsistent practices around document sharing and knowledge management
- Program management capacity – both people-power and technical tools
- Lack of full visibility into what is happening enterprise-wide with respect to IT
- Speed of hiring
- Need to synchronize and be more cohesive division-wide (esp. with stakeholder outreach, but not limited to that) (some silo effect)
- Need an internal dashboard to show progress and/or better tools to improve project integration
- Stakeholder networks – we often go back to the same well
- Opportunity to turn temporary funding sources into permanent, sustainable funding sources
- Additional way to assess and evaluate the needs of the community beyond online surveys

F. Linkages

This strategic plan was designed to complement and build upon other guiding documents, plans, initiatives, and coalitions already in place to improve the health of Needham residents. Rather than conflicting with or duplicating the recommendations and actions of existing frameworks and coalitions, the participants of the strategic planning process identified potential partners and resources wherever possible. This was done explicitly with the Community Health Assessment (CHA) and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), Substance Prevention Alliance of Needham (SPAN), Massachusetts Collaboration for Action, Leadership, and Learning (MassCALL3), and opioid abatement work underway, along with other initiatives.

SECTION 3: IMPLEMENTATION AND CAPACITY PLANNING

As we transition to implementation planning, we have reviewed our existing capacity and our capacity needs.

A. Information Management

The Needham Public Health Division currently utilizes three different document-sharing functionalities – a shared drive, Microsoft Teams, and OneDrive. The need is to better coordinate the use of these systems to share information more efficiently and effectively.

The Town of Needham plans to remove the shared drive in the coming years, leaving in place Microsoft Teams and OneDrive. NPHD is currently devising a staff survey to better understand how each staff member uses the current systems. This will provide the baseline data to develop a plan to organize a standardized and consistent approach to information management.

B. Workforce Development

The Needham Public Health Division participated in the 2021 – 2022 PH WINS workforce development survey. This survey provided data on NPHD staff training needs. Through this survey NPHD developed a set of goals to increase the type and amount of training each employee attends on an annual basis. These are detailed in the Workforce Development Plan. NPHD plans to participate in the PH WINS workforce survey each cycle that it is offered to track progress against these training goals.

C. Communications and Branding

The Needham Public Health Division has retained the services of MORE Advertising to develop a comprehensive brand strategy, including a logo update, brand and style guide, and standardized templates for documents and social media posts.

Improving internal communications remains an area of need and opportunity. Specific to strategic planning implementation, discussions with staff are underway to update the meeting and reporting cadence and to more broadly evaluate and improve how information is shared internally.

D. Financial Sustainability

The Needham Public Health Division is well-resourced through a combination of funds provided by the annual municipal budget, revolving funds, donations, trust funds, and grants. Approximately half of the Public Health Division's spending comes from its operating budget, with the other 50% supported by non-profit, foundation, state, and federal sources. NPHD also relies upon other types of accounts – donation accounts, revolving funds, trust funds, and financial warrant articles – to support smaller programs or very targeted activities.

Our fiscal strategy includes spending non-durable sources first, maximizing potential earnings, and limiting costs. Two specific needs moving forward are:

- Increased support from the Board of Health in pursuing new funding opportunities, especially those that can be made permanent rather than temporary
- Greater flexibility in using indirect grant funds.

SECTION 4: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

The division will track progress in achieving its goals using a methodical process, a tracking tool, and quarterly in-person status review meetings.

The forthcoming Performance Management Plan will follow the fiscal year, will align CHIP and Strategic Plan timelines, and will establish:

- Individual and team priorities aligned with overall organizational priorities
- Priorities broken down by quarter
- An effective pattern of well-organized weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annual meetings to monitor progress toward achieving objectives, maintain alignment, and drive accountability
- What data sets will be reviewed and at what intervals
- Key activities by owner
- Deliverables and timelines
- Resource allocation
- The system/platform used to track progress, including:
 - Identifying the primary owner(s) or user(s) of the system
 - How data is entered into the system
 - How data will be used to guide decision-making, programming decisions, and continuous quality improvement

APPENDIX: STAKEHOLDER FOCUS GROUPS

Advocacy Groups – October 30, 2023

Hanna Burnett, Domestic Violence Action Committee (NPHD staff)
Nancy Irwin, Friends of Needham Board of Health
Sandra Robinson, Needham Community Council
Lt. Belinda Carroll, Police DVAC Co-Chair (invited)
Colleen Schaller, Council on Aging (invited)
Tatiana Swanson, Disability Commission (invited) (Town staff)

Peer Departments – October 31

Deputy Chief Chris Baker, Community Crisis Intervention Team
Chief Thomas Conroy, Fire Department
Lee Newman, Planning & Community Development
Sara Shine, Youth & Family Services
Stacey Mulroy, Parks and Recreation (invited)
Lt. John McGrath, Police Department (invited)
LaTanya Steele, Aging Services (invited)

Customers – October 31

Laurie Blake, Needham Housing Authority
Steve Volante, Volante Farms

Community Partners - November 1

Jill Carter, Beth Israel Lahey Hospital
Susannah Hann, Needham Public Schools
Emily Turnbull, Needham Police (invited)

Elected Officials – To Be Scheduled

Denise Garlick – 13th Norfolk

KEY THEMES:

Appreciated the outreach and being involved in the process

Compliments:

- Very thorough, logical, covers all the pillars of public health
- Priorities are well thought out
- Reads as inclusive doc; the priority around people and compassion, caring for each other – that value really came through
- Mission statement captures what the department is trying to do
- Really liked and understood the mission, vision, and values (esp. “prevent when possible, respond when necessary”)

Questions / Curious for more information

- How much of this is new? How much is ongoing/continuation of existing work?
- Hadn’t seen BOH/staff areas of focus divided so starkly in the past

Encouragements

- ID any gaps in awareness of public health services within the general public
- Communications are good between our divisions – keep doing this!
- ID how some of the goals overlap between departments
- Involve other departments in the goal-planning process
- Mental health cannot be emphasized enough
- Involve staff to a greater degree and make it readable/accessible to them
- Consider naming the schools as a key partner



**Board of Health
Town of Needham
AGENDA FACT SHEET**



MEETING DATE: January 12, 2023

Agenda Item	Health and Human Services FY23 Annual Report
Presenter(s)	Timothy McDonald, Director of Health and Human Services

1.	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF TOPIC TO BE DISCUSSED
	Mr. McDonald will share the FY2023 Health and Human Services Annual Report Submission.
2.	VOTE REQUIRED BY BOARD OF HEALTH
	None.
3.	BACK UP INFORMATION:
	a. Health and Human Services FY23 Annual Report

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Timothy Muir McDonald, Director

The Needham Department of Health and Human Services has four divisions: Aging Services, Public Health, Youth & Family Services, and Veteran's Services.

In fiscal year 2023 the Divisions continued responding and adjusting to COVID-19, while gradually resuming usual services. Aging Services began offering in-person and hybrid services, welcoming older adults back to the Center at the Heights. Youth & Family Services also returned to in-person services, in the schools and in the community. Public Health staff continued to provide consultation to Town departments, schools, and local businesses regarding COVID-19, continued some virtual programming, and resumed many in-person activities.

AGING SERVICES DIVISION

Council on Aging

Colleen Schaller, Chair; Penny Grossman, MEd, MBA, Vice Chair; Ed Cosgrove, PhD; Carol deLemos, MSW; Dan Goldberg; Helen Gregory; Susan Mullaney; Sandra Prinn; Ted Prorok; Lianne Reich; Kate Robey; Kathy Whitney.

Staff

LaTanya Steele, MPA, Director of Aging Services; David Fawley, Van Driver; Dylan Copley, Van Driver; Kerrie Cusack, MSW, LICSW, Clinician; Steven DeCosta Van Driver; Alan McDuffie, Van Driver; Isabelle Dick, MSW, LCSW, Clinician; Jennifer Garf, Program Assistant; Emiliana Gomes, SHINE Assistant Program Coordinator; Stephan Grably, Transportation Program Coordinator; Michelle Gucciardi, SHINE Program Coordinator; Aicha Kelley, Assistant Director of Programming and Transportation; Deborah Marcus, Van Driver; Karen Marchilonis, Administrative Office Support Specialist; Maryanne Messenger, Van Driver; Yustil Meija, Senior Custodian; Jessica Moss, MSW, LICSW, Assistant Director of Counseling and Volunteers; Katie Pisano, Program Assistant; Jessica Rice, MSW, Clinician; Nathalie Steeves, Program Assistant; Annie Toth, Administrative Assistant; Tom Watson, Building Monitor.

Mission

The Needham Aging Services Division responds to the needs of Needham's older residents by providing a welcoming, inclusive, and safe environment with programs, services, and resources that enhance their quality of life and provide opportunities for growth. The Center at the Heights serves as a focal point for supporting aging in the community.

Summary of Services

Aging Services offers a wide variety of programs and services to older adults and to their families. Services include daily meals; health benefits counseling; creative and social classes; special events and trips; case management and counseling services; transportation; entertainment; information and referral services; educational programs; the fitness center; health

and wellness programming; and volunteer opportunities. The Aging Services Division provides the resources and support that are essential to healthy aging.

FY23 included ongoing efforts to engage and support older adults in Needham. The Social Services Department prioritized mental health needs by offering a free short-term individual counseling program, in addition to continuing to provide ongoing case management and information and referral services. The Programming Department offered new and innovative programs in-person, remote, and via hybrid platforms. All were filled to capacity. Offerings included 'LaBlast,' a Latin inspired cardio dance class, community dinners on the beautiful deck, mindfulness and meditation classes, and more. The Transportation Department has expanded, with a fleet of four vehicles as well as a grant-funded partnership with a local taxi company to provide transportation to and from the Center, shopping trips, and medical appointments. With the support of dedicated volunteers, the Transportation Department also continues to deliver an average of 250 meals per week. These services prove to be critical, as highlighted by the 2023 Needham Healthy Aging Assessment conducted by Needham's Department of Health and Human Services, which highlights lack of transportation resources as a major concern among older adults.

Volunteers have always played a central role for the Aging Services Division and from the smooth operations at the Center at the Heights (CATH). Volunteers provide essential operational support to Aging Services staff as well as an opportunity for engagement with community members. Volunteers assist in the kitchen, manage the front desk, staff the gift shop, deliver meals, and assist in special programming. The Aging Services Division is grateful for such community support which is an essential component in offering the breadth of services.

As the impacts of COVID-19, a pandemic that disproportionately impacted older adults, appear to wane, Aging Services Division has successfully pivoted to a hybrid model of service. The Center at the Heights is bustling with vibrant older adults and staff committed to providing the support and engagement opportunities critical to healthy aging.



Summer BBQ with Needham Rotary Club

Program Highlights

- The Social Services Unit continued to provide case management and counseling to older adults in Needham. Social Workers offer in-person individual and group support services, both in the office as well as in the homes of homebound older adults. Services in FY2023 remained focused on the mental health needs of the community and included a short-term therapy offering to offset the shortage

of available mental health services in the community at large. In FY2023, the Social Work Unit served 490 individuals and logged 4,201 interactions.

- For the second year in a row the Aging Services Division, in partnership with the Youth & Family Services Division, received a grant from the Metro-West Health Foundation to finance professional clinical consultation services for Town of Needham clinicians. With increased mental health needs observed in the community, this service provides vital support to Needham's own clinicians.
- Through a grant from MassDevelopment, the Aging Services Division's Transportation Department resumed its medical taxi ride program, offering free transportation for older Needham residents to medical appointments within an 8-mile radius.
- To promote a socially inclusive environment with equal opportunity and respect for everyone, Aging Services emphasizes cultural diversity in its programming. The Executive Director, LaTanya Steele facilitates a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion book club. Cultural and educational events, and informational resources helped to create a safe environment for people to learn and to share concerns.
- Fifty-one volunteers supported the Aging Services Division, with 1,774 hours of service. Volunteers provide vital in-person support including assisting in the gift shop, delivering meals, managing the front desk, and serving food in the Café.
- The Programming Unit continued to use a hybrid model for programming, serving many more individuals than in previous years. Programs included health and wellness classes, cooking demonstrations, educational lectures, card games, music programs, and more. Special highlights for programming include a presentation from famed meteorologist Harvey Leonard, a pizza tasting contest highlighting local businesses, and a visit from Master Illusionist Lyn Dilles. The Aging Services Division continued collaborating with the Needham Community Council's Tech and Tutors program, which distributes free electronic tablets and tutoring to Needham residents and is an essential resource for those who choose to participate in remote programming.
- In partnership with Springwell Elder Services , the Aging Services Division continued to provide home delivered meals program in addition to serving as a congregate meal site. With the help of dedicated staff and volunteers, Aging Services delivered 12,923 meals to the homes of 119 older adults at no cost to the recipient. The meals are paid for by the MA Executive Office of Elder Affairs.
- SHINE (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Everyone) is a free service that provides health insurance counseling for



Officer Rocket joins in on our weekly BINGO game

Medicare beneficiaries and their caregivers. The MetroWest SHINE program had over 8,246 appointments during FY 2023, including 4,475 appointments during the Medicare open enrollment period from October to December 2022. During FY 2023, SHINE offered both in-person and remote appointments.

PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION

Board of Health

Edward V. Cosgrove, PhD, Chair; Kathleen Ward Brown, ScD, Clerk; Stephen K. Epstein, MD, MPP; Tejal K. Gandhi, MD, MPH, Vice Chair; Robert A. Partridge, MD, MPH

Staff

Taleb Abdelrahim, MS – Emergency Management Support; Roland Abuntori, REHS/RS – Environmental Health Agent; Diana Acosta, MPH, REHS/RS – Shared Public Health Services Manager; Michaela Bucca – part-time Contact Tracer; Hanna Burnett, MPH, RN – Public Health Nurse; Isabella Caruso, MPH – COVID-19 Contact Tracer; Virginia Chacon-Lopez, MSN, RN – Public Health Nurse; Lydia Cunningham, MPH, CHES – Substance Use Prevention Coordinator; Monica DeWinter, MPH – Program Support Assistant III; Elissa Dockstader – Student Intern IV; Mary Fountaine, MSN, RN – Public Health Nurse; Tara Gurge, MS, RS – Assistant Director for Community & Environmental Health; Rebecca Hall, MBA – Traveling Meals Program Coordinator; Jazmine Hurley – Program Support Assistant III; Christine Kenney, RN – On-call Public Health Nurse; Jessica Kent – Environmental Health Agent; James Lawrence-Archer – Administrative Office Specialist; Michael Lethin, MS – Emergency Management Administrator; Jane Lischewski – Administrative Office Specialist; Ally Littlefield, MS – Environmental Health Agent; Jane Lockhart, RN – On-call Public Health Nurse; Angela MacDonnell – Program Support Assistant III; Elaine Mahoney, RN – On-call Public Health Nurse; Tracy Mahoney, RN – On-call Public Health Nurse; Julie McCarthy, MS – Epidemiologist; Cindi Melanson, MPH – Special Assignment Support; Karen Mullen, MBA – part-time Program Support Assistant III; Susan Orsillo, RN – On-call Public Health Nurse; Monica Pancare, CP-FS – Environmental Health Agent; Sainath Palani, MPH – Environmental Health Agent; Alison Paquette, RN – On-call Public Health Nurse; Carol Read, M.Ed, CAGS, CPS – Substance Use Prevention Coordinator; Karen Rogers – Administrative Office Specialist; Lynn Schoeff, M.Ed – Professional Technical Support Specialist; Karen Shannon, CPS – Substance Prevention Alliance of Needham Program Coordinator; Thaleia Stampoulidou-Rocha – Environmental Health Agent; Dawn Stiller – Administrative Analyst; Kendy Valbrun – Contact Tracer; Vanessa Wronski, MHA – Program Support Assistant III ; Tiffany Zike Benoit, MPH, RN – Assistant Director for Public Health Nursing & Behavioral Health

Mission

The Needham Public Health Division is empowered through the Needham Board of Health by the Massachusetts General Laws ([Chapter 111](#)) to enforce state and local public health and environmental regulations.

The mission of the Division is to prevent disease, promote health, and protect the health and social well-being of the residents of Needham, especially the most vulnerable. The staff of the Public Health Division pursues this mission through a series of goals and objectives to:

- efficiently use Town operating budget funds, grant resources, and donations,
- actively cooperate and collaborate with state and local agencies and community partners,
- promote evidence-based health practices and data-driven program management, and
- advocate for policy and regulatory changes that promote health and well-being.

There are five units in the Public Health Division: Environmental Health, Public Health Nursing, Substance Use Prevention, Traveling Meals, and Shared Services.

Environmental Health

The Environmental Health Unit protects the public's health through implementation and enforcement of state and local laws to assure compliance with environmental health and safety standards. The Environmental Health team monitors and regulates a wide range of business establishments, facilities, and activities, including, but not limited to food service; tobacco sales; residential housing; the medical marijuana treatment center; construction activities (demolition, septic system upgrades, and well installations); waste hauling; bodywork; and public swimming pools. The team licenses mobile food vendors and conducts inspections of temporary food events, including the annual seasonal Needham Farmers Market. Environmental Health agents work closely with Massachusetts Departments of Public Health, Professional Licensure, Environmental Protection, and Agricultural Resource. The Environmental Health Unit coordinates with other Town departments, especially the Town Manager's Office, Building, Engineering, Public Works, Water & Sewer, Planning, Zoning, Police, Fire, and Animal Control.



*Sainath Palani, Environmental Health Agent,
Conducting a residential septic system installation
inspection.*

Environmental Health is continuing to see an increase in mental health issues associated with hoarding and unsanitary housing conditions and has assisted the Needham Police and Fire Departments with challenging housing concerns. Health agents have also seen an increase in pest activity in certain areas in town including in parking lots which abut food establishments, and in areas along the MBTA train tracks. Environmental Health monitors and works with pest control services to ensure that those active areas are managed.

Program Highlights:

- The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recognizes that the goal of retail food regulatory programs is to reduce or eliminate the risk and occurrence of foodborne illnesses and deaths from food produced at the retail level. The Environmental team has aligned with the FDA and, since 2017, has worked towards adopting each of the nine Voluntary FDA Retail Food Program Standards. In FY23, the Public Health Division achieved two of those standards, having completed rigorous staff training and evaluation, and adopting the FDA food inspection format.



The Environmental Team continues to adopt and maintain the nine FDA Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards.

The Environmental Health team made significant progress toward adoption of two other FDA standards with the adoption of a strict food code enforcement policy and ongoing outreach and training of food permit holders. This fiscal year, the Environmental Health team was again awarded two grants from the National Environmental Health Association and the Food and Drug Administration to assist with the completion of the nine FDA Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards. Through these grants, Needham has been improving its food safety inspection program and is able to align with the FDA to work towards reducing and eliminating the risk of foodborne illnesses at our permitted retail food establishments.



Ecom Lu, summer intern, at opening day of the Needham Farmers Market in May 2022

- The Food Safety Excellence Program was developed in FY23 and is being rolled out in summer and fall 2023. The program includes strict enforcement of federal standards, clearly defined consequences for violations, and restaurant grading with a certificate of excellence awarded to those restaurants that consistently meet standards.
- In FY 2023, health agents conducted over 980 inspections, reviews, and responses to food safety, housing, tobacco, and nuisance complaints; 347 permits and licenses were issued.
- In October and November 2022, Environmental Health staff hosted four Food Establishment Food Safety trainings via Zoom (subsequently available on YouTube) which focused on food safety basics for restaurants and the most common violations noted on food establishment inspection reports. For one of these trainings, Environmental Health worked with a bilingual trainer and hosted a virtual training in Spanish for food establishment staff.
- The annual Food Advisory Board meeting was held in fall 2022 via Zoom. This advisory board is made up of representatives of Town departments, community partners, nursing homes, corporate food companies, restaurants, retail food establishments, and interested residents.

Epidemiology

The Epidemiology Unit collects and analyzes data on health and disease in Needham, which is used to guide program development and evaluation, to apply for funding, and to shape public education campaigns. The epidemiologist works closely with Public Health nurses to monitor trends in communicable diseases and collects public health data from community partners, including other town departments and local hospitals.

In FY23, the epidemiologist focused largely on the Public Health Division's efforts towards Public Health Accreditation by working on the Division's first Community Health Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan. This entailed collecting demographic and health data for the town and identifying health priorities for the Public Health Division to focus on for the next five years.

The epidemiologist also worked closely with other units within the Division, collaborating with nursing to install sunscreen dispensers in popular recreational spaces around town and with Environmental Health on launching Nutritionally Needham, a monthlong healthy eating campaign.

Public Health Nursing

The Public Health Nursing Unit provides health education; advocates for the health of Needham residents and workers; tracks the health and wellbeing of residents; provides some immunizations and health screenings; and promotes healthy living. Services also include public health emergency management including the Medical Reserve Core.

Summary of Services

Vaccinations

Vaccinations continued during FY2023 with the focus on COVID-19 boosters and outreach to different age groups. Needham Public Health Division continued to adjust to the changing vaccination requirements throughout the year including providing vaccinations for all ages. The Public Health Nurses were able to find new ways and locations to provide influenza vaccinations to all residents, especially some of the most vulnerable.

New Services

During FY2023 the nursing team worked with IMPACT Melanoma to provide free sunscreen dispensers to residents at some of Needham's community settings.

Public Health Nursing also provided free COVID-19 molecular testing to Needham residents thanks to a grant from the MetroWest Health Foundation.

Educational Efforts

FY2023 educational efforts by the nursing team included increasing the number of CPR classes to residents; training volunteers to provide classes for Matter of Balance classes, thus increasing availability; and providing domestic violence training to community groups and residents through the Domestic Violence Action Committee (co-chaired by a Needham Public Health Nurse). Other educational efforts included MRC training about shelters and housing pets at shelters, and presentations at the Massachusetts Health Officers Association conference.



CPR class at the Harvest Fair, October 2022

Public Health Excellence Shared Services Programs



The Public Health Excellence Shared Services and the Regional Public Health Field Training programs are two related grant funded programs hosted by Needham Public Health. The first, known as the Charles River Health District, is a shared services coalition of the communities of Needham, Dover, Medfield, and Sherborn. The second is the North Central & MetroWest Field Training Hub. These programs, funded by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, are elements of a statewide initiative to improve local public health capacity, increase compliance with local public health performance standards, and expand public health services. The current focus is on meeting the mandates for seven subject areas in MA statute and regulations (*Administration, Community Sanitation, Disease Control and Prevention, Environmental Protection, Food Protection, Housing, and Tobacco Use Prevention*).

The North Central & MetroWest Field Training Hub is one of ten field training hubs in the Commonwealth, each of which will coordinate and provide standardized training for local public health environmental health staff in multiple shared service arrangements.

The Charles River Public Health District employs an equity lens in all its work, including training plans and hiring practices. Health district staff provide environmental health site reviews, inspections, and enforcement in the coalition communities.

Program Highlights

The Needham Public Health Division led the formation of a coalition of Needham, Dover, and Medfield health departments in FY22. (Note: the Town of Sherborn joined the coalition in FY 23, and the communities agreed to name their group the Charles River Health District.)

The newly formed health district engaged in a strategic planning process (Spring 2023) facilitated by Regina Villa Associates to explore the future of public health shared services

among the communities. The process included stakeholder interviews and monthly sessions with a working group comprised of representatives from each community.

A consultant with expertise in Title V, the MA regulation that governs the construction and maintenance of septic systems and the transport of septic-system waste, was retained to teach program inspectors how to conduct Title V septic plan reviews.

The four communities drafted and signed a memorandum of understanding in June 2023, began discussions about hiring a public health nurse who would serve Dover and Sherborn, and contracted with a company to use their food and environmental safety inspection platform. As a result, all four communities will use the same inspection forms and practices.

Needham was awarded a contract to be a field training hub serving thirty-nine communities in the North Central and MetroWest areas, including Dover, Medfield, Needham, and Sherborn. These training hubs coordinate course offerings by MDPH central trainers and provide intensive field training following completion of those courses.

Substance Use Prevention

The Substance Prevention Alliance of Needham (SPAN) uses a collaborative and data-driven approach to reduce alcohol, marijuana, and other drug use among Needham youth. Through community education and strategic action, SPAN focuses on supporting youth in making healthy choices by working to decrease risk and increase the protective factors associated with adolescent substance use.

Summary of services

Using the Strategic Prevention Framework (a national model), SPAN engages community members to plan, implement, and evaluate these prevention programs.

Under a federal grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, SPAN provided in-person training to Needham alcohol licensees on responsible beverage service and sales. SPAN and Needham Police also continued conducting compliance checks with licensees, where underage individuals are enlisted to try to purchase alcohol to test whether servers are checking identification and refusing to serve minors.

The need for education and resources for youth and their families remained great and SPAN responded with virtual and in-person events and messaging campaigns including:

- August 2022 - The first *Needham International Overdose Awareness Day vigil*, held on Wednesday, August 31 drew over 100 people. The event included a display of 2,290 flags representing the MA lives lost to opioid-related overdoses in 2021. SPAN served along with other Town departments who worked on this event under the leadership of the Becca Schmill Foundation. The Select Board declared August 31 as Needham Overdose Awareness Day.

- November 2022 - SPAN hosted a presentation of the results of the 2022 Needham Parent Survey. This survey is administered biennially to parents of students in grades 6 – 12 to assess their attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions about youth substance use and wellness. This data complements the substance use data provided by the MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey and informs SPAN's prevention work.
- January 2023 - SPAN launched *Positive Community Norms*, a poster campaign intended to reduce youth misperceptions about peer use of substances. The campaign posters use data from the Metro West Adolescent Health Survey to show that most high school students choose not to use substances.
- May 2023 - SPAN, in partnership with the Needham High School PTC, hosted *Social Host: What Parents Need to Know to Keep Kids Safe* and the *Hidden in Plain Sight* exhibit. Parents and community members heard presentations from law enforcement and a legal expert to understand the MA Social Host Law and how they can be pro-active in preventing underage access to alcohol. A pediatrician shared recommendations to parents for talking with their teens and children about the physical, mental, and legal risks of underage alcohol use.

Students Advocating Life without Substance Abuse (SALSA) is a health advocacy club at Needham High School. SALSA members make a personal connection with Pollard Middle School students in the classroom when they teach them how to resist peer pressure.

Throughout the school year SALSA peer leaders present to over 400 eighth grade students in small group settings. These youth prevention advocates also educate their peers, partner with SPAN, build presentation and leadership skills, and advocate for policy change at the local, state, and federal level. During the 2022-23 school year more than 150 Needham High School SALSA members contributed 1,350 hours of service in the community.

During the 2022-23 school year, three SALSA leaders identified the need for peer-to-peer mental health advocacy in Needham. They wrote a grant and received funding to hire 2 advisors to launch a new Wellness Club at Pollard Middle School focused on Mental Health. Middle school students will be trained as role models for strong mental health and teach elementary school students healthy coping skills. Needham High School SALSA leaders will partner with the middle schoolers as they learn the presentation and



SALSA at Needham High School Club Fair June 2023

leadership skills they will use in the classroom when speaking to younger students. The goal is for the new Wellness club at Pollard Middle School to be sustained going forward to encourage positive mental health among youth.

MassCALL3 Prevention Partners

In June 2021, Needham was awarded an eight-year annual grant of \$125,000 from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's Bureau of Substance Addiction Services, to manage a regional prevention initiative. The award was increased to \$250,000 annually for FY23, FY24, and FY25. The grant, called the Massachusetts Collaborative for Action, Leadership, and Learning 3 (MassCALL3), includes Dedham, Walpole, and Westwood.

MassCALL3 applies an equity lens to prevention work. Its two main goals are to build community engagement and prevention capacity; and to prevent and reduce underage use of nicotine, alcohol, and marijuana. During FY23, the MassCALL3 Prevention Partners team worked with a consultant to incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion into strategic planning and sponsored a three-session DEI workshop for all regional partners. Prioritizing equity has expanded community involvement and informed data collection in stakeholder interviews and focus groups.

In April 2023, in the context of Alcohol Awareness Month, staff facilitated a Needham Community Forum featuring esteemed researchers, scientists, and professors. The event included information on adolescent brain development, alcohol regulations, state and local data, and more.

In May and June of 2023, staff facilitated three strategic planning meetings. Data analysis and feedback from over 30 participants across the four-town region has resulted in the creation of a plan to minimize the risk factors and increase the protective factors known to support youth to navigate away from high-risk behaviors.

The Traveling Meals Program

The Traveling Meals Program was started in 1977 to provide meals to homebound Needham residents. Volunteers deliver two-meal packages to participants' homes. These visits often act as a safety check as they may be the only contact a program participant will have that day.

Thanks to loyal and dedicated volunteers and Beth Israel Deaconess-Leahy Healthcare, the program continues to run smoothly. All volunteers used proper personal protective gear to ensure that COVID guidelines were in place through the end of the public health emergency in May 2023. The majority of volunteers returned from the previous year to commit their time and energy to Traveling Meals clients.

- 10,515 two-meal packages were delivered to more than 80 residents by 28 committed volunteers and community business partners in FY2023. This represents an increase of 9.7% in meals delivered from FY 2022.

- The fundraising committee, *The Friends of Needham Board of Health and Traveling Meals*, paid over \$3,700 to provide meals for elderly and disabled Needham residents in need. Traveling Meals is thankful for the continued partnership with, and help from, Beth Israel Deaconess-Leahy Healthcare.



Traveling Meals volunteers

VETERANS' SERVICES DIVISION

Sarada Kalpee, Director of the West Suburban Veterans District
Nancy Blanchard, Deputy Director of the West Suburban Veterans District
TJ Tedeschi, Deputy Director of the West Suburban Veterans District
William Topham, Care of Graves

Purpose

The West Suburban Veterans' Services District includes the Towns of Needham, Wayland, Wellesley, Westwood, and Weston. Director Sarada Kalpee, former Deputy Director Nancy Blanchard, and new Deputy Director TJ Tedeschi are the Veteran Service Officers for the district. They continue to work with resident veterans and their families within the district to assist them in receiving entitled benefits and services that they deserve in accordance with the provisions of MGL Chapter 115. The district office also assists veterans and their spouses in negotiating the challenging bureaucratic procedures that are associated with the state and federal government by providing assistance for applying to the VA Health Care system and VA benefits applications for disability and pension claims.

During FY2023, substantial funding was expended in public assistance for Needham resident veterans and their families. These expenses were dispersed in accordance with MGL c115. Veterans returning from Afghanistan, Iraq, and other combat areas from around the globe who will require encouragement, guidance, and assistance in their transformation back to civilian life. In addition, aging veterans may require greater assistance with their healthcare benefits and other needs.

West Suburban Veterans District

The West Suburban Veterans' Services District is anticipating an exciting year working with veterans, their families, and the entire Needham community. Needham Office Hours are held on

Thursday's from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Center at the Heights, and then 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Needham Town Hall. Please check by phone for specific availability, as schedules do change, and to make an appointment.

The main office is in Wellesley, and we can schedule an appointment at your convenience at any of the office locations or a home visit if needed. Please feel free to contact us at the office (781)489-7509, or by cellphone (781)850-5504, or email skalpee@westsuburbanveterans.com or nblanchard@westsuburbanveterans.com.

YOUTH & FAMILY SERVICES

Youth Commission

Julie Stevens – Chair, Susan Patkin – Vice Chair, David Bookston, Jill Mullaney, Karen Mullen, Massiel Gallardo, William Holland, Joseph Brienze

Staff

Sara Shine, MSW, LICSW, Director; Megan Carleton, LMHC; Alyssa Cellucci; Kelsey Nichols, LCSW; Hannah Stein, LICSW; Christine Weitzel, MSW, LCSW; Ellen Whirley, LCSW; Grace Burnham, Intern

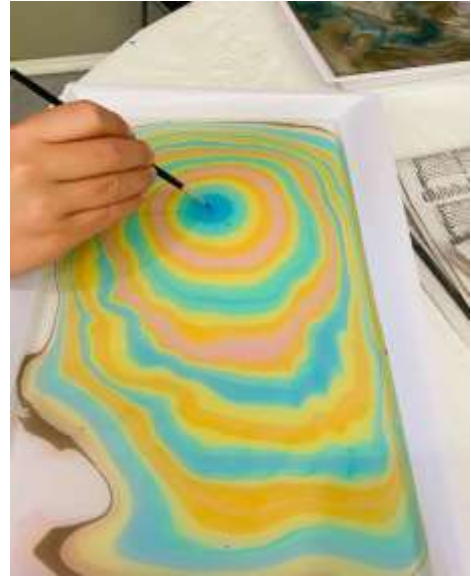
Mission

The Needham Youth & Family Services Division provides leadership and a community focus on youth and family issues and promotes community wellness. The Division accomplishes this through advocacy, education, partnering with other organizations, and providing high quality programs and counseling services.

Summary of Services

Youth & Family Services offers free clinical counseling services to the residents and students of Needham. In addition to ongoing individual and group therapy, the Division provides crisis support to individuals and to the community. Therapeutic groups include topics such as social skills, substance use prevention, self-esteem, expressive arts, and parenting support. The Division offers webinars, workshops, training, employment assistance, and enrichment activities for children and adolescents.

- Individual, Family, and Group Counseling:** Masters level clinicians are skilled at working with youth and families who are experiencing difficulties with issues such as family discord, loss, drug or alcohol use, stress, anxiety, and other mental health concerns. In FY2023, staff provided 1346 hours of counseling to Needham youth and families. Clinicians also attend treatment meetings and provide consultation, advocacy, and outreach for residents and family members. Due to a long waitlist for individual services, staff have offered increased group counseling so more young people can receive support while waiting for individual treatment. There were multiple groups for elementary, middle, and high school youth; specific groups such as one focusing on grief for youth who had lost a close family member; and a group for youth new to the area after living in a violent country or escaping war. Youth & Family Services also worked closely with a local expressive art therapist, Tova Speter, on three workshops for youth and parents. These workshops focused on expression, self-care, coping and connection.



Meditative marbling workshop for teens

- Community Crisis Response:** Over the past decade, the Needham community has grappled with critical youth issues such as suicide, loss, self-injury, depression, and anxiety. Youth & Family Services has responded by reaching out to youth, parents, families, and local organizations to provide clinical support for these challenges. Services included individual meetings, group sessions, and supportive information and materials. Youth & Family Services has continued outreach and continued to assess the mental health needs of the community. Division staff continued to work closely with the public schools to address the mental health concerns of students. Youth & Family staff also continued involvement with community partners, including identifying gaps in services and needed areas of support.

Program Highlights

- VIP and Peer Tutor Programs:** Needham Youth & Family Services offers two programs that pair high school students with children in elementary and middle school. The VIP program (Valuable Interactions among Peers) sets weekly meetings between a high school student and a younger child to build a meaningful relationship through playing games and doing enrichment activities. In FY2023, twenty-five high school students provided a total of 475 volunteer hours. The Peer Tutor Program matches a high school student with another student for tutoring and educational guidance. Over the past year, the Peer Tutor Program has matched 28 pairs of students.

- Volunteers Around Needham:** In this program, youth aged 12 to 17, provide community service to non-profit organizations in Needham. The program has expanded to run during school vacation weeks and to include middle school students. Sixty youth volunteered at Circle of Hope, Needham Parks and Forestry, Needham Fire Station, Needham Community Council, the Charles River Center, and the Needham Community Farm. Youth & Family Services has also started a volunteer relationship with Newbridge on the Charles, a retirement community. Through this partnership, students earn 30 volunteer hours needed for graduation while supporting these organizations with various tasks such as organizing supplies, helping children with developmental disabilities, farming, washing fire trucks, and field maintenance



Volunteers Around Needham at the Fire Station

- Needham Unplugged:** Needham Unplugged is an annual awareness campaign to remind families and residents to “unplug their electronics and plug into each other”. A calendar for March listed electronic-free activities and emphasized person-to-person interaction and health. Partners included the YMCA, Park and Recreation, the Needham Public Library, Needham House of Pizza, Nicholas’ House of Pizza, and Hearth Pizzeria, resulting in a dynamic calendar. Activities included make your own pizza night, family game night, stained glass crafting, and family swim.



The Patrick and Patricia Forde Good Person Memorial Award recognizes a local volunteer who helps to make Needham a better place to live. Jean Higgins, an inspirational community member, was the FY23 awardee. Jean exemplifies service as the founder and administrator of “Be-Kind Needham,” a Facebook group dedicated to providing critical assistance to local families and individuals in need.

- Family Playgroups** is a new program that started in FY23. Youth & Family Services worked closely with Family Access Community Connections on a playgroup for parents and their young babies. The playgroup helps new parents connect and, with the support of clinical staff, discuss stressors and coping, as depression can be significant when a new baby is born. The playgroup also provides a social environment for young children.

- **SHOP (Students Helping Older People)** is an intergenerational program that was started in FY23. Students were paired with older adults to make connections and help the older adults with their grocery shopping.
- **Community Mural Project** - Youth & Family Services organized another Community Mural Project, this one under the tunnel between DeFazio field and Pollard Middle School. Over 150 community members were part of this project which also connected families to Youth & Family Services.
- **Family Nights** – Youth & Family Services has started to host multiple family nights per year. Family nights provide opportunities to connect residents with staff while engaging in a night of arts and crafts, games, food, and prizes. These evenings have been very well attended and there has consistently been a waiting list.
- **Educational Workshops** – Several staff members teach Youth Mental Health First Aid, a class to help adults learn to identify, understand, and respond to mental health challenges, substance misuse, and crisis situations. These classes are free to the community. In FY23 four staff members became trainers in Teen Mental Health First Aid, which teaches teens how to respond to peers who may be experiencing a mental health challenge. In addition, two staff members have been trained in *Question, Persuade, Refer*, which is a proven training for community members to recognize the warning signs of suicide and intervene effectively.
- **More Community Collaboration:** Youth & Family Services maintains membership in several community groups including the Youth Resource Network and the Community Crisis Intervention Team. Other groups include, the Domestic Violence Action Committee, the Homelessness Prevention Committee, the Online Safety Coalition, the Community Health Resource Group, International Overdose Awareness Day Committee, Chapter 84, and the Substance Prevention Alliance of Needham, where Division staff sit on the steering committee and action committees.
- **Community Presentations:** The Division has been focused on getting information out to the public. Staff have participated in various community presentations including:
 - A presentation on executive function presented by Engaging Minds.
 - In collaboration with the Needham Exchange Club, the Division hosted John Halligan, author of “Ryan’s Story.” Mr. Halligan presented to 75 individuals (both youth and families) about bullying, social media use, and suicide prevention.
 - Dr. Chris Willard, Harvard Medical School Faculty, author, psychologist, and consultant, presented on Mindful Resiliency in the “New Normal.” This presentation focused on the most common mental health challenges that youth are facing (including depression, anxiety, addiction, self-harm, and body image concerns) and strategies to support youth.
 - Dr. Mitch Abblett, a Wellesley psychologist, presented on “the Mindful Path to Unwinding Anxiety for Kids and Teens.” He addressed the epidemic of anxiety

and its impact on youth, and he guided the group through specific mindfulness-based tools for helping with anxiety.

- In FY2023, Needham Youth & Family Services received \$11,750 in funds to help support programming. MetroWest Health Foundation provided a grant for \$9,500, and \$2,000 came from donations from High Rock Church and the Forde Family.



**Board of Health
Town of Needham
AGENDA FACT SHEET**



MEETING DATE: January 12, 2024

Agenda Item	Staff Updates
Presenter(s)	Public Health Department Staff

1.	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF TOPIC TO BE DISCUSSED
Each area within the Public Health Department will give a brief update on current topics, projects, events and more that they are working on.	
2.	VOTE REQUIRED BY BOARD OF HEALTH
Discussion only.	
3.	BACK UP INFORMATION:
a. Accreditation – Lynn Schoeff, Alison Bodenheimer b. Shared Services (Public Health Excellence, Regional Field Training Hub, Contact Tracing/Investigating) – Kerry Dunnell, Samantha Menard, Kristin Scoble, Keleigh Boudreau, Thaleia Stampoulidou-Rocha c. Traveling Meals – Rebecca Hall d. Nursing – Ginnie Chacon-Lopez, Hanna Burnett & Tiffany Benoit e. Epidemiology – Julie McCarthy f. Environmental Health – Sai Palani & Tara Gurge g. Substance Use Prevention MassCALL3 – Carol Read & Lydia Cunningham h. Emergency Management – Taleb Abdelrahim i. Substance Use Prevention – Karen Shannon, Karen Mullen, Monica DeWinter, Angi MacDonnell, Vanessa Wronski	



NEEDHAM PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION



Unit: Accreditation
Date: December 2023
Staff: Lynn Schoeff, Alison Bodenheimer

Activity	Notes
New team member	Alison Bodenheimer joined the Accreditation Team. Everyone is thrilled to have her on board.
Annual report	Submitted annual report to Town Manager.
Application for accreditation	The application was accepted. The due date for final submission of all supporting documents is December 13, 2024. We expect to begin uploading documents in early 2024.
Strategic plan	The strategic plan was finalized in December, marking completion of one accreditation requirement.
Performance management	The consultants who helped with the NPHD strategic plan (BME and Copper) are now assisting with developing a performance management system
Communication plan	Continued work with consultant on comprehensive communication plan
Accreditation Steering Committee	The committee met twice in December to help finalize the Community Health Improvement Plan.



Needham Public Health Division

DECEMBER 2023



Unit: Shared Services Grants – Public Health Excellence and Contact Tracing

Date: 12/29/2023

Staff members: Kerry Dunnell, Samantha Menard, Kristin Scoble, Thaleia Stampoulidou-Rocha, Keleigh Boudreau

Activities and Accomplishments

Activity	Notes
Shared Services-Environmental Health	Regional Health Agent Thaleia Stampoulidou-Rocha continues to assist Needham with various routine food establishment inspections, re-inspections, and pre-operational inspections. Thaleia completed her Lead Determinator field training on December 20th and is now a licensed Lead Determinator. Assistant Manager of Shared Services Sam Menard, and Regional Health Agent Thaleia Stampoulidou-Rocha met with Dover Health Director Jason Belmonte to discuss logistics of conducting food inspections for Dover by the Regional Health Agent. A list of locations for inspection will be shared and the authority to inspect will be requested by Dover at the January 8 Board of Health meeting. Upon approval, she will be eligible to begin inspections in the jurisdiction. Shared services staff continue to convene bi-weekly meetings with Needham Environmental Staff to discuss inspectional best practices and standardize practices among inspectors. Recent topics include pest control and food storage temperatures.
Shared Services-General	Intermunicipal Agreement – Charles River Health District Advisory Board met remotely on December 21, 2023. A voting member from each of the four communities was present. The primary topic was review of the intermunicipal agreement (IMA) that will establish roles and relationships for shared services arrangements under Ch. 40 4j of MA General Laws. All shared services arrangements in MA use the same agreement. Attorneys from the MA Association of Health Boards (MAHB) were present to provide technical assistance through a contract with MA Department of Public Health. Community Review and Approval of IMA – Next, Shared Services will work with MAHB to reflect Advisory Boards comments and initiate the review of that commented version with Needham Town Counsel. As lead community, Needham reviews first. Then each other community will have their own Town Counsel review. All four communities must approve execution of the IMA by a vote of the Board of Health and Select Board. The current goal is for all four communities to have reviewed and approved the agreement by January 31. This may be revised depending upon review time and meeting schedules. Inspection Software – Shared services staff continue to work with communities and the vendor to complete software and data uploading processes that will enable use by inspectors and staff of FoodCode-Pro. Licenses for this inspection and reporting tool in, have been purchased by the Charles River Health District for all four communities, and shared services staff.

	Relavent Systems will host training for all license holders upon completion of software and data uploads. Regional Public Health Nursing – Keleigh Boudreau started as the full-time Shared Services Public Health Nurse on December 4. As part of Keleigh’s on-boarding and orientation to public health nursing practice, she has completed online trainings for Massachusetts Virtual Epidemiological Network (MAVEN), as well as selected Local Public Health Institute (LPHI) courses and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Incident Command System (ICS) trainings. She has been shadowing the Needham Public Health Nurse team to gain experience with day-to-day tasks including observation of home visits to residents for vaccines and Directly Observed Therapies (DOT). Additionally, she has as participated in meetings of the Metro Regional Preparedness Coalition, Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), and Community Crisis Intervention Team (CCIT).
Field Training Hub	Training the Trainers – A schedule for MA Public Health Intensive Trainings (MA PHIT) Food was released by MA Department of Public Health (MDPH) Office of Local and Regional Health (OLRH). The MA PHIT Food classroom sessions for current Regional Training Hub staff will take place in mid-January. Central trainers will also begin conducting field training for Field Training Hub trainers. Samantha Menard has been completing co-requisites in preparation for training and certification as a field trainer by MDPH central trainers. An offer has been extended to a candidate for the Regional Trainer position. Pending acceptance, the individual will start in mid-January. Training the Workforce – The MA PHIT Food classroom training for individuals employed by public health excellence (PHE) affiliated communities will be offered in late January and at least monthly thereafter. Once an inspector has completed the 25 hours of co-requisites and the three half days of classroom training, they will be eligible for field training to be conducted by Field Training Hub (FTH) trainers. Field trainers will conduct three to five field training experiences with each eligible inspector. Upon completion of all requirements, inspectors will be certified by MDPH. Preparing the Workforce – Staff communicated regarding the release of the long-anticipated training schedule with all four Charles River Health District communities and with staff from the remaining four shared services arrangements in the FTH. We created a frequently asked questions document to use with all departments and boards and began preparing presentations for all groups about the training, the TRAIN MA learning management system and workforce training requirements. TRAIN MA – TRAIN MA is the learning management system for MA OLRH training and all MA PHIT courses as well as other existing and newly developed courses in a range of content areas will be accessed via the user account. Existing Local Public Health Institute (LPHI) courses will be transferred to TRAIN MA in March/April 2024 and LPHI will no longer have a web presence. MA DPH created user accounts on TRAIN MA for Board of Health, Health Department and Shared Services Staff across the state. All eligible individuals in the North Central & MetroWest Training Hub can now register for training using their new account.



NEEDHAM PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION



Unit: Traveling Meals Program

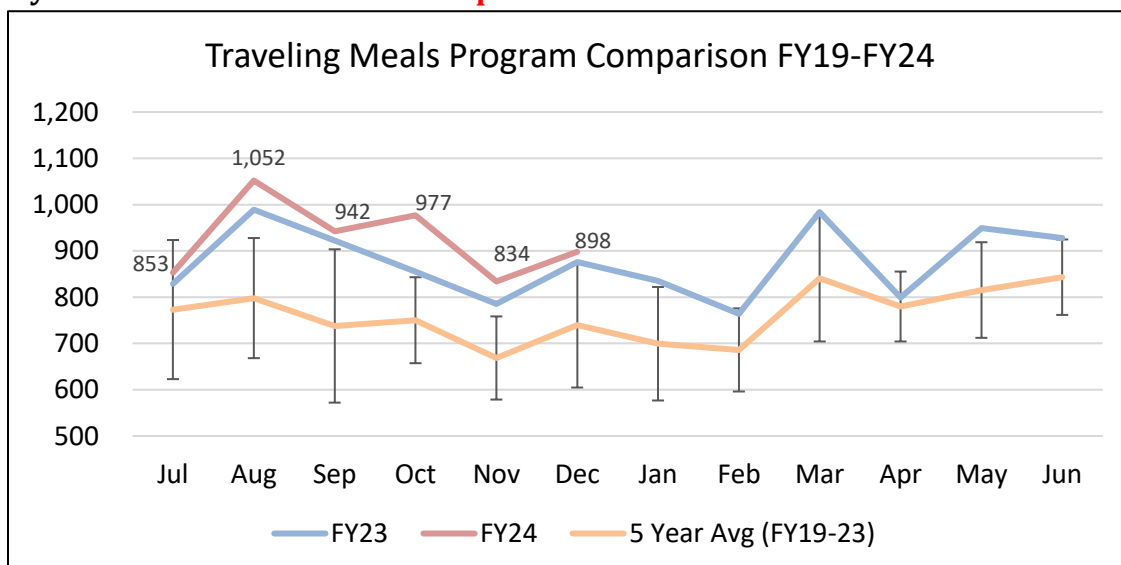
Monthly Report for December 2023

Staff member: **Rebecca Hall, Program Coordinator**

Activities

Activity	Notes
<i>Volunteers delivered meals to homebound Needham residents in need of food.</i>	<i>Meal delivery for month by 28 Volunteer Drivers and Community Partners</i>
<i>898 Meals delivered in December 2023</i> <i>55 Clients at end of December</i> <i>44 Springwell Consumers</i> <i>11 Private Pay Consumers</i> <i>9 New Clients (6 Springwell, 3 Private)</i> <i>1 Canceled Program (1 Private)</i>	<i>Two 911 calls initiated:</i> <i>-Client was missing; had already been transported to hospital</i> <i>-Client was found on the floor and was transported to hospital</i>
<i>Included flyers about Taxi Program at CATH in meal bags</i>	<i>Program offers one round-trip ride per week to medical appointments Mon.-Fri., including appointments in Boston</i>
<i>Included flyers about Christmas Day Meal Sign-Up in meal bags</i>	<i>Christmas Day Meals organized by Needham Community Council and prepared/distributed by Temple Beth Shalom and Project Ezra on 12/25/23</i>

Summary overview for the month: **Graph of Meal Deliveries for the month December 2023**





NEEDHAM PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION



Unit: Public Health Nursing

Month: December 2023

Staff members: Hanna Burnett and Ginnie Chacon-Lopez

Activities and Accomplishments

Activity	Notes
Vaccinations	All remaining purchased COVID vaccines given out! (clinics and multiple home visits at both NHA locations). State COVID vaccines for all ages and/or underinsured/uninsured still available.
Community Outreach	Health Department hosted a table at Rep. Garlick's resource fair at the CATH where multiple conversations with residents about available resources were had. Heating Assistance programs advertised on social media / News You Need(ham). 3 CPR classes held.
Education	Ginnie: various webinars. Hanna: n/a
DVAC	Hosted a table at Rep. Garlick's resource fair at CATH where we spoke to about 40 individuals about the work DVAC does. Hosted <i>DVAC Conversations</i> at North Hill where over 50 people came to listen and ask questions. Very well received overall. Brandeis University internship ended (positive feedback from student about the experience).
Other	Hanna: participated in an event at Boston College for their nursing student preceptors. Participated in the department's strategic planning meeting.

[illegible]



NEEDHAM PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION



Immunizations/Injections	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	2024	2023	2022
B12			1			1							2	3	14
Influenza			201	535	34	1							771	719	812
Tdap													0	1	3
Covid-19				5	177	25							207	461	3792
VFC													0	0	4
Other						3							3	0	0
Total	0	0	202	540	211	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	983	1184	4625
Animal-to-Human Bites	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	2024	2023	2022
Dog													0	3	4
Cat													0	0	0
Bat													0	0	1
Skunk													0	0	0
Raccoon													0	0	0
Other													0	0	0
Total Bites	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	5
Assistance Programs	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	2024	2023	2022
Food Pantry													0	4	0
Friends													0	0	0
Gift of Warmth	2	2	3	0	5	3							15	51	23
GoW Amount	350	2070	1486	0	2882	1035							7823	25921	13141
Parks & Rec													0	0	0
Self Help													0	6	1
Education	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	2024	2023	2022
CPR Education	9	9	11	19	2	13							63	197	53
Matter of Balance Graduates													0	34	10
Narcan		41	7	67	1	9							125	25	

Donations:	0
Gift Cards Distributed:	0



NEEDHAM PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION



Unit: Epidemiology

Date: December 2023

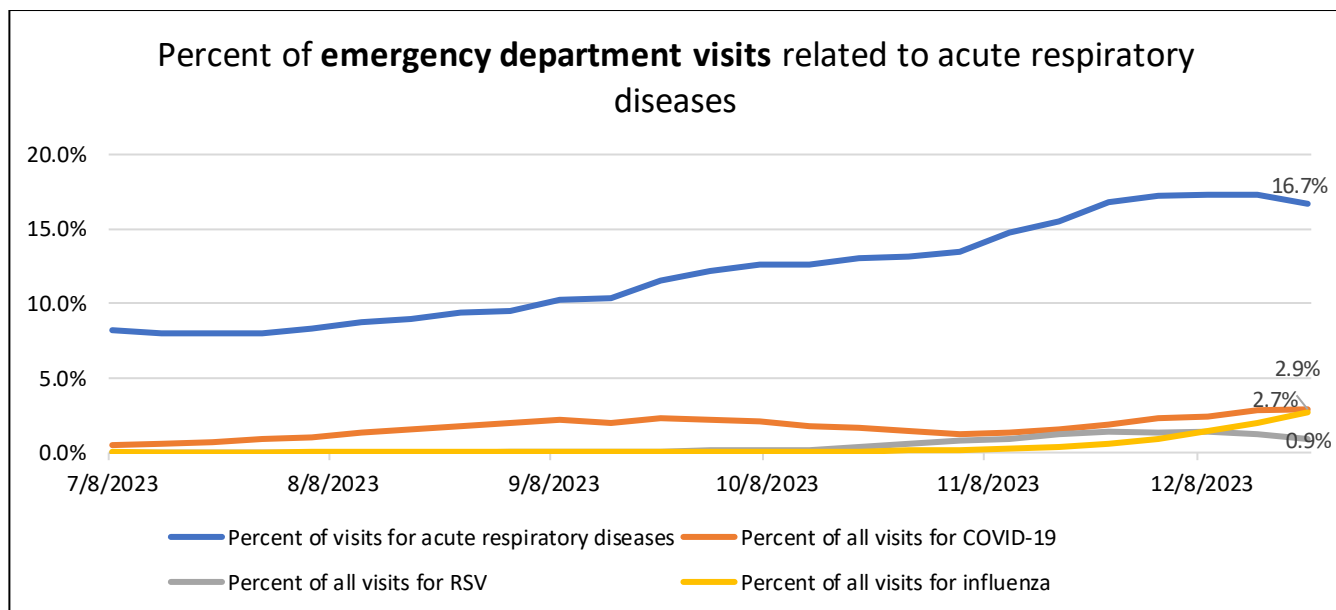
Staff member: Julie McCarthy

49 confirmed COVID-19 cases in Needham Dec 2023 (18 cases last month, 157 cases in December 2022)

Immunizations for Respiratory Diseases:

Age	Population Estimate	Proportion vaccinated- COVID	Proportion vaccinated- flu	Individuals vaccinated- RSV
Under 5 Years	1,811	20-40%	40-60%	135
5-19 years	7,385	20%-40%	40-60%	*
20-34 years	3,428	20%-40%	40-60%	*
35-49 years	5,960	20%-40%	40-60%	*
50-64 years	7,308	20%-40%	40-60%	198
65-79 years	4,286	40%-60%	60-80%	1,066
80+ years	1,910	40%-60%	60-80%	368
Total vaccinated	32,091	34.3%	56.6%	1,798

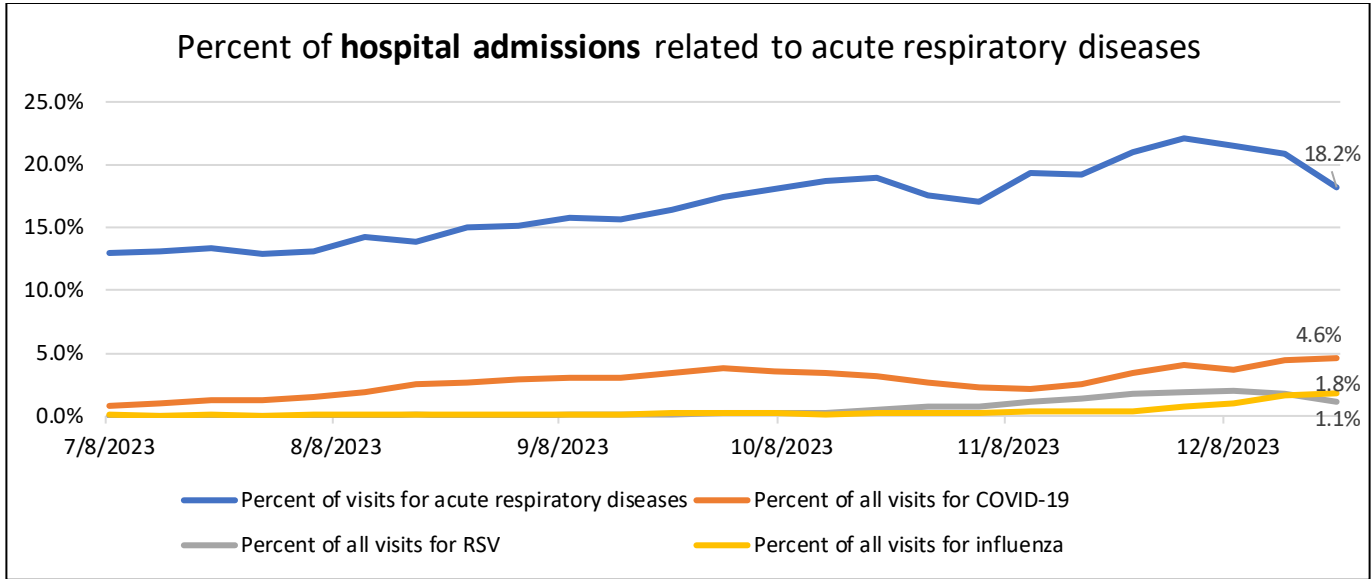
Source: [Respiratory Disease Immunization Data](#), MDPH



Source: [Respiratory Illness Reporting](#), MDPH



NEEDHAM PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION



Source: [Respiratory Illness Reporting](#), MDPH

Activity	Notes
Accreditation	Meeting #2 with CHIP Committee (with members of Public Health Division, Aging Services Division, Needham Community Council, Needham Commission on Disabilities, Needham Community Farm) to discuss objectives and strategies within Priority Areas. Mental Health, Substance Use, Physical Health were chosen as 3 priority areas at previous CHIP Committee meeting). Following that meeting, met twice with Accreditation Steering Committee to review objectives and strategies. Collected feedback from Committee, included into final draft to be sent back to Accreditation group at the beginning of January.
Biosafety Committee/Regulation	The Needham Biosafety Committee met on 12/19/23 and reviewed Biosafety Permit applications for Evolved By Nature, MLab Biosciences, and Kudo Biotechnology (all at 117 Kendrick St). All permit applications were recommended for approval by the Health Division staff, pending receipt of minor modifications to documentation. Sai has been in communication with Building Dept about a process going forward to ensure all appropriate permits are obtained by companies prior to work. Starting to outline our approach to inspections of companies with Biosafety Permits. Sai and I will be contacting Sam Lipson in Cambridge to discuss their process for inspections and tools we may be able to use (checklists, etc). No additional Biosafety permit applications have been submitted as of end of year.



Needham Public Health Division



December 2023

Assist. Health Director - Tara Gurge

Full-time Health Agent – Sainath Palani

Part-time Health Agents – Monica Pancare and Pamela Ross-Kung

Unit: Environmental Health

Date: January 12, 2024

Staff members: Tara Gurge, Sainath Palani, Monica Pancare and Pamela Ross-Kung

Activities and Accomplishments

Activity	Notes
Annual Permit Application Reviews/ Permits issued	This month, we continued with our annual online permit renewal application reviews. Permit applications were received and reviewed, and reminders sent for late applications. Conducted annual inspections for relevant permits, prior to issuance.
The Rice Barn Follow-up	At our previous Board of Health meeting held on December 8th, the owner of the Rice Barn presented his hardships and requested to reopen his food establishment to the Board of Health. This request was also stated in a letter that was received by the Public Health Division dated November 29, 2023. The owner had requested whether it would be possible to re-open his restaurant in its current state, even though there are outstanding plumbing/gas items that still need to be addressed. The Needham Building Commissioner was also present to give the board the latest updates on the status of the outstanding items that were previously noted by the Building Department during a joint inspection that was conducted at the Rice Barn on March 6, 2023. Immediately following the receipt of the letter, a follow-up joint inspection was conducted on November 29th by Sai and reps of the Building Dept. to check on the current status of the items. The Commissioner stated that the electrical items have been completed; however, the plumbing work has not started yet. No plumbing permits have been requested to date. As stated in the March 6th letter, the owner was reminded that he must hire a licensed plumber and secure a plumbing permit along with a gas permit to perform work on the remaining outstanding items. At the conclusion of the meeting, it was made clear by the Board of Health that no leniency can be offered to allow the owner to re-open his restaurant, since these MA state code requirements need to be met and signed off before we can continue with the food establishment permit plan review process. We will be following up with the owner to receive updates on the status of the remaining items.

Other Public Health Division activities this month: (See report below.)

Activities

Activity	Notes
Demo Reviews/ Approvals	7 - Demolition signoffs: - #267 Rosemary St. - #277 Harris Ave. - #58 Woodbine Cir. - # 969 South St. - #38 Henderson St. - #34 Horace St. - #126 Fairfield St.
Disposal of Sharps Permits	9 – Disposal of Sharps permits issued: - Invicro - Blue Lotus Healing Arts - Zdorovie ADH Needham - Chinese Acupuncture and Herbal - Karla Barbieri Acupuncture - MLAB Biosciences - Boston Acupuncture Center - Acupuncture Herbs and Beyond - Kudo Biotechnology
Septage/Grease Waste Hauler Permits Issued	20– Septage/Grease Waste Hauler permits Issued: - John’s Sewer & Pipe Cleaning - Podgurski Corporation - Cape Cod Biofuels - Rooterman (BNV Enterprises) - Bakers Commodities - Fairbank Septic Pumping LLC - East Coast Fryer Services - Regan Septic Pumping LLC - Action King Enterprises - A&K Waste Systems - Rodenhiser Excavating - Agri-Cycle Energy, LLC - Service Pumping & Drain - Wayne’s Drain - D.L. Atkinson, Inc. - United Rentals - J Hockman, Inc. - The Throne Depot -Patriot Services - Bay State Sewage Disposal, Inc.
Trash/Recycling Waste Hauler Permits issued	2 - Trash and Recycling Waste Hauler permits issued: - All State Waste, Inc. - Gastaldo Waste & Recycling, LLC.
Medical Waste Hauler Permit Issued	3 – Medical Waste Hauler permits Issued: - Stericycle, Inc. - Triumvirate Environmental, Inc. - B&D Associates, Inc.
Food - Plan reviews/Follow- ups/Pre-operation inspections	11 – Food Permit Plan Reviews/Follow-ups conducted for: - The Rice Barn - UPDATE: Owner presented his hardships and request to reopen his food establishment to the Board of Health. The Building Commissioner also attended the meeting and stated that during his recent joint inspection with Sai, that the electrical items have been

	completed; however, the plumbing work has not started yet. No plumbing permits have been requested to date. As was stated in the March 6th letter, the owner was reminded that he must hire a licensed plumber and secure a plumbing permit along with a gas permit to perform work on the remaining outstanding items. The board let the owner know that no leniency can be offered to re-open his restaurant, since these MA state code requirements need to be met and signed off before we can continue with the food establishment permit plan review process. A follow-up letter was sent to the owner. - <u>Dragon Chef</u> - Permit to operate was granted after passing their inspection. - <u>Just Salads (previous 3 Squares site)</u> - Renovations had begun after initial approval was granted. - <u>New Garden</u> - Waiting on final response from establishment to complete HACCP plan. - <u>#140 Kendrick St. (Guckenheimer)</u> - Approval was granted to prepare cold food items onsite. - <u>Panella's Mobile Food Trailer</u> - Waiting for response to comments from initial plan review. - <u>Common Room (Formerly Latina)</u> - Initial plan review done and initial pre-operation inspection scheduled. - <u>Sunita Williams School</u> - List of recommendations that environmental health staff and Eco Pest were shared with facilities manager and vice principal, and they have started to work on these items. - <u>Kids and Company</u> - They are trying to figure out how to run establishment without installing a dedicated hand washing sink and how to deliver the meals individually packaged from the commissary. Bathroom that was being renovated into the kitchen was returned to original state. - <u>#865 Central Ave. (North Hill Bar Area)</u> - Has been tied in with the Bistro permit and a final inspection will be performed by our office prior to opening the bar area. - <u>Blue on Highland</u> – Looking to expand dining area into abutting space to allow for larger private parties. (Plan review in process.)
Food – Temporary Food Event Permit issued	1– Temporary Food event online permit application review and permit issued to: - Christmas Dinner at Temple Beth Shalom
Food Complaints/ Follow-ups	1 – Food Complaints received: - <u>Volante Farms</u>: State contacted us to report a foodborne illness complaint. State reported person ate at this establishment. Establishment was inspected based off report. Illness likely not associated with this establishment.
Housing - Complaints/Follow-ups, etc.	5/8 - New Housing Complaints/Follow-ups conducted at: – <u>Marsh St. (0/1) - Update:</u> Owner is going through eviction proceedings before remining renovations are completed. – <u>Greendale Ave. (0/1)</u> - Fire Department contacted our office after responding to a residence where unsanitary and unsafe conditions were present. An inspection was performed and orders to correct and inspection report has been sent out. Occupants have started to make repairs and progress will be assessed in a month. <u>Update:</u> Next site visit will be early January. – <u>St. Mary's St. (0/1)</u> - A joint Teams meeting was set up to review the next steps. Meeting was held with reps from Health, Town Managers office, Building and Town Counsel. <u>UPDATE:</u> Town Managers office still working with Town Counsel on next steps. Will continue to keep Health in the loop on any updates. – <u>Redington Rd. (1/1)</u> – After recent heavy rain, Fire Department responded to an incident of a flooded basement. Public Health received a call from Fire requesting our assistance and to head out to the residence. Upon entering the residence, there were unsafe and unsanitary conditions observed and inspection was performed by staff with owner's permission. Orders to correct have been sent and next steps are being assessed. – <u>Hoover Rd. (1/1)</u> - There was a police-related incident related to the occupant of this residence. Upon entry into residence by Police and Fire Depts. they reportedly observed unsafe and unsanitary conditions. Health was then notified to help assist with this case. Preparations were made to make contact with occupant and staff have visited property to observe exterior conditions. A social worker at Aging Services Division is also assisting

	the occupant. Most recent visit showed that the occupant has started to make progress. Next steps will be assessed. – <u>Yurick Rd. (Needham Housing Authority) (1/1)</u> - Occupant had issued a complaint about mold in their bathroom. A comprehensive housing inspection was performed at request of the occupant. Deficiencies were noted and we are working with the Housing Authority to address these issues in a timely manner. – <u>Highland Ct. (1/1)</u> - Occupant had leak in roof that has been occurring since storm in August and had concerns about mold. – <u>Wingate Residences (1/1)</u> - Pest issue in units, inspection yet to be scheduled
Housing Pre-occupancy inspection	1 – Housing pre-occupancy inspection conducted at: - <u>#275 2nd Avenue (unit #3008)</u>
Nuisance complaints/Follow-ups	(2/4) – New Nuisance Complaints/Follow-ups: - <u>Chapel St./Antons (0/1)</u> - Report of additional pest activity identified across from French Press Bakery. Received report of someone leaving out bags of birdseed to feed the birds. Will be talking to individual to discourage that ongoing practice. Owner of Anton's is about to install security cameras to catch culprit and it has been recommended to install signage to help deter this individual. Follow-up - Antons caught individual on video and video footage was submitted to Needham Police. The police are continuing to help us track down this individual so we can educate them on this public health nuisance concern. Latest UPDATE: Police are still trying to identify this individual and have conducted additional surveillance in the area. Additional site visits were conducted by Health to try to catch this individual in the act and to notify Antons if birdseed was observed, so they can clean it up in a timely manner, as not to attract pests. - <u>Chapel St. Shared Dumpster (0/1)</u> - Dumpster has been maintained in an unsanitary condition on multiple documented occasions contributing to pest issues in the area. Emails have been sent to all tenants asking for a joint meeting. Landlord for the site was contacted and the next step is to coordinate a mandatory joint site visit with all shared dumpster parties, including the landlord, via certified mail, due to this ongoing lack of improvement. - <u>Sudbury Farms (1/1)</u> - Received an anonymous complaint about rodents around the side of the building. Agent met with store manager who acknowledged the issue and they have been treating the area with their contracted pest control service. No signs of pest activity were observed. - <u>Edgewater Dr. (1/1)</u> - Neighbor was complaining about overflowing dumpsters at a neighboring property. Site visit was performed.
Indoor/Outdoor pool spot check inspections (some conducted by shared services inspectors)	0 – Indoor/Outdoor pool spot check inspections conducted.
Planning Board Special Permit reviews	0 – Planning Board reviews conducted.
Septic Certificate of Compliance (COC)	1 – Septic Certificate of Compliance final signoffs issued: - <u>311 Charles River St.</u>
Septic – Construction permits issued	0 – Septic Construction Permits issued.
Septic Failure Letters	0 – Septic system failure letters sent.
Septic Installation inspections	2 – Septic installation inspections conducted at: - <u>#211 Stratford Rd. (x2)</u>

Septic Deed Restrictions	0 – Septic Deed Restrictions received.
Septic Installer Exams/Permits Issued	4 – Septic System Installer exams and permits issued to: - Scott Septic - Derenzo Properties, LLC. - J. Hockman, Inc. - DJ Morris Contracting
Septic Addition/Reno. to a Home on a Septic reviews	0 – Addition/Reno. to a Home on a Septic reviews conducted.
Septic Plan Reviews/Approval issued	2 – Septic Plan reviews conducted/approvals issued for: - #1230 South St. - New Septic as-built plan received and approved. Waiting on deed restriction to be filed and a copy to be provided for the file before issuing the Certificate of Compliance. - #311 Charles River St. - Received septic as-built plans. Approved plans and issued a Certificate of Compliance.
Septic – Soil/Perc Tests	1 – Septic Soil/Perc Tests conducted at: - #300 Charles River St. - Additions are being made to the home that would trigger the need to upgrade existing leaching pits. Perc test passed for this lot.
Septic Trench permit issued	1 – Septic Trench permit issued: - #300 Charles River St.
Septic – Abandonment Forms	0 – Septic abandonment/connection to sewer forms received.
Tobacco Inspections conducted	0– Routine Inspections conducted.
Well Permit online plan review	1 – Well permit plan review conducted for: - #31 Gage Street (Geothermal Well) – Received Final Well Completion report and uploaded it to the online permit. Tagged Water and Sewer on the online permit to notify them to conduct the final well pre-operation inspection, when the weather allows, to verify that no cross connections exist to the municipal water supply. This pre-operation and final sign off would need to be issued by Water and Sewer prior to Health issuing the well permit to allow wells to be open for use.
Zoning Board of Appeals plan reviews	2 – Zoning Board of Appeals plan reviews conducted for: - #460 Hillside Ave. - #320 Grove St.

FY 24 Priority FBI Risk Violations of Interest

Establishment	Date	Violation(s)	Corrective Action/Follow-up
Briarwood	12/5	One of the fridge units was running too warm.	Products were discarded by PIC and fridge will not be used.
Farmhouse	11/30	Larger container of meat and pasta that was prepared a few days prior was over temp. Dishwasher was not dispensing sanitizer.	Product was tossed out by establishment and were instructed to use 3-bay to perform sanitizing step.
French Press	12/16	Meat was left out and were at around room temperature. Prepared food was held for over seven days. Potentially hazardous baked goods were being displayed without temperature controls.	Meat and prepared food were discarded. This office is working with establishment to create protocol to address potentially hazardous baked goods left out without temperature controls.
Fresco	12/15	Employee observed preparing ready to eat food without wearing gloves. Employee was using an unapproved chemical to sanitize food preparation surfaces.	Manager and employees were educated about this, and a reinspection is scheduled.
Gyro and Kebab House	12/15	Staff were unable to make a food grade sanitizer to perform proper ware washing.	Staff were educated on how to make sanitizer and were instructed to post procedure on wall by 3-bay sink.
Little Spoon	12/15	Staff were making sanitizer that was too strong to sanitize food contact surfaces.	Staff were educated on how to make sanitizer, and this was corrected on-site.
Residence Inn	12/6	Items on the open buffet line were being reused. Several items marked as having to be kept frozen until service were being kept thawed out in the fridge.	Unsafe products were discarded, and staff were educated about this.

Zdorovie ADH	12/11	Food was observed being received out of temperature from commissary kitchen and prepared foods were being left out of temperature controls for extended periods of time. Storage of foods in fridge was risking cross contamination in the fridge. Sanitizing step was not being taken during ware washing process.	Food items were tossed.
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Category	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	FY'24	FY'23	FY'22	FY'21	FY '20	FY' 19	FY' 18
Biotech registrations/Plan rev./Insp.	0	0	0	1	0	3							4	3	3	0	1	1	1
Bodywork Estab. Insp.	0	0	0	0	0	5							5	5	5	6	7	14	11
Bodywork Estab. Permits	0	0	0	0	0	4							4	6	5	13	9	9	6
Bodywork Pract. Permits	0	0	0	0	0	4							4	5	8	12	23	21	22
COVID 19 Complaints	0	0	0	0	0	0							0	0	3	123	0	0	0
COVID 19 Follow Ups	0	0	0	0	0	0							0	0	3	122	0	0	0
Demo reviews	18	9	13	10	2	7							59	53	89	76	73	104	105
Domestic Animal permits	3	0	0	0	1	0							4	17	15	29	1	21	19
Domestic Animal Inspections	0	0	0	0	1	0							1	1	10	8	3	22	3
Food Service Routine insp.	20	24	7	25	17	17							110	214	194	134	149	200	225
Food Service Pre-oper. Insp.	1	3	5	2	0	2							13	22	22	16	48	12	32
Retail Food Routine insp. Or 6 month check in	2	0	1	0	0	0							3	13	11	12	33	46	60
Residential Kitchen Routine insp.	1	1	0	1	1	0							4	8	5	5	3	6	8
Mobile Routine insp.	0	0	0	0	0	0							0	10	10	10	4	17	13
Food Service Re-insp.	11	9	4	4	13	8							49	37	27	7	21	28	53
Food Establishment Annual/Seasonal Permits	1	0	2	0	35	82							120	130	138	134	155	140	171
Temp. food permits	9	2	6	0	3	1							21	33	37	9	67	134	163
Temp. food inspections	9	1	3	0	0	2							15	16	9	3	10	37	29
Farmers Market permits	2	2	1	0	0	0							5	11	16	15	14	14	14
Farmers Market insp.	19	11	14	9	0	0							53	73	149	124	158	229	127
Food Complaints	0	2	4	4	0	1							11	11	13	7	49	18	20
Follow-up food complaints	0	1	2	4	0	1							8	12	15	8	48	21	21
Food Service Plan Reviews	3	3	2	2	5	1							16	75	13	12	14	20	42
Food Service Admin. Hearings	0	0	0	0	0	0							0	0	2	1	3	0	0
Grease/ Septage Hauler Permits	0	0	0	0	4	20							24	29	22	13	20	21	24
Housing (Chap II Housing) Annual routine inspection	1	0	0	6	3	1							11	9	10	7	7	0	14
Housing Follow-up insp.	1	0	0	2	3	3							9	13	3	2	0	0	5
Housing New Complaint	2	1	3	3	0	5							14	26	41	40	41	22	22
Housing Follow-ups	5	3	2	6	4	8							28	69	65	63	56	28	24
Hotel Annual inspection	0	0	0	0	0	3							3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Hotel Follow-ups	1	0	0	0	0	0							1	2	0	1	15	0	0
Nuisance Complaints	5	2	3	4	1	2							17	36	35	45	34	55	42
Nuisance Follow-ups	11	6	6	8	3	4							38	58	41	60	55	69	42
Pool inspections	0	9	4	0	0	0							13	14	15	15	13	20	12
Pool Follow up inspections	0	3	1	0	0	0							4	5	4	5	3	12	7
Pool permits	0	0	0	0	0	5							5	14	15	17	11	19	12
Pool plan reviews	0	0	0	0	0	0							0	5	0	5	0	3	44
Pool variances	0	0	0	0	0	3							3	7	6	5	6	5	7
Septic Abandonment	1	0	1	1	0	0							3	4	9	17	21	9	5
Addition to a home on a septic plan rev/approval	0	0	0	0	1	0							1	2	15	5	5	2	2
Septic Install. Insp.	4	0	8	8	1	2							23	22	19	11	13	21	28
Septic COC for repairs	0	0	0	0	0	0							0	2	3	2	5	3	1
Septic COC for complete septic system	0	1	0	1	1	1							4	3	4	1	3	4	3
Septic Info. requests	7	5	4	8	6	3							33	62	64	86	61	62	51
Septic Soil/Perc Test.	0	0	0	1	0	1							2	6	5	8	1	1	2
Septic Const. permits	1	0	1	0	1	0							3	5	6	6	6	6	5
Septic Installer permits	0	2	0	0	0	4							6	16	11	8	6	8	9
Septic Installer Tests	0	3	0	0	0	0							3	9	4	3	2	5	3
Septic Deed Restrict.	0	1	0	2	0	0							3	0	0	4	1	1	3
Septic Plan reviews	2	2	0	3	4	2							13	29	21	14	8	9	23
Septic Trench permits	1	1	1	1	0	1							5	11	12				
Disposal of Sharps permits	0	0	0	0	0	9							9	10	7	8	7	7	9
Disposal of Sharps Inspections	0	0	0	0	1	5							6	12	8	8	7	7	7
RMD	1	0	0	0	0	0							1	2					

Planning Board Subdivision Sp Permit Plan reviews/Insp. of lots	0	0	0	0	0	0								0	19	21	20	4	1	1
Subdivision Bond Releases	0	0	0	0	0	0								0	1	0	1	0	1	0
Special Permit/Zoning	3	0	0	2	1	2								8	19	21	18	17	34	15
Tobacco permits	0	0	0	0	2	2								4	7	6	7	10	10	11
Tobacco Routine insp	0	0	0	0	6	0								6	7	12	7	8	14	18
Tobacco Follow-up insp.	0	0	0	0	0	0								0	0	0	1	8	3	3
Tobacco Compliance checks	0	0	0	6	0	0								6	6	6	6	30	30	41
Tobacco complaints	0	0	0	0	0	0								0	6	0	0	2	3	4
Tobacco Compl. follow-ups	0	0	0	0	0	0								0	6	0	0	1	3	4
Trash Hauler permits	0	0	0	0	0	2								2	20	23	16	15	17	14
Medical Waste Hauler permits	0	0	0	0	0	3								3	6	2	2	2	2	1
Well - Plan Reviews, Permission to drill letters, Insp.	2	1	0	0	0	1								4	14	10	11	2	6	2
Well Permits	0	0	0	0	0	0								0	1	4	1	1	1	0



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Unit: Substance Use Prevention MassCALL3 grant: Dedham, Needham, Walpole, Westwood

Date: December 2023

Staff members: Carol Read, M.Ed., CAGS, CPS & Lydia Cunningham, MPH, CHES®

Activity	Notes
MassCALL3 Connections Monthly Meeting- 12/5 Carol Read & Lydia Cunningham, MassCALL3 grant staff.	Agenda: PhotoVoice project recruitment- town specific activities and progress status, Strategic Plan status updates: strategies submitted, timeline/next steps, MWSAPA MIAA policy change initiative, overview of the Massachusetts Behavioral Health Helpline for resident support. Next meeting; January 2 nd 9:00am Zoom
Office of Local and Regional Health (OLRH) 12/5 Dr. Sam Wong, Director. Hepatitis A & B community response and LBOH recommended actions, outbreak prevention. Anthony Orsini, MPH, Linda Goldman and Geena Chiumento, MPH, Bureau of Infectious Diseases and Laboratory Sciences.	Agenda: Massachusetts case data including homeless and IV drug users (2018-2020 563 cases - 442 hospitalizations- 9 deaths 64% male median age 35 years) MAVEN data tracking, laboratory testing and case investigation. Vaccination protocols (Dr. Angela Fowler, MPH) Hepatitis A protocols.
Needham Homelessness Prevention Coalition- 12/6 Jessica Moss, LICSW, Assistant Director of Counseling and Volunteers, Needham Council on Aging, Tiffany Benoit, Assistant Public Health Director. Deputy Chief Chris Baker, NPD.	Review: Needham homeless case data- town service provider and stakeholder leader contributions Identify increases related to domestic violence incidents, migrant families housed locally and housing insecure resident cases. Resource review: Temporary shelter options and financial supports including Needham Community Council, Needham Crisis Fund and MGH Brigham - Newton Wellesley Hospital Housing Security Health Initiative program (six communities in the NWH service are)
Youth PhotoVoice Recruitment, Dedham High School- 12/6 Natascha Nussbaum, Youth Engagement Intern	Attended 3 lunch periods at informational table with resources including Photovoice fliers and past project examples. Fliers distributed, project discussed with interested students, questions answered about the project. Community service hour approval granted for PV project. Connection with new Dedham superintendent of schools. 22 interested students provided contact information to participate in upcoming information session.
Walpole Public Health and Bright Solutions- 12/7	Review and discussion: registration processes for grants.gov, login.gov, SAM.gov, overview of grant application portal.
Needham Board of Health- 12/8 Tim McDonald, Director of Health and Human Services, Tiffany Benoit and Tara Gurge, Assistant Public Health Directors, Kerry	Agenda: Welcome & public comment period, public hearing: Biosafety Regulation Changes, Community Health Assessment, Rice Barn restaurant request to reopen, Code of Conduct, Board discussion: Public



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Dunnell, Shared Services, Virginia Chacon-Lopez, Public Health Nurse.	Comment Policy, FY25 budget, staff updates, Public Health Strategic Plan update. Next meeting: January 12 th .
Local Emergency Planning Coalition- 12/11 Thomas Conroy, Chief, Needham Fire Dept., Tim McDonald, Director of Health & Human Services.	Agenda: Welcome – FEMA and MEMA update, Needham DPW winter weather update- Staff transition, Taleb Abdelrahim, Emergency Preparedness coordinator. Next meeting: January 8 th .
Massachusetts Municipal Association-Cannabis Compliance: An Act Relative to Equity In The Cannabis Industry Chapter 180 of the Acts of 2022 Final regulations Promulgated October 27, 2023 935 CMR 500.00 (adult Use) 935 CMR 501.00 (Medical Use) 12/11 Nicole Costanzo, Esq., KP Law.	Presentation: Reviewing the New Regulatory Requirements for Host Communities- Industry-changes to the role of MA Cannabis Control Commission (CCC) including: community impact fees, equity standards, host community agreements, prohibitions and complaints alleging noncompliance. KP Law Power point presentation-shared with MassCALL3 cluster communities.
Sgt. Jason Sullivan, Dedham Police Department- 12/11	Discussion: cannabis dispensaries in Norfolk County, TIPS training portal and trainer recertification and preference for spring TIPS trainings for MassCALL3 region alcohol licensees.
TIPs (Training for Intervention Procedures). Alcohol licensee national training program Section 12 and Section 15 - 12/11	Trainer Recertification examination- 2024 examination completed.
BSAS Logic Model and Strategic Planning Office Hours- 12/12 Andrew Robinson, Lead Program Coordinator, BSAS, Scott Formica, Senior Research Scientist, SSRE, Emily Bhargava, Education Development Center	Discussion: changes to demographic data collection requirements, evaluation process expectations and requirements: reaching the centered population, implementing dosage that has an effect, achieving initial outcomes, taking attendance at meetings/events with a tool that tracks demographics, upcoming statewide conference topics, information sharing.
Needham Public Health Division Staff Meeting- 12/12 Tim McDonald, Director of Health and Human Services, Tiffany Benoit and Tara Gurge, Assistant Public Health Directors.	Agenda: Introductions, recovery coaching, major projects: accreditation, strategic plan, opioid community engagement, staff updates, Staff & Cultural Appreciation Committee, reminders/new methods: Board of Health packet, ITC Help Desk requests, IT purchase requests, purchasing requests (supplies), memberships and trainings, timesheet submissions and general division operating procedures.
Lisa McDonough, Town Accountant- 12/12	MassCALL3 November monthly invoice submission, EIM reimbursement, CADCA Forum travel expense discussion and review.
SAMHSA Talk. They Hear You: Maximizing Social Media - 12/12 Scott	Agenda: Understanding social media metrics, content creation tools, content strategies for



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Kelley & Keisha Brewer, Communications Specialists, Synergy Enterprises	different platforms, expanding to new platforms, management tools and speaking to leadership about social media.
Office of Local and Regional Health (OLRH) monthly webinar. Dr. Sam Wong, Director 12/12 Phyllis Williams – Thompson. M.S. Director Local Public Health Workforce Development. Special Commission on Local and Regional Public Health – Foundational Public Health Services.	Agenda: Mosquito control, <i>Environmental Health & Safety Standards</i> , updates and <i>Workforce Development Standards</i> , updates, <i>Cleaning and Disinfecting Products: Resources for Municipalities</i> Sarah Yiu, MDPH Occupational Health Surveillance Program. <i>Health at Home</i> , Tracy Triplett, Assistant Attorney General Environmental Protection Division Resources. https://www.mass.gov/guides/health-at-home
Middlesex County District Attorney Marian Ryan Opioid Task Force- 12/13 Kayla Vodka, Division Manger, Division of Addiction Medicine, Boston Children’s Hospital Adolescent Substance Use and Addiction Program (ASAP)	Agenda: San Francisco Chronicle data tool, Boston Children’s Division of Addiction Medicine Adolescent Substance Use and Addiction Program (ASAP), PC Plus virtual program, MCPAP consultation line and Justice Clinic fellowship.
Youth PhotoVoice Recruitment, Needham High School- 12/13 Natascha Nussbaum, Youth Engagement Intern	Attended 3 lunch periods at informational table with resources including Photovoice fliers and past project examples. Fliers distributed, project discussed with interested students, questions answered about the project. Community service hour approval granted for PV project. Approximately 60 interested students provided contact information to participate in upcoming information session.
Ben Spooner, CSPA Technical Assistance- 12/14	Discussion: MassCALL3 Strategic Plan Section 3 submission review- BSAS feedback timeframe. December timing options to submit Sections 4& 5.
Jessica Goldberg, MPH, Prevention Solutions@EDC- 12/14	Review and discussion: MassCALL3 Strategic Plan Sections 3, CSPA- SSRE feedback and BSAS feedback timeline. Content review for Sections 4 (Logic Model) and 5 (Evaluation)
Amal Marks, BSAS Contract Manager- 12/6 and 12/14	Review and Discussion: CADCA National Forum January 29 th - February 3 rd (out of state travel budget parameters – registration and expenses Lydia Cunningham) National Harbor, MD MassCALL3 Strategic Plan timelines including Section 3 BSAS review and Section 4& 5 submission, FY24 budget line item amendment review- UFR line justifications- for final approval.
Youth PhotoVoice Recruitment, Westwood High School- 12/14 Natascha Nussbaum, Youth Engagement Intern	Attended 3 lunch periods and one study block period at informational table with resources including Photovoice fliers and past project examples. Fliers distributed, project discussed with



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	interested students, questions answered about the project. Connection with National Honor Society President and school newspaper. Approximately 20 interested students provided contact information to participate in upcoming information session.
Needham Public Health Monthly Supervision- 12/14 Tiffany Benoit, RN, MPH Assistant Director of Public Health.	Review and discussion: MassCALL3 Strategic Plan priority alignment with Needham Public Health CHIP, request to provide strategy/deliverables for CHIP priority area: Substance Use and Prevention- NPHD Accreditation processes- prevention staff contributions/timeline. MassCALL3 Connections monthly meeting schedule review, request for NPHD manager participation.
Holiday/End-of-Year Gathering- 12/14	Rosemary Recreation Complex- Public Health and Parks and Recreation staff gathering.
Melissa Ranieri, Walpole Public Health Director- 12/18	Discussion: Walpole Prevention Coalition capacity building and youth engagement, MassCALL3 recruitment for PhotoVoice project. Next steps: DFC application budget sharing and prevention staff hiring information, January coalition retreat, Amanda Decker, Bright Solutions, LLC.
BSAS Logic Model and Strategic Planning Office Hours- 12/19 Andrew Robinson, Lead Program Coordinator, BSAS, Scott Formica, Senior Research Scientist, SSRE, Emily Bhargava, Education Development Center	Discussion: addressing adolescent health survey resistance from communities: preparing to back up why you are asking any questions, preparing data, future goal: meetings for grantees with similar intervening variables, Strategic Plan selected intervening variable sharing, healthy coping skill promotion for high stress, anxiety, and depression.
MassCALL3 Prevention Partners- Grantee report. Ben Spooner, CSPS Technical Assistance Provider & Amal Marks, BSAS Contract Manager- 12/19	Review and discussion: Prevention Partners meeting monthly meetings and activities updates: PhotoVoice recruitment- Social Media Talk They Hear You and AdCare training programs. Strategic Plan submission, <i>Sections 1-5</i> , FY24 line item amendment modification, MassCALL3 logic model and Strategic Plan brief feedback/suggestions.
Walpole Prevention Coalition Leadership Team- 12/20 Melissa Ranieri, Health Director, Town of Walpole, Amanda Decker, Bright Solutions, LLC.	Agenda: Leadership Team positions, community coalition meeting schedule, Bylaws: voting abilities for members and Leadership Team. Walpole Prevention Coalition retreat: goals, structure, attendees, Youth PhotoVoice project recruitment including: Walpole High School lunch periods, MassCALL3 staff outreach to faith-based organizations, youth leader programs.
Charles River Health District Collaborative Shared Services: Needham, Medfield, Dover, Sherborn-	Monthly Advisory Board meeting: Charles River Health District infographic review Updates on staff hiring- Keleigh Boudreau, RN Public Health nurse –



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12/21 Kerry Dunnell, MPH Shared Services & Field Training Hub Manager - Samantha Menard, MPH, REHS Assistant Manager Charles River Health District Manager- Needham Public Health Division	Thaleia Stampoulidou- Rocha, MPH, REHS Environmental Health agent Intermunicipal agreement review (IMA aligned with M.G.L. c 40, Chapter 4A) Structure- language – next steps with Michael Hugo, JD, MAHB- KP Law – TRAIN portal overview- registration processes. Next meeting: January 18 th 9:00am-11:00am
Dedham Youth PhotoVoice Information Session- 12/21 Natascha Nussbaum, Youth Engagement Intern	Follow-up information session preceded by virtual and in-person outreach to Dedham youth through attending 3 lunch periods at Dedham High School, outreach to youth programs, outreach to Town staff. Presentation: overview of Photovoice, including requirements, project background, community service, questions. Six students in attendance: asked to complete follow-up survey for scheduling future meetings.

Holiday: (1.5) December 22nd, half day & December 25th Christmas Day

*All processes related to on-boarding new part-time Youth Engagement Intern

* NPHD November Report- Monthly activities (NPHD- MassCALL3)

*NPHD Accreditation and Comprehensive Communication Plan- Unified Messaging request completion, New Staff Orientation: acronym list review, social media connection reporting.

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NEEDHAM PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION



Unit: Emergency Management

Date: December 2023

Staff member: Taleb Abdelrahim

Activities and Accomplishments

Activity	Notes
Medical Reserve Corps	• We sent out a comprehensive survey for 2023 MRC training program to assess volunteer training experience, satisfaction levels, challenges faced, and suggestions for improvement. • We reviewed the NC-8 final draft of the 2024 NC-8 Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Operational Readiness Awards (ORA) application. • We had a meeting with NC-8 MRC coordinator regarding follow up approach with volunteers, who have pending applications.
Grant	Application for the annual Emergency Management Performance Grant has been completed and delivered to Emergency Management Grants Unit at MEMA. Needham is eligible for \$8,500.
December 18 th Storm After-Action Report	Conducted a hot wash by sending out a survey to collect feedback regarding the December 18 th , 2023, Storm Event and an After-Action Report was produced capturing lessons learned.
Town website - Severe Weather Preparedness	Worked with the town's Public Information Officer, Ms. Amy Haelsen, to get access to edit the website to update Severe Weather Preparedness page on Town website.
Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)	Coordinated with Mr. Andy Nash, Meteorologist-in-Charge, National Weather Services, to deliver a presentation tailored to our town's leadership. The goals to enhance our understanding and preparedness for handling winter weather events and related emergencies.
Training	Ongoing process taking online of some of FEMA trainings.



NEEDHAM **PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION**



Unit: Substance Use Prevention

Date: December 2023

Staff: Karen Shannon, Karen Mullen, Monica De Winter, Angi MacDonnell, Vanessa Wronski

Activities and Accomplishments

Activity	Notes
SPAN Projects/Events	• SPAN meetings: Winter Quarterly Meeting, 12/5/23 -22 in attendance (16 community members, 6 NPHD staff). Action Team breakout sessions discussed and prioritized strategies for new coalition action plan: SPAN Policy Action Team – Two community members joined this new team and are enthusiastic to learn about policy change SPAN Education Team - Membership consists of five current coalition members with the addition of five prospective members. • SPAN Communications: the Mental Health Action Team continued marketing of the Rethinking Success newsletter to 19 school and community organizations. • SPAN social media – new posts on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/SPANNeedham/
Needham Public Health Peer Recovery Coach	Angi MacDonnell, NPHD Substance Use Prevention Coordinator, prepared for the launch of her 500-hour practicum, the final requirement for her certification as a Certified Addictions Recovery Coach in MA. Planning included finalizing procedures for recovery coach services and the creation of communication materials for participants. Angi also created an overview of the recovery services which she presented at the NPHD December staff meeting. Additional presentations are planned in January to educate community partners. The practicum will run from January – May 2024.
STOP Act grant	SAMHSA grant: STOPing Underage Access and Use of Alcohol: Codifying Youth, Parent and Retailer Education and Compliance in Needham, MA: Alcohol compliance – <u>Alcohol Compliance Check</u>- conducted by the Needham Police Department on December 6. Of 29 licensees checked, 4 businesses had a sales- to- minor violation: one hotel and three off-premise licensees. See summary chart below for more information. <u>TIPS training</u> – the next in-person training for Needham alcohol licensees will be conducted in early February.



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SALSA	• 35 SALSA members contributed 62 hours of service in Needham in December. • 3 SALSA Leaders met with Rep Denise Garlick to discuss their ideas for a parent focused event to offer healthy parent/teen communication strategies.
SBIRT Screening	During the first week of December, four NPHD staff assisted the Needham Public Schools with SBIRT screening interviews of the 9 th grade student body. Tiffany Zike, Monica De Winter, Angi Mac Donnell and Karen Shannon responded to a request from the Director of Health Services for Needham Public Schools for additional adults to conduct the interviews.
Parent Al-anon group	SPAN community resource for parents navigating their child's substance use addiction. Meetings held every Monday evening. Attendance remains steady averaging 6- 14 people each week. Hometown Weekly continues free publishing of meeting announcements in Needham edition.

Summary for Month of December 2023: Focus this month included the SPAN Winter Quarterly Meeting, the alcohol compliance check in partnership with Needham Police, SBIRT training, Recovery Coach Services planning and ongoing content development and posting for SPAN social media accounts.



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Needham Alcohol Compliance Summary

Business	11/2022 TIPS	12/2022 CC	4/2023 CC	5/2023 TIPS	9/2023 CC	10/2023 TIPS	12/2023 CC
Bin Ends	0	Pass	Pass	1	Fail	1	Pass
Blue on Highland	0	Pass	Pass	1	Pass	0	Pass
Cappella	0	Fail	Pass	0	Pass	7	Pass
The Common Room	0	N/a	N/a	0	N/a	0	N/a
Cook Needham	0	Fail	Fail	3	Pass	0	Pass
French Press Bakery	0	Fail	Pass	0	Pass	0	Pass
Fuji Steakhouse	0	Pass	Pass	0	Pass	0	Pass
Gari	0	Pass	Pass	0	Pass	1	Pass
Gordons Fine Wines	0	N/a	N/a	0	N/a	0	N/a
Hearth Pizzeria	0	Pass	Pass	1	Pass	0	Pass
Hungry Coyote	3	N/a	Pass	0	N/a	0	N/a
Latina Kitchen and Bar	0	Pass	Pass	0	Pass	1	Pass
Little Spoon	1	Fail	Pass	0	Pass	0	Pass
Mandarin Cuisine	0	Pass	Pass	0	Pass	0	Pass
Masala Art	0	Pass	Pass	0	Pass	0	Pass
Needham Fine Wines	0	Fail	Pass	0	Pass	0	Fail
Needham Golf Club	0	N/a	N/a	0	Pass	0	N/a
Needham Wine & Spirits	1	Pass	Pass	0	Pass	0	Fail
Ray's New Garden	1	Pass	Pass	0	Pass	0	Pass
Pancho's Taqueria	0	Fail	Fail	0	Pass	0	Closed
Residence Inn	0	Pass	N/a	0	N/a	0	N/a
Reveler Beverage	0	Fail	Pass	0	Pass	0	Pass
Rice Barn	0	Pass	N/a	0	N/a	0	N/a
Sheraton Needham	0	Fail	N/a	6	Pass	4	Pass
Spiga	0	Pass	Pass	3	Pass	0	Pass
The Farmhouse	5	Pass	N/a	0	Pass	0	Pass
Homewood Suites	0	N/a	N/a	2	N/a	0	Fail
The James	0	Pass	Pass	0	Pass	0	Pass
The Needham General Store	0	Pass	Pass	0	Pass	0	Fail
V.F.W.	2	Pass	Pass	1	Pass	1	Pass
Village Club	0	N/a	N/a	0	N/a	0	N/a
Vinodivino	0	Fail	Pass	0	Pass	0	Pass
Volante Farms	0	Pass	Pass	6	Pass	0	Pass

N/a = business was not checked because it was not open for one of the following reasons:

Not operating, closed for private events, check conducted outside of business hours, or no longer selling alcohol.



**Board of Health
Town of Needham
AGENDA FACT SHEET**



MEETING DATE: January 12, 2024

Agenda Item	Other Items/Updates
Presenter(s)	Board Discussion

1.	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF TOPIC TO BE DISCUSSED
The Board of Health and Public Health staff will discuss any other items that come before the board. An updated staff listing is available with current new hires.	
2.	VOTE REQUIRED BY BOARD OF HEALTH
None, discussion only.	
3.	BACK UP INFORMATION:
a. Needham Public Health Division Staff Listing	



NEEDHAM PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION



Staff Introductions

December 27, 2023

Taleb Abdelrahim:

Taleb joined Needham Public Safety in December 2019 as Emergency Management Support intern. In March 2020, he moved to Public Health in response to COVID-19-19. He has been supporting the Medical Reserve Corps & Emergency Preparedness programs.

Previously, Taleb worked five years as a Second Mate in an oil tanker carrying liquid petroleum gas, as well as other ships, for various shipping companies. During his seagoing he assumed safety officer responsibilities on board ships.

Taleb is a graduate of the Arab Maritime Academy in Alexandria, Egypt, earning a Bachelor of Science in Maritime Transport - Nautical Technology and Second Mates of Vessel Operations. He has also earned a Master of Science in Emergency Management from the Massachusetts Maritime Academy.

Tiffany Benoit

Tiffany joined Needham Public Health Division in July 2017 as a full time Public Health Nurse. In October of 2020, Tiffany was promoted to Assistant Director of Public Health and oversees the Nursing and Behavioral Health teams. She came to the Needham Health Division while pursuing a Master of Public Health degree at Boston University.

Tiffany has a passion for health promotion through education and communication. Before pursuing her master's degree Tiffany had been working as a dual diagnosis nurse at a psychiatric facility for almost seven years.

Since working with the Needham Health Division Tiffany has enjoyed taking on different roles and responsibilities, including emergency preparedness, Domestic Violence Action Committee, the Community Crisis Intervention Team, and others.

Keleigh Boudreau

Keleigh joined the department on December 4, 2023, as a Regional Public Health Nurse. Keleigh graduated from Northeastern University in 2020 with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and began her nursing career in a busy pediatric primary care office. Most recently, Keleigh worked as a staff nurse at Boston Children's Hospital in the Division of Sports Medicine.

Keleigh grew up in Medfield and currently lives in Framingham with one of her childhood best friends. She loves spending time outdoors, baking, going on long walks with her dogs, and spending time with family and friends. An interesting fact about Keleigh is that she has a massive sweet tooth!

Hanna Burnett

Hanna Burnett joined Needham Public Health in September 2020 as a part-time public health nurse. She received her bachelor's degree in Nursing Science in Finland in 1998. She has lived in Massachusetts since 2005 and has worked in the ICU at St. Elizabeth's hospital for most of her American nursing career. As a foster parent Hanna saw that education, proper resources, and compassionate support offered at the right time could drastically improve the overall health of whole families. Feeling a growing desire to promote health in a community setting, she entered a Master of Public Health program through Liberty University in 2019 and graduated this past summer. Talk about good timing! Hanna is very excited to be part of an enthusiastic group of professionals whose goal is to improve the health of Needham residents.

Hanna and her husband have three children of their own. She also enjoys playing tennis and reading books. One of her favorite books has been *Hold on to Your Kids* by Gordon Neufeld & Gabor Mate.

Virginia Chacon-Lopez

Ginnie joined the Needham Public Health Division in January 2023 as a full-time public health nurse and is in the final semester of her MSN Public and Population Health Program at Worcester State University.

Prior to joining Needham, Ginnie worked with pediatric and adolescent populations in primary care and inpatient psychiatry for ten years. She also did contact tracing for Providence College during the 2020-2021 school year and worked with the Visiting Nurse Association to conduct flu vaccine clinics in Boston and COVID testing for healthcare workers. Ginnie also completed a practicum with the Medfield Board of Health.

Ginnie hopes to be able to make a difference in the Needham community, particularly when it comes to the mental health and physical wellbeing in the youth and teen populations, through education, prevention, and health promotion.

Lydia Cunningham

Lydia joined the Needham Public Health Division as a Substance Use Prevention Coordinator in January 2023. She received her Bachelor of Science in Public Health in 2021 from the University of Massachusetts in Lowell, and her Master of Public Health from the Boston University School of Public Health in December 2022. Lydia is also a Certified Health Education Specialist.

Prior to joining NPHD, Lydia worked several part-time jobs, most recently as a health educator with Peer Health Exchange, teaching students from 7-12th grade in Lynn, West Roxbury, and Charlestown, MA. She is passionate about health education, health equity, and empowering young people, and hopes to continue working towards these goals in Needham.

In her free time, Lydia enjoys painting, reading, yoga, and going on long walks and hikes with her husky Yobe and lab Lucy!

Monica DeWinter

Monica has been a Program Coordinator for the Drug Free Communities (DFC) Grant since November 2015. She works within the Public Health Division's Prevention Team to fulfill annual DFC reporting requirements and to support the mission of the Prevention Team. Monica also oversees the work of the Substance Prevention Alliance of Needham (SPAN), a coalition supporting substance use prevention among Needham youth.

Monica received her Master of Public Health from Boston University during which time she was a Program Coordinator at Slone Epidemiology Center for the Thalidomide Survey for seven years.

Her most interesting job was what led her to public health - as an outreach worker for Salud Medical Center in Woodburn, OR, where she worked with Mexican migrant workers and children and where she became proficient in Spanish.

Monica and her husband Michael both grew up in Needham and they have two daughters, Kathleen and Amy.

Kerry Dunnell

Kerry Dunnell has worked in public health at the local, regional, and state levels for more than 20 years, including 5 years part-time here in Needham. Most recently Kerry was the manager of the Metro Regional Preparedness Coalition, a health and medical coordinating coalition serving 60 public health departments and 12 acute care hospitals in the Greater Boston area, linked with the community health centers, long-term care facilities, and EMS providers in those communities. Prior to that, Kerry was the manager of the Local Public Health Institute, worked with stakeholders, subject matter experts, and trainers to develop and maintain a catalog of on-line and in-person trainings specifically for the Massachusetts local public health workforce.

Prior to falling in love with governmental public health in 2002, Kerry worked as a compliance administrator for a Boston mutual fund company, and a regional manager for a small chain of drycleaning stores on the South Shore. Kerry holds an MSW (Community Organizing, Policy Planning and Administration) from Boston College, and a BA in English from Bates College, and is a member of the Reading Board of Health and MA Environmental Health Association Executive Board.

Kerry loves yoga, being barefoot, singing most anywhere, the ocean, and baseball. She took up running after she broke her ankle in 2014 and hopes to get back to racing and fundraising with Team Challenge this decade.

Tara Gurge

Tara has worked in the Environmental Health Unit since May 2000, first as the Environmental Health Agent and since 2017, as Assistant Public Health Director for Environmental and Community Health.

Tara holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Science, a Master of Science Degree in Public Health, and is a Registered Sanitarian. She is also a technical advisor and peer reviewer for the National Environmental Health Association. Tara's work in the field has included internships at the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission and the Mass Department of Environmental Protection as well as a two-year fellowship at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (CDC NIOSH).

Tara is married and has three wonderful children – Daniel, Benjamin, and Caroline, has two cats (Sweet Pea and Brewster), and has recently adopted a rescue puppy named Bailey.

Rebecca Hall

Rebecca began at NPHD as the Traveling Meals Program Coordinator on March 7, 2022. Her undergraduate degree is from Western Michigan University, and she has an MBA from Babson College. Rebecca has worked in marketing and client service experience in large and small organizations. Her clients have ranged from individual customers to multimillion-dollar corporations.

In recent years, Rebecca operated a home-based baking business specializing in decorated sugar cookies for special occasions.

Angela MacDonnell

Angi has been a project coordinator for the Needham Public Health Department since November 2020 when she joined the Prevention Team to oversee the Vaping Cessation Program at Needham High School. Today Angi supports the Substance Prevention Alliance of Needham (SPAN), the coalition of community stakeholders who support youth and their families in making healthy choices.

Angi spent 20 years working in information technology. It was her role as Technical Support Coordinator at the Holyoke Health Center in Holyoke, MA that introduced her to public health.

Angi is a person living in long-term recovery, and she brings over twenty-five years of lived experience to her prevention work.

In her 20's, Angi had a job cleaning houses in western Massachusetts, among them Emily Dickinson's house. Years later she was a student at Mount Holyoke College and took a poetry class in that home.

Julie McCarthy

Julie joined Needham Public Health as the epidemiologist in November 2021. She holds a B.S. in Biology and M.S. in Infectious Disease and Global Health. After receiving her master's degree, Julie worked in a variety of roles in a Lyme disease lab at Tufts Medical School, beginning with work on a clinical trial that entailed placing uninfected larval ticks on willing participants. Julie then worked with Lyme disease vaccine candidates, and later became the lab manager and data analyst, working on RNA sequencing data generated from a variety of projects within the lab. Ultimately, an interest in using data science in more real-world applications to directly benefit the health of communities lead her to Needham.

Julie lives in Franklin, and enjoys reading, running, yoga, and going on long walks and hikes with her husband!

Timothy Muir McDonald

Tim serves as the Director of Health & Human Services in the Town of Needham, a position he has held since 2017. Prior to this role, Tim served as the Town's Public Health Director for a little over two years. Before that he served in a variety of emergency planning and management roles at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, the Conference of Boston Teaching Hospitals (COBTH), and Boston's Office of Homeland Security (now Office of Emergency Management).

Timothy holds a bachelor's degree in Government from Harvard College and a master's degree in Public Administration from the Harvard Kennedy School. He completed the HKS-HSPH National Preparedness Leadership Initiative executive training course in 2012. Tim is passionate about how a responsive government can make a difference and improve the lives of its people.

Tim enjoys taking walks in the Arnold Arboretum with his wife, which is right down the street from his house on Peters Hill in Roslindale.

Samantha Menard

Sam joined the Needham Shared Services Team as Lead Trainer & Assistant Manager in August of 2023. She earned her MPH from Boston University in 2018 with a Certificate in Epidemiology & Biostatistics and her undergraduate degree from the University of Rhode Island where she majored in Animal Science. Sam interned at the Brookline Health Department during grad school and developed a love for local public health.

After graduating Sam spent a year as an Environmental Health Specialist for Newton Health & Human Services followed by four years as a Senior Public Health Inspector for Brookline Health & Human Services. She has served on the Massachusetts Environmental Health Association Executive Board since fall of 2022. Sam holds certifications in lead determination, food protection management, pool operation, and MA Public Health Institute Training in housing.

Sam loves to play volleyball, travel, and listen to podcasts (recommendations are always welcome). She also loves to spend weekends at the beach in Rhode Island, her home state. _____

Karen Mullen

Karen Mullen worked in sales, marketing, and communication for twenty years prior to her work with the Needham Public Health Division. Karen grew up in New Jersey and is a graduate of Boston College, where she earned her BS in Business and Marketing, and Bentley University, where she earned her MBA.

Karen is a Needham resident whose two children attended Needham Public Schools. She has worked on the Substance Use Prevention team since 2011. Karen works primarily in the schools as the advisor to the Needham High School club *Students Advocating Life without Substance Abuse* (SALSA). She is proud to support the hundreds of Needham teens who have chosen to make their health a priority by educating and advocating for their peers about prevention, health, and wellness.

Karen and her husband Rich rescued Rosie, a puppy from the South who has brought much joy and excitement to their previously empty nest!

Natascha Nussbaum

Natascha joined the Needham Public Health Division as the Youth Engagement Intern under the MASSCall3 grant in October 2023. She will be working with local high school students on a photovoice project about substance use and about positive social experiences in their community. Natascha is currently working towards her Bachelor of Science degree in Health Sciences at Boston University.

Prior to joining NPHD, Natascha interned at Walworth County in her home state of Wisconsin. There she worked on creating recommendations on increasing active transportation in the Country for the Health and Human Services team. She also has experience volunteering in the City of Franklin, Wisconsin, with their substance prevention coalition, “Volition”.

In her spare time, Natascha enjoys reading and baking. She also loves spending time with her friends, family, and of course her family cat (Nerms) and dog (Chatham).

Sainath Palani

Sai has a Master of Public Health in Epidemiology & Biostatistics and Chronic & Non-Communicable Diseases from Boston University. He grew up in the suburbs of New Jersey and received his Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science from Rutgers University in May 2017. He worked as an environmental scientist doing a combination of field work and report writing for industrial and hazardous waste sites across the Northeast. He then moved in with his family to Needham and he pursued his MPH degree. During this time, Sai realized that he enjoyed working outside and serving the public and decided to commit to working in local public health. For the past year and a half, he has worked as the Environmental Health Agent at the Quabbin Health District in western Massachusetts.

Sai loves to play tennis, meditate, watch films and stand-up, garden, and hike in the woods or by freshwater bodies.

Monica Pancare

Monica is a Certified Professional – Food Safety (CP-FS) and has been a part-time environmental health agent conducting risk-based food inspections since December 2018. Monica's unique background in food service management and culinary operations allows her to provide subject matter expertise, technical assistance, and regulatory compliance in food service establishments. She is a chef graduate of The Culinary Institute of America and received her Bachelor of Science in Restaurant Management from Florida International University.

In 2009, Monica went back to the “classroom” in Napa Valley and completed her first level of wine accreditation and achieved the status of certified wine professional. In her spare time, Monica enjoys cooking, restoring vintage Weber grills, mini car trips, and spending time with family.

Kristan Patenaude

Kristan lives in Amherst, New Hampshire, and has worked for the past six years there as the Town's main meeting secretary for nine boards and commissions. She has previously completed her master's degree in Environmental Science and Journalism at Green Mountain College in Vermont. She lives with her two children and two cats.

Recently, Kristan has been considering branching out and creating an LLC, as her minute taking business has expanded. She currently takes the minutes for nine different towns: Amherst, NH; Lebanon, NH; Charlestown, NH; New Boston, NH; Falmouth, MA; Boxborough, MA; Lexington, MA; Guilford, CT; and, of course, Needham, MA. Kristan loves learning about new municipalities and their inner workings.

Pamela Ross-Kung

Prior to joining Needham as an Environmental Health Inspector, Pamela worked for Safe Food Management, a consulting firm that she founded over 30 years ago. The firm offers inspectional services to municipalities; audits for retail and wholesale operations; plan reviews for new and existing facilities; epidemiological assistance in suspected or confirmed foodborne illness outbreaks; food safety training; program development and implementation; and assistance to local boards of health to meet the requirements of the FDA Voluntary Retail Program Standards.

Pamela has also worked in the foodservice industry in a variety of roles, which has helped her understand food operations and the daily challenges they face.

Pamela is a Registered Sanitarian, MA Department of Environmental Protection Approved Title V System Inspector, and Soil Evaluator with undergraduate degrees in food science and business management, and a master's degree in training and development from Lesley University. Pamela

is a registered "ServSafe" food safety training instructor, and certified trainer for Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point.

Pamela loves to spend time with her family and take walks with her mini-poodle Lincoln. She is an avid reader and gardener, and in the warmer months she works with her husband tending to their home vegetable garden and fruit trees.

Carol Read

Carol Read, Certified Prevention Specialist, has been working on substance use prevention with the Needham Public Health Division since 2008 when she began doing community outreach. She was the program director and grant manager for Drug Free Communities from 2009-2015 and is now managing a state-funded grant program with the towns of Dedham, Walpole, and Westwood. The grant is Massachusetts Collaborative for Action, Leadership, and Learning, better known as "MassCALL3". The two primary program goals are to prevent underage substance use and to build prevention capacity across the region.

Carol has a Master of Education in Counseling – Substance Abuse. She worked as a clinician in the evening treatment program for NORCAP, a Southwood Hospital program, and is a licensed Massachusetts school counselor for grades 5-12. Carol is a member of the Board of Health in Medfield, where she has lived for 31 years.

Lynn Schoeff

Lynn came to Needham Public Health Division in 2016 after it was clear that "retirement" wasn't working for her. Lynn's forty-year career began as a therapist working with adolescents, families, and substance abusers. She then ran a school-based health center in an urban high school, managed community health programs for a city health department, and directed emergency preparedness programs for a complex system of hospitals and public health departments.

Lynn currently works on public health accreditation, grant-writing, program development, policies and procedures, and other odd jobs around the division.

Lynn is an avid curler. She plays a few times a week, tends bar at the curling club, and is an instructor of this quirky sport that originated in Scotland about 500 years ago.

Kristin Scoble

Kristin has worked for the Town of Needham since 2019 and has joined the Public Health Division in March of 2023 as the Administrative Specialist for the Regional Training Hub and Public Health Excellence Grant. Prior to joining the Town of Needham, Kristin worked over 15 years as the Program Manager for the Westwood Recreation Department, where she oversaw programs, large scale events, summer camp and marketing.

When Kristin was first hired in Needham, she worked split shifts for the Youth & Family Services Department and the Health Division. She quickly became part of the Emergency

Operation Center during COVID to assist with the after-action reports, messaging to the public and vaccine clinics. In 2021 Kristin joined the Town Manager's Office as the Administrative Specialist where she oversaw licensing, permits, Select Board packets and handled all fiscal responsibilities. She has always enjoyed working with multiple Town Departments and agencies and is willing to jump in with any task.

Karen Shannon

Karen, a Certified Prevention Specialist, has been working on youth substance use prevention since 2015 when she started as a part-time project coordinator for the Drug-Free Communities grant project. In 2019, Karen became the Program Director for the Substance Prevention Alliance of Needham (SPAN), a coalition of community stakeholders who bring a civic-minded, collaborative, and data-driven approach to preventing youth substance use. SPAN offers Needham residents education, support, and resources for preventing or navigating substance use and misuse among Needham youth.

Among Karen's responsibilities is to lead the Substance Use Prevention Team and to oversee grant-funded programs, including the federal Sober Truth on Preventing Underage Drinking Act grant project (STOP Act).

Thaleia Stampoulidou-Rocha

Thaleia holds a BS and MPH from Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, specializing in Environmental Health Services and Health Policy. Thaleia is certified as a food protection manager, certified pool operator, licensed lead determinator, and is currently pursuing studies to become a soil evaluator and registered sanitarian in 2024. With seven years in the healthcare field, Thaleia is also dedicated to direct patient care as a certified nurse assistant. Her commitment extends to public health initiatives, demonstrated through roles as a previous epidemiologist-in-training and health officer in Randolph, assistant health agent in Plainville, and her current position in Needham as Regional Environmental Health Agent providing services to Dover, Medfield, and Sherborn.

Beyond her public health professional roles, Thaleia enjoys being a registered manicurist, and cherishing quality moments with her family and friends.

Dawn Stiller

Dawn Stiller, the Administrative Analyst, manages the financial aspect of the Needham Public Health Division. Dawn has been with the Public Health Division since 2014 and with the Town of Needham since 2007. She attended Westfield State College and received a Bachelor of Science degree. Dawn has extensive customer service experience from working at CVS for 16 years and other customer service positions. Dawn gained her financial experience working at Harvard School of Public Health, CVS, and the Needham Tax Collector's office. She came to the Health Division after working in the Tax Collector's office.

Dawn likes her current position's combination of financial and administrative responsibilities.

She has two nieces who she enjoys spending time with, and she has the best two kitties in the world.

Vanessa Wronski

Vanessa joined NPHD in June 2023 as a part-time project coordinator on the STOP grant. She received her Bachelor of Science in Pre-medical Studies in 2013 with hopes of attending medical school, but soon realized that she wanted to help others on a much larger scale. Vanessa received her master's in Healthcare Administration in 2018 from the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Services, where she also earned her bachelor's degree.

Prior to joining Needham, Vanessa worked for a local organization to provide training and technical assistance in substance use disorders, homelessness, mental health recovery, racial equity, and other public policy concerns.

Vanessa is originally from Brazil and has been in the United States since 2002, with English being her second language. In her free time, she enjoys reading, creating art, baking, and spending time with her family. Vanessa and her husband have been residents of Needham since 2018 and enjoy walking around the town center with their son, Luca, and Cavalier king Charles, Ollie.
