



**CITY OF WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS**  
Department of Health & Human Services  
Division of Public Health



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Matilde Castiel, MD  
Health & Human Services  
Commissioner

Karyn E. Clark  
Public Health  
Director

**Central MA Regional Public Health Alliance (CMRPHA) – Monthly Update**  
**January 2020**

**ADMINISTRATION (ADM)**

- **Duty Officer Number** – Reminder that the Duty Officer Pager System is in place for after hours and weekend emergencies. Please make sure that appropriate parties have the number, which is **508-408-5173**. This should be the process instead of calling specific environmental health staff cell phones after hours. **PLEASE ENSURE YOUR DISPATCH FOR ALL SHIFTS HAS THIS NUMBER AND ARE FAMILIAR WITH THE ON PAGE PROCESS AND CMRPHA.**
- **Quarterly Alliance Meeting** – The next meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday January 15, 2020 from 12:30 – 2:00 PM**. Lunch will be included – please RSVP to [clarkke@worcesterma.gov](mailto:clarkke@worcesterma.gov) so we have a headcount for food. Shrewsbury will be hosting the meeting at the Shrewsbury Town Hall, 100 Maple Avenue in the Selectman's Room. Thank you Kevin and Kristen.
- **Regional Youth Health Survey** - The Public School Districts of Worcester, Shrewsbury, Grafton, and Leicester (waiting on confirmation from Millbury Public Schools) have once again partnered with the Worcester Division of Public Health and the UMass Worcester Prevention Research Center to administer the 2019 Regional Youth Health Survey (RYHS). The biennial RYHS is sponsored by the Worcester Division of Public Health and is modeled after the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBS). The survey serves to learn about the health behaviors of youth on topics such as nutrition, physical activity, mental health, violence, tobacco and alcohol use, among other related health topics, as well as protective factors such as support received from family, friends and teachers. The survey is administered to middle and high school students in grades 7 through 12 and is completely voluntary. The results of the survey are used for school programs, to guide local youth organizations, and to inform the Greater Worcester Regional Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), among other health initiatives. **For more information on the RYHS and to see past summary reports, visit [www.umassmed.edu/prc/youth-data](http://www.umassmed.edu/prc/youth-data).**
- **New Federal Tobacco Legislation** – on December 20, 2019, President Trump signed legislation to amend the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act, raising the age for all tobacco purchases to age 21, effective immediately.



- **Annual CHIP Community Report Out** – On December 5, 2019, the Coalition for a Healthy Greater Worcester held its annual meeting and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) Report Out at the Boys and Girls Club of Worcester. An electronic report that includes progress to date on the 2016 CHIP, that all Alliance communities participate in, can be found on the Coalition website at <https://www.healthygreaterworcester.org/>. **Please consider posting this document to your website to share with your residents.**
- **The WDPH Academic Health Collaborative** is currently accepting requests for internships. If you need an intern or have a project that could use some assistance please reach out to Kelsey Hopkins at [hopkinsk@worcesterma.gov](mailto:hopkinsk@worcesterma.gov).
- **Local and Regional Public Health Advisory Committee** – as a result of the Local and Regional Public Health Commission's recommendations around workforce credentialing, regionalization and data sharing, MDPH has named 28 public health professionals for its new Advisory Committee. Both Karyn Clark, Director and Phil Leger, Chief of Environmental Health has been appointed and will further serve on sub-committees for 3 and 2 year terms, respectively. The first meeting will take place in January 2020 at the new MDPH regional offices in Marlborough.
- **The WDPH team wishes all of our Alliance partners a very happy and healthy New Year!**

## ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH (EH)

- The EH team will respond to after events if needed. Please use the Duty Officer line. 508-408-5173.
- The State Sanitary Code also known as the Housing Code is soon to be updated. This has been a ten year plus effort. Go to [www.mass.gov/dph/csp](http://www.mass.gov/dph/csp) to download copy of proposed changes.

## COMMUNITY HEALTH (CH)

### December Updates

- On December 3<sup>rd</sup>- December 5<sup>th</sup> Oscar de la Rosa and Jennifer Nakijoba traveled to Alexandria Virginia to attend the US Dept. of Justice Office for Victims of Crime conference on The Opioid Crisis and the Nation's Youth: Strategies and Solutions to Serve our Youngest Victims. Oscar presented during a breakout session on recognizing cross-sector values and strategies to meet our shared goals to serve families and children victimized by the opioid epidemic.
- On December 5<sup>th</sup>, WDPH staff attend the Shrewsbury Wellness Advisory Committee Meeting to discuss student needs including addressing the vaping crisis.
- On December 10<sup>th</sup> WDPH staff attended the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual BSAS Statewide Prevention Conference titled: Constructing a Collective Vision for Prevention: The Connection between Partnerships, Processes, and Results at the Four Points by Sheraton in Norwood.
- On December 11<sup>th</sup>, WDPH staff attended the Millbury Board of Health meeting to discuss tobacco regulations.
- On December 18<sup>th</sup>, WDPH hosted the quarterly meeting for the Regional Response to Addiction Partnership (RRAP) Coalition. The RRAP Coalition is the working group for the substance use priority area of the Community Health Improvement Plan. The RRAP Coalition is comprised of over twenty-five community-based organizations, hospitals and health centers, law enforcement personnel, recovery treatment providers, faith-

based organizations, funders, and other key stakeholders. For more information or to get involved, please contact Joshan Niroula at [niroulaj@worcesterma.gov](mailto:niroulaj@worcesterma.gov).

- On December 20<sup>th</sup>, WDPH staff attended the Longest Night Vigil held at City Hall in Worcester to commemorate and honor those who have passed away in 2019 as a result of homelessness. December 21 marks the first day of winter, and the longest night of the year, and The National Coalition for the Homeless and the National Health Care for the Homeless Council have designated the day as National Homeless Persons' Memorial Day.
- On December 27<sup>th</sup>, WDPH staff attended Wellness Week: Bold Moves at the EcoTarium, and provided health and wellness activities for children under the age of eight.

#### **January Announcements**

- Spring 2020 interns will begin working with us in late January. If you need an intern for a project (big or small!) please email Kelsey Hopkins at [hopkinsk@worcesterma.gov](mailto:hopkinsk@worcesterma.gov)
- WDPH was awarded grant funding that will start in January from the Bureau of Substance Addiction Services to support the work of Worcester's Recovery Coach Initiative to provide recovery coaching and street outreach services to homeless and marginally housed individuals with a history of substance use disorder and overdose in Worcester.



Oscar de la Rosa, WDPH Public Health Prevention Specialist, with the Massachusetts cohort at the conference on The Opioid Crisis and the Nation's Youth: Strategies and Solutions to Serve our Youngest Victims

#### **NURSING (PHN)**

##### **RESPIRATORY HYGIENE/COUGH ETIQUETTE**

Cold and flu season is upon us. Remember to practice respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette to prevent the spread of viruses this season. Printable posters in various languages are

available on the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Website:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/actions-prevent-flu.htm> .

**The following measures are recommended for all individuals with signs and symptoms of a respiratory infection:**

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing;
  - Use in the nearest waste receptacle to dispose of the tissue after use;
  - Perform hand hygiene after having contact with respiratory secretions and contaminated objects/materials.
- 
- **Key Points as posted on the CDC flu website:**
    - The 2019-2020 season is underway; all regions of the country are seeing elevated levels of flu-like illness.
    - Activity is being caused mostly by influenza B/Victoria viruses, which is unusual for this time of year. A (H1N1) viruses are the next most common and are increasing in proportion relative to other influenza viruses in some regions.
    - CDC estimates that so far this season there have been at least 3.7 million flu illnesses, 32,000 hospitalizations and 1,800 deaths from flu.
    - It's not too late to get vaccinated. Flu vaccination is always the best way to prevent flu and its potentially serious complications.
    - Antiviral medications are an important adjunct to flu vaccine in the control of influenza. Almost all (>99%) of the influenza viruses tested this season are susceptible to the four FDA-approved influenza antiviral medications recommended for use in the U.S. this season.
  - **LEICESTER:**
    - Nazareth Home—Flu Clinic scheduled for Friday, January 24, 2019
    - Flu Clinic records from 2012-2018 have been transferred to the BOH Office for storage.
  - **GRAFTON:**
    - Flu Clinic/Shingrix Clinics records through 2019 have been transferred to the BOH Office for storage.
  - **SHREWSBURY:**
    - Flu Clinic records have been transferred to the BOH Office for storage.

#### **Regional Public Health Nursing Upcoming Events January/February 2020**

- **Grafton**
  - Grafton Housing Authority-Blood Pressure Clinic was completed for November 13, 2019 Forest Lane, Grafton from 3:30 pm until 5 pm
  - Grafton Housing Authority-Blood Pressure Clinic is scheduled for December 11, 2019 9 Forest Lane, Grafton from 3:30 pm until 5 pm
  - Grafton Senior Center-Blood Pressure Clinic is scheduled for December 26, 2019 Providence Road, Grafton from 11:00 am until 12:30 pm
- **Leicester**
  - Plans are being formulated to provide education at the Senior Center, topic to be determined (February 18, 2020)

- Amelia will provide a Dementia Friends Information Session to retired school teachers, in the Leicester Senior Center, February 8, 2019 at 1:00PM.
- **Holden** Plans are still being formulated for events at the Holden Senior Center
- **Shrewsbury**
  - Amelia will be attending the Health and Human Services Leadership Meeting Wrap Up session December 16, 2019 from 3PM to 4PM, Shrewsbury Public Library
  - Plans are being formulated to continue with Hands-Only CPR sessions at the Senior Center (dates to be determined)
- **Worcester**
  - HANDS ONLY CPR training class was provided to Arabic American elder group with interpretation from 9:30am-11:00am on November 5, 2019.
  - Blood Pressure clinics were provided on November 1, 5, 8, 12, 15, 19, 22, 26 and 29.
  - December Blood Pressure clinics are scheduled for December 3, 6, 10, 13, 17, 20, 24, 27, 31 from 9AM to 1PM.
  - Worcester State University RN to BS students will accompany Amelia in providing a multi station Blood pressure clinic in the Worcester Senior Center lobby on Thursday December 12, 2019 from 9AM to 1PM.

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS (EP)

- As the winter storms are here, a reminder that if you would like to request Worcester Regional MRC volunteers for a real world emergency such as a sheltering operation, please page the 24/7 Duty Officer. MRC volunteers are also available to participate in a community event, such as a senior health fair; for more information or to request MRC participation, please contact Alissa Errede at [erredea@worcesterma.gov](mailto:erredea@worcesterma.gov). Note: Grafton has its own Greater Grafton MRC unit.
- The Region 2 Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) Coalition provides reimbursement for certain Public Health conferences. If you're interested, please contact Katrina Stanziano at [stanzianok@worcesterma.gov](mailto:stanzianok@worcesterma.gov) to determine eligibility.
- If your community needs Public Health Emergency Preparedness equipment and supplies (such as replacement pads for an AED or an iPad to stay connected) and is interested in using grant funds to purchase them, please contact Alissa at [erredea@worcesterma.gov](mailto:erredea@worcesterma.gov) for more information and to determine eligibility. Additionally, the PHEP coalition recently made regional purchases for EDS equipment, including stanchions, cones, privacy screens, and signs, which many Alliance towns took advantage of.
- All communities within MDPH Region 2 (74 communities within Central MA) are in the process of transitioning to an updated EDS Plan template, based on current state and federal guidelines. Worcester DPH staff are available to assist CMRPHA communities in fulfilling this deliverable, which have to be completed by the end of the grant year. For more information, please contact Katrina at [stanzianok@worcesterma.gov](mailto:stanzianok@worcesterma.gov).
- As with previous years, all communities have been tasked by MDPH to complete a facility set-up drill for their Emergency Dispensing Site (EDS). Worcester DPH staff are available to

assist CMRPHA communities in fulfilling this deliverable; Shrewsbury has completed theirs. For more information, please contact Katrina at [stanzianok@worcesterma.gov](mailto:stanzianok@worcesterma.gov).

- Recently, the topic of town Emergency Operation Centers (EOC) has come up at LEPC meetings. As a reminder, while WDPH staff may be able to assist in physically staffing an EOC should an event be localized and staff are available, it is more likely that the assistance will come in the form of message development, serving as a liaison between the municipality and MDPH, providing situational awareness, and similar support functions. Therefore, town plans should include BOH members and/or town BOH admin staff in the staffing of an EOC, rather than WDPH staff. Please reach out to Alissa at [erredea@worcesterma.gov](mailto:erredea@worcesterma.gov) with any questions.