



**MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
September 16, 2010**

The monthly meeting of the Board of Directors of the Boston Public Health Commission was held on Thursday, September 16, 2010 at the Boston Public Health Commission Long Island Campus, Boston.

Board Members Present:

Paula Johnson, MD, MPH, Chair
Jack Cradock
Joseph Betancourt, MD, MPH
Harold Cox

Board Members Absent:

Celia Wcislo
Ruth Ellen Fitch, JD
Kathleen Walsh

Also Present Were:

Barbara Ferrer, Ph.D., MPH, MEd, John Townsend, Maia Brodyfield, Deborah Allen, Beth Grand L'Heureux, Anita Barry, David Thomas, Natalie Grant, Pam Jones, Gita Rao, Latifah Hasan, Damien J. Turini, Jim Greene, Jan Mastrocola, James Hooley, Laura Williams, Emily Gabriel, Christy Moulin

Visitors:

Erin Gorham, University of Wisconsin – Green Bay; Kaitlyn Kiernan, Boston University

Counsel Present:

Nakisha Skinner, General Counsel

Proceedings

Chairwoman's Comments

Dr. Paula Johnson, MD, MPH

- The meeting was called to order at 4:25 PM by Chairwoman, Dr. Paula Johnson MD, MPH. Approval of the minutes was postponed until a quorum could be met.

Executive Director's Report

Barbara Ferrer, PhD, MPH, Med

- The new Director of the Emergency Shelter Commission (ESC), Jim Greene, and the new Board Secretary, Jamie Martin were both welcomed. The ESC is the newest program addition to the Boston Public Health Commission.
- The board was updated on the events of a visit from Gil Kerlikowske, the Director of the National Drug Control Policy.
- A review of the most recent Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW) Leadership Team meeting was given. The focus of the meeting was on reducing tobacco smoke in public housing and offering cessation tools. Sugar consumption reduction, and obesity prevention were also discussed, and supporting policies will be explored throughout the next few months.
- The board was notified of the Boston EMS Relief Association award ceremony to be held on Saturday, September 18.

Influenza Planning: After Action Report/Fall Campaign

Natalie Grant, Director, Office of Public Health Preparedness

Emily Gabriel, MPH, Associate Director, Boston MMRS, Boston EMS

Laura Williams, MPH, Deputy Chief of Staff, Boston EMS

Anita Barry, MD, Director, Infectious Disease Bureau

- Boston Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) and Community Health Centers (CHC) have partnered for flu prevention once again.
 - There are 25 Boston CHC that have the capability of administering vaccines to large groups of people. CHC have been found to be a good source of community-wide data.
 - The partnership has already been successful in responses to Hurricane Earl, the water emergency from this past summer, and the earthquake in Haiti. Similar plans on a smaller scale are in the works for flu prevention.
- Boston EMS is currently considering the use of Massachusetts Casualty Assistance for seasonal flu response and H1N1 records management.
 - Massachusetts Casualty Assistance has been utilized in the past as a patient tracking system. The data provided would allow the construction of charts, and maps depicting patient attendance at various CHC.
- Topics involving planning for the 2010-2011 Influenza season included surveillance, infection control, and vaccination.
 - The available vaccine contains H1N1, as well as two additional influenza strains, and is available through injection, or nasal spray at primary care sites as well as public clinics. One dose of the vaccine is recommended except for children under the age of nine who should have two doses. It is recommended that everyone be vaccinated. RNs may attend trainings to administer the vaccine in faith based communities.
 - The Avian Flu is still being monitored however there are no new strains of the flu that could be transferred from person to person.
 - Schools are not currently being utilized as vaccine administering centers however discussions are on-going.

Early Childhood Mental Health: Healing Where It Hurts

Deborah Allen, ScD, Director, Bureau of Child, Adolescent, and Family Health

Latifah Hasan, Director, Early Childhood Mental Health

- There are very few long term services for children with mental health discrepancies, and almost no form of prevention for these conditions.
- The Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Association (SAMHSA) has funded two initiatives involving child mental health. MYCHILD provides support for children through age five who currently have or are at risk to develop mental health conditions with \$9 million in federal funding for six years. LAUNCH focuses on prevention and works with children from birth to age eight with \$850 thousand in funding each year for five years. There are currently efforts to obtain permission from SAMHSA to combine MYCHILD and LAUNCH to create one mental health program.
- There will be new staff at BPHC, as well as on site to support MYCHILD and LAUNCH.
- Seven Community Health Centers will be utilized as partners. For LAUNCH, Martha Elliot and Codman Square Community Health Centers, as well as the Boston Medical Center will be utilized. For MYCHILD, Bowdoin, Mattapan, and Joseph Smith Community Health Centers will be utilized, along with Health Care for the Homeless.
- Community Partners include the Parent/Professional Advocacy League, the Federation for Children with Special Needs, the Boston Family Nurturing Program, and United Way.

City-Wide Homelessness: A System Snapshot

James Greene, Director, Emergency Shelter Commission

- The Emergency Shelter Commission (ESC) was established in 1983 as a program of the City of Boston.
- Roughly 4,000 people are housed in emergency shelters per night in Boston.
- Causes of adult homelessness include substance abuse problems, mental health issues, income barriers, and high housing costs.
- Particular focus for the ESC is on families.
 - In 2008, for the first time, the number of families suffering from homelessness was greater than the number of adults. That trend has continued into 2010.
 - 10% of housing under the ESC is set aside for families.
- Homeless youth are “house hopping” after being banned from various forms of housing due to crime involvement. Some youth are showing up at career centers in an effort to be proactive about their situations.

Homeless Services: Housing First Initiatives

Beth Grand L’Heureux, Co-Bureau Director, Homeless Services

- Three Housing First grants have been awarded to the Boston Public Health Commission.
 - SAMHSA provides aid with housing and intensive support services.
 - *Home to Stay* is aimed at individuals classified as “long stayers” at emergency shelters. The program provides housing, support services, and work opportunities. The program also supports integration back into the community.
 - *Hues to Home* supports homeless individuals who most frequently visit the BMC emergency rooms with crisis intervention and permanent housing aid.
- Development of the Mattapan Campus is continuing and will provide a means for more housing for the homelessness programs.
- At Northampton Square an individual with a voucher is entitled to an apartment with a subsidized grant. A total of 30% of an individual’s income will go towards housing costs, and the rest will be covered by the grant.

- There has been an influx of people coming into Boston to take advantage of the shelters and programs that we have available.
 - Other cities are closing down some of their shelters, resulting in fuller shelters in those areas.
 - It was acknowledged that homelessness is not “just a Boston problem” and that our programs will be made available to anyone in Boston, not solely its residents.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 6:22 PM.

Minutes Submitted By:

Jamie L. Martin, Secretary