

North East Public Health Alliance

April 11th, 2024 Meeting Minutes

11:00 am -1pm EST

In-person: 365 Boston Rd #G03, Billerica, MA

Voting members in attendance:

Kristel Bennett, Billerica

Sue Rosa, Chelmsford

Shannon Gillis, Tewksbury

Angela Lemire, Tyngsborough

Non-voting members in attendance:

Shelagh Collins, Billerica

Cynthia Baker, BME Strategies

Darcy Beall, Chelmsford

Donna Greenwood, Chelmsford

Siobhan LaFreniere, Regional Public Health Specialist

Opening

The regular meeting of the NorthEast Public Health Alliance was called to order by Cynthia Baker at 11:08AM on April 11th, 2024.

I. Welcome

Approval of March meeting minutes

Sue Rosa made a motion to approve the previous meeting minutes. Kristel Bennett seconded the motion.

Billerica: Y

Chelmsford: Y

Tewksbury: Y

Tyngsborough: Y

Motion passes.

II. Regional Staff Updates

The coalition officially welcomed the newest regional staff member, Siobhan LaFreniere, to the team. BME presented an overview of the role and key deliverables of focus for the remainder of the fiscal year.

North East Public Health Alliance

April 11th, 2024 Meeting Minutes

The coalition also discussed updates related to the Shared Services Coordinator posting. The group is currently awaiting confirmation from DPH on next steps.

III. Announcements & Reminders

BME provided an overview of upcoming training opportunities, including the Municipal the Annual MAPHN Conference, MAHB Certificate Program series, newly released LPHIT Food Protection and Housing training dates, and Certified Pool Officer training through Pool Operations Management. BME will follow up regarding MAHB certification program registration for the Shared Services Coordinator and Regional Public Health Specialist, and tentatively new BOH members from Chelmsford and Tewksbury. The coalition also reviewed recent updates regarding the forthcoming 3 year PHE contract cycle for FY25-FY27.

IV. FY24 Review to Date

The coalition reviewed upcoming Q3 reporting deadlines. BME provided an overview of procurement updates. Tyngsborough released the digitization IFB on Wednesday 4/10, which is due to close 4/24. Pending vendor responses, the coalition hopes to start the contract work in May. The group also checked in regarding approved expenses of trailhead kiosks and footwear for inspectors. Participants explored the idea of purchasing a noise meter for regional use: BME will follow up with specifications for a few reasonable models. The group also expressed interest in purchase of coalition uniforms. BME will send the coalition some options to review.

The coalition also reviewed key work plan deliverables to date. Participants discussed progress against the individual training plans. Multiple members indicated a need for ServSafe recertification, and will explore completing the credentials during Billerica's Friday courses during April. The group also reviewed the ongoing documentation audit with DPH, with materials due 4/12 to appointed SMEs.

V. FY25 Work Planning

The coalition briefly reviewed DPH recommendations from the 2022 Capacity Assessment and highlighted potential areas of opportunity to address in the FY25 work plan. BME confirmed the next official capacity assessment is postponed until Fall 2025.

North East Public Health Alliance

April 11th, 2024 Meeting Minutes

BME provided an overview of the Capacity Self-Assessment Tool developed by OLRH to support municipalities and PHE groups between official rounds of evaluation. The group debated completing the assessment for internal use. BME clarified that the assessment is meant solely for communities and SSAs to assess their progress against the Performance Standards to date, and reiterated the assessment's value for FY25 work planning. The group discussed the feasibility of completing the self-assessment prior to the end of May to allow for sufficient time for finalizing the work plan ahead of a future OLRH deadline.

Sue Rosa made a motion to have each NEPHA community complete the self-paced capacity assessment by Friday, May 17th. Shannon Gillis seconded the motion.

Billerica: Y

Chelmsford: Y

Tewksbury: Y

Tyngsborough: Y

Motion passes.

The coalition reviewed regional and municipal-level food code violation data. Chelmsford shared their experience with different strategies to increase compliance and reduce food code violations, including introduction of a violation fee schedule and educational sessions about the food code for operators. The group debated the feasibility of introducing a similar fee schedule across towns, but agreed the education component could be a potential area for FY25 work planning focus.

Participants reviewed the timeline for FY25 work plan and budget submission, and discussed scheduling a second coalition in May to collaborate on work plan and budgeting prior to the forthcoming due date. The group tentatively agreed to meet virtually on May 23rd. Additional details and confirmation will be forthcoming.

VI. Community Updates

Chelmsford shared their roster of upcoming health events and trainings. Tyngsborough and Tewksbury also shared updates about their health fairs.

North East Public Health Alliance

April 11th, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Sue Rosa officially announced her impending retirement at the end of June.

VII. Adjournment

Tewksbury will host the next monthly meeting on Monday, May 13th 11AM-1PM.

Shannon Gillis made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kristel Bennett seconded the motion.

Billerica: Y

Chelmsford: Y

Tewksbury: Y

Tyngsborough: Y

Motion passes.

The meeting adjourned at 1:28 PM.

Documents and exhibits used by the public body in the meeting:

NEPHA March Coalition Meeting Presentation

NEPHA Coalition Meeting



April 11th, 2024

Agenda

- I. Meeting Opening
- II. Regional Staff Updates: Welcome, Siobhan!
- III. Announcements & Reminders
- IV. FY24 PHE Opportunities Updates and Next Steps
- V. FY25 Work Planning
 - A. Self-Paced Capacity Assessment
 - B. Food Code Violation Data
- VI. Community Updates
- VII. Adjournment

Meeting Opening

Approval of March 2024 meeting minutes

Regional Staff Updates

Welcome, Siobhan!



Develop, implement, and evaluate strategic programs and coalition projects including quality improvement and community engagement.



Coordinate and provide resources to individuals and families impacted by community health issues; provide case management assistance and referrals for community residents.



Regularly assess community health needs to target education programs and community intervention services.



Develop and maintain a regional resource guide.



Build relationships and drive collaboration opportunities with community organizations throughout the coalition.



Research grant opportunities to expand NEPHA services and capacity, compile and submit grant applications on behalf of the coalition.



Collaborate with NEPHA municipal and shared staff to generate and deliver public health programming for all NEPHA residents.

Priority Deliverables

- 1) Develop a regional Community Resource Guide
- 2) Design a case management and resource referral framework to support NEPHA residents when social needs surface during inspections or disease case follow-up

Regional Staff Updates

- Home base in Tewksbury
- Initial biweekly check-ins with BME to guide onboarding and review assigned tasks, assist with work planning, discuss strategy for municipal support & grant-related activities
- Up-front focus on relationship-building within all four communities
 - Please reach out / feel free to connect Siobhan with your contacts for outreach, case management, and support!

Shared Services Coordinator

Announcements and Reminders

Conference Opportunities

2024 Annual MAPHN Conference

In person

May 8-9, 2024

Hilton 2 Forbes Rd

Woburn, MA

Prices vary



Please let us know if you would like to request PHE funds to send your nurse to the MAPHN Conference! (as long as it does not supplant municipal funding)

Announcements and Reminders

Training & Continuing Education Opportunities

MAHB Certificate Program Sessions

4/20 @ Marlborough Marriott Courtyard

4/27 @ Taunton Clarion Hotel

Intended Audience

All Elected/Appointed BOH members

Health Department staff

PHE Shared staff

Registration: \$100

Who is attending from each community?

Topics/Programs

Board of Health Authority

Public Records

Open Meeting

How to deal with disruptions

Nuisance Actions (Case Study)

PFAS/Environmental Issues

Opioid Settlement Funds

BOH & Tobacco Enforcement

Other Emerging Issues

PHE Program

Housing Issues

And more!!

Announcements & Reminders

Pool Operation Management Training Locations & Dates

April 13-14, 2024	Norwood, MA
April 27-28, 2024	Peabody, MA
May 18-19, 2024	Lowell, MA
June 12-13, 2024	Norwood, MA

Early Bird Rate:

\$380

Late Registration:

\$405

Announcements & Reminders

LPHIT Courses: Upcoming Dates

- April 25 **TRAIN MA Demo**
- April 30 **Latest Updates on Beaches and Recreational Camps** (\$25 for MHOA members)
- May 2 **Latest Updates on Beaches and Recreational Camps** (\$25 for MHOA members)

SAVE THE DATES

- May 7, 8, 9 + 14, 15, 16 **Intensive Housing Course** - *Register by 4/19*
- May 28, 29, 30 + June 3, 4, 5 + June 11 **Intensive Food Course** - *Register by 4/19*
- June 18, 19, 20 + 25, 26, 27 **Intensive Housing Course** - *Register by 4/19*

Announcements & Reminders

Budget Updates for FY25

- OLRH to implement 3-year contracts for FY25-FY27
- Contracts will be level-funded annually at our current budget award
- Promissory budget and signed contract due Friday, 4/19

FY24 Review to Date

- Reporting Deadlines
- Procurement
- Work Plan Progress

FY24 Review to Date

Reporting Deadlines

- PHE Q3 expenditure and narrative reports are due April 30th
- Please be on the lookout for requests for information to facilitate timely completion!

FY24 to Date

Procurement

Digitization IFB

- Released Wednesday 4/10; closes 4/24
- Contract executed by early May; aim to complete work by June 30th

Trailhead Kiosks

- Greenlight from DPH to purchase (~1 each per community; smaller kiosks @ \$1900 each)

Slip-Resistant Shoes for Inspectors

- Awaiting approval from DPH

Technology Software

- Added Billerica FCP and HCP licenses
- Exploring PoolCode Pro or next generation iC-P for next fiscal year

FY24 to Date

Procurement: Opportunities

Appendix 2: FY24 Nursing Supplies

The following supplies may be purchased using PHE grant funds if other funding sources such as general funds or PHEP funds are not available. Towns may not supplant existing public health funds. These purchases are to support public health initiatives and programs of public health departments. Materials may not be given to other town departments, non-profits, or other organizations. These purchases are intended to be used to increase the public health infrastructure and capacity in Shared Service Arrangements.

Nursing Supplies	Equipment for Vaccine Clinics, Health Fairs, & Outreach Events hosted by Health Departments
Alcohol prep pads	Cones
Bandages	Dry erase boards and markers
First Aid Kits	Folding chairs
Gauze Pads	Folding tables
Ice packs	Partitions
Masks	Pop-up Tent
Nitrile gloves	Rolling bags/boxes
Portable vaccine cooler (recommend regional shared purchases)	Safety vests
Sanitizer/Sanitizing Wipes	Sign weights
Sharps Disposal Containers specific to nurse use (not for general distribution)	Signage (i.e. a-frame sign)
Sphygmomanometers/Stethoscopes	Stanchions
Stop the Bleed Kits	Trash cans and trash bags
Syringes	Wagon for moving materials
Tissues	
Vaccine cart	
Vaccine refrigerator or freezer and associated temperature logger (recommend regional purchases)	

Inspection Supplies

Supplies needed for staff to provide shared PHE inspection services.

Examples of PHE inspection-related expenses include: thermometer, moisture meter, handheld blacklight/flashlight, PH meter, test strips, and pool test kits. SSA logo apparel/uniforms is approved at \$250 per employee (one-time expense).

Health Communication

Creating and distributing local public health information to communicate PHE grantee shared services programs and improve residents' health in PHE municipalities.

Examples of health communication-related expenses: Fact sheet design and printing services, PHE grantee regional web site development/hosting services, translation services. Health Communications can also cover staff outreach materials including business cards and badges of shared staff. SSA logo apparel for municipal staff supporting shared service activities in a public facing role is allowed (capped at \$250 per employee as a one-time expense).

NorthEast Public Health Alliance

Public Health Excellence Grant	FY24	Q4
--------------------------------	------	----

	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Next Steps & Suggestions	Due	Status
Hire Public Health Specialist				JD/Post Interview & Hire							Onboarding			Conduct RPHS onboarding	5/31	Delayed
Launch Regional Food Truck Program				Review MFEs	Plan	Convene stakeholders				Develop Case Management SOPs	Finalize & launch			Refocus on internal resource; region-wide plan is not viable at this time	-	Remove
Conduct Inspectional Audit						Consult HR/IA					Conduct Audit	QI Plan		SMEs to review documentation audit materials	4/31	On track
Develop EH Training Calendar				Survey	Review		Develop Calendar				Facilitate EH Training			Work with each community to complete baseline trainings	6/30	On track
Hire FTE Shared Services Coordinator						Develop JD/Post				Interview & Hire		Onboarding		Paused	-	PAUSED



Risk	Mitigation	Next Steps	Due	Status
Remaining funds following Q3 expenditure	Work with fiscal lead to develop plan	Compile expected expenditures and meet with Tyngsborough	4/30	Not started

Budget	\$ 466,656.23
Spent	\$ 213,335.76
Allocated	\$ 466,656.23

Training Audits & Calendar

Individual Training Plans

- How are your teams doing with baseline & catch up trainings?
 - How about the less frequent trainings, like Title 5?
- Who plans to enroll in upcoming MA PHIT Food and Housing trainings?
 - Enrollment / progress with co-requisites?

Documentation Audit

Recap of Process

- Met with DPH on 3/25
- Outlined timeline and packet of documentation for review
 - Food Protection: HACCP Plan, 3 food establishment inspections, 2 schools, 1 frozen dessert manufacturer, 1 variance review
 - Housing: 1 complete inspection packet (from complaint to final report)
- Final handoff of documents to SMEs **due tomorrow, 4/12**

FY25 Work Planning

- CART 2022 Refresher
- Self-Paced Capacity Assessment
- Food Code Violation Data

1

Training - Environmental Protection & Administration

In the next fiscal year, consider investing in training for staff related to Environmental Protection and Administration.

**Training Calendars**

2

Shared Staffing - Food Protection

In the next fiscal year, consider sharing existing or hiring shared staff to expand your SSA's ability to meet more Standards in the Food Protection category. Consider hiring personnel that are reflective of your SSA's demographics.

Area of Opportunity

3

Contracted Services

In the next fiscal year, consider expanding staffing capacity and/or consider consolidating contractors for the Environmental Health and Disease Control & Prevention categories to increase efficiency, consistency, and ease of management.

Area of Opportunity

4

Backup Documentation

In the next fiscal year, investigate if all subject area-related backup documentation needs improvement due to a training or capacity issue (specifically Food Protection, Housing, Recreational Camps for Children, & Tobacco Use Prevention) as there is an opportunity to improve the quality of these documents.

In the next fiscal year, increase staffing to improve infectious disease response time in MAVEN.

**Documentation Audit****Existing Contractual Requirements**

5

IMA In the next six months, finalize your SSA's IMA.

Completed ✓

6

Shared Services

In the next fiscal year, integrate shared services more to achieve the Performance Standards.

Area of Opportunity

FY25 Work Planning: Capacity Assessment

Performance Standards for Local Public Health Self-Assessment

Performance Standards for LPH Self-Assessment Administration Questions

Overview and Directions

Below are the Performance Standards for LPH questions for the Administration subject area. Read the question in the "Performance Standard Question" column and associated M.G.L./CMR language in the "Link" column. Use the dropdown options in either the "Response #1" or "Response #2" column to reflect your municipality's current ability to meet the associated Performance Standard.

- Read the directions outlined in the "Directions" column, when applicable.
- Ensure to respond to ALL questions in the tab before reviewing the results in either the "12. Response #1 Results" "13. Response #2 Results" or the "14. Response Trends" tabs (depending on the column that is filled out).
- All "Response" cells highlighted in light blue means it is associated with skip logic, so please review the directions in the corresponding "Directions" cell of the same row.

Administration Subject Area Performance Standards for LPH Questions










#	Subject Area	Performance Standard Question	Link	Not Applicable Explanation	Response #1	Response #2	Directions
5	Administration	5. In the last five years, has your Health Department/Board of Health filed with the Environmental Protection (DEP) attested copies of sanitary codes, all rules, regulations, and standards which have been adopted, and any amendments and additions for the maintenance of a central register in accordance with section eight of chapter twenty-one A AND can provide documentation of submittal? (M.G.L. c. 111, s. 31).	M.G.L. c. 111, s. 31	Not applicable - We have not had any new sanitary codes, rules, regulations, or standards which have been adopted, or any amendments and additions to the maintenance of a central register in accordance with section eight of chapter twenty-one A in the last five years.			
6	Administration	6. In the last five years, has your Health Department/Board of Health held a public hearing, of which notice was published in a local newspaper, regarding regulations or amendments to regulations that relate to the minimum requirements for subsurface disposal of sanitary sewage as provided by the state environmental code? (M.G.L. c. 111, s. 31)	M.G.L. c. 111, s. 31	Not applicable- We have not had any new regulations or amendments to regulations that relate to the minimum requirements for subsurface disposal of sanitary sewage in the last five years.	Yes No - More staff required. No - Additional training needed. No - Lack of funding (not staffing related). No - I was not aware of this requirement.		If "No" or "Not applicable", choose "Not applicable" for Question 7
7	Administration	7. At a public hearing, prior to the adoption of any such regulation or amendment which exceeds the minimum requirements for subsurface disposal of sanitary sewage as provided by the state environmental code, does your Health Department/Board of Health state the local conditions which exist or reasons for exceeding such minimum requirements? (M.G.L. c. 111, s. 31)	M.G.L. c. 111, s. 31				If "No" or "Not applicable", for Question 6 (above) choose "Not applicable" for this question
8	Administration	8. Does your Health Department/Board of Health annually publish a list of hazardous chemicals present in the municipal water supply in concentrations greater than fifty percent of the suggested action guidelines (the suggested no adverse response levels or the maximum contaminant levels established by the United States Environmental Protection Agency) AND post the list in a town or city hall and at the offices of the Water Department? (M.G.L. c. 111, s. 26F)	M.G.L. c. 111, s. 26F	Not applicable - Our Health Department/Board of Health does not accept the provisions of M.G.L. c. 111, s. 26F.			

FY25 Work Planning: Capacity Assessment

Response Trends (Response #1 to Response #2)

Below is a summary of the comparison between "Response #1" and "Response #2" results for all of the subject areas in a table and visual format. "Response #1" and "Response #2" columns in tabs 4-11 are completely filled out in order to view the trends in the results.

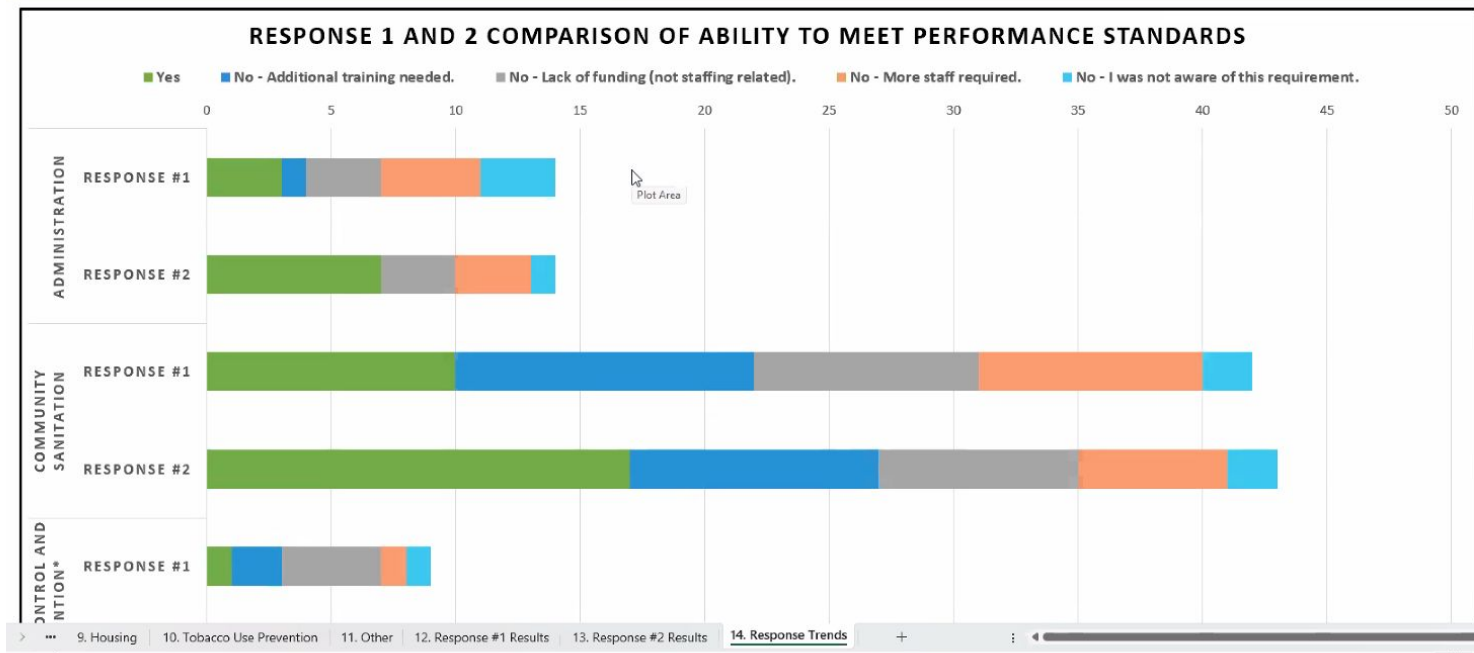
Comparison of Percentage of Performance Standards Met (Response #1 vs Response #2 Results)

Subject Area	Response #1	Response #2	Change %	
	% of Performance Standards Met	% of Performance Standards Met		
Administration	21%	50%		29%
Community Sanitation	24%	40%		16%
Disease Control and Prevention*	11%	67%		56%
Environmental Protection	81%	63%		-19%
Food Protection*	35%	35%		0%
Housing	10%	80%		70%
Tobacco Use Prevention	36%	64%		27%
Other*	50%	100%		50%
Total Results	34%	55%		22%

**if this result does not match that in the Capacity Assessment Interactive Data Dashboard it is due to the removal of antiquated regulations (Food Protection: 3; Disease Control and Prevention: 3) from the Performance Standards in the "Other" subject area.*

FY25 Work Planning: Capacity Assessment

Graphical Representation of Response #1 and Response #2 Results



FY25 Work Planning: Capacity Assessment

Self-Paced Capacity Assessment

Recommendation: Complete a self-paced capacity assessment to compare CART 2022 results with current state

- Collate individual municipality responses
- Leverage results to inform FY25 work plan development (starting in May)

Are there certain subject areas we'd like to focus on?

Ex., *Environmental Health & Environmental Protection, Food Protection*

Capacity & Feasibility - what would be an appropriate and attainable timeline?

FY25 Work Planning: Food Code Violation Data

Most Common Violations Cited (Regional)

- 6-501.12 Cleaning. Frequency/Restrictions
- 4-501.11 Good Repair and Proper Adjustment
- 3-305.11 Food Storage

FY25 Work Planning: Food Code Violation Data

Most Common Violations Cited (by Municipality)

Community	Billerica	Tewksbury	Tyngsborough
1	3-501.16 (A)(2) (B) Proper Cold Holding Temps (3)	6-501.12 Cleaning. Frequency / Restrictions (37)	4-501.11 Good Repair and Proper Adjustment (28)
2	6-501.16 Drying Mops (2)	4-501.11 Good Repair and Proper Adjustment (34)	6-501.12 Cleaning. Frequency / Restrictions (23)
3	6-501.12 Cleaning. Frequency / Restrictions (2)	3-305.11 Food Storage (28)	4-601.11 (A) Equip, Food-Contact Surfaces (16)

FY25 Work Planning: Food Code Violation Data

Discussion

- Common themes among repeat violations?
- Possible Variables:
 - Operator & staff education
 - Accessible literature on food code requirements
 - Training

How might we develop a plan to address these variables?

FY25 Work Planning

Thinking Ahead

We anticipate work planning guidance and template release in early May

- *Due date unknown*

Proposal: At least one additional meeting (outside of regular coalition convening) to workshop the work plan and budget

Next regular meeting: Thursday, May 9th

Additional meeting: The week of May 20th?

Community Updates

Meeting Adjournment

Next Meeting

Monday, May 13th

11AM-1PM