



Meeting Minutes: Mohawk Area Public Health Coalition Steering Committee			
Date	November 14, '22	Location	Zoom Call
Time	4:30-6:00 PM	Meeting ID	871 6363 7957
		Facilitators	Carolyn Shores Ness & Norene Pease, Co-Chairs

<p>ATTENDEES: Deerfield BOH: Carolyn Shores Ness Montague BOH: Michael Nelson Shutesbury BOH: Norene Pease Williamsburg BOH: Donna Gibson</p> <p>ABSENT: Ashfield BOH: Duncan Colter Charlemont BOH: Mae Tanner Erving Fire Dept.: Phillip Wonkka Greenfield Health Dept.: Jennifer Hoffman Heath BOH: Gene Garland Leverett BOH: John Hillman</p>	<p>GUESTS: Berkshire Public Health Alliance/Berkshire Regional Planning Commission: Marie Brady, Matt Gilbert, Sandra Martin</p> <p>STAFF: Randy Crochier; Nick Licata; Dan Nietsche; Xander Sylvain; Phoebe Walker; Liz Jacobson-Carroll</p>
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Agenda Items	
1. Welcoming remarks/introductions/agenda	Called to order by Pease at 4:30 PM
2. Review/approval of past meeting minutes	Gibson moved to accept the minutes of the September 12, 2022 meeting, Pease seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously by roll call. Review of the minutes of the August 8 meeting was tabled until the next meeting, as they were not included in the meeting packet.
3. Old business a) EDS plan improvements b) Ardent AAR	<p>a.) Nietsche described his aim to operationalize the EDS plan by making it shorter, more task-driven, and more agile. It will be less-oriented toward use of the national stockpile, less specific to individual EDS sites.</p> <p>Attendees expressed frustration regarding the state having overlooked the EDS system in its rollout of COVID-19 vaccines, and the unclear utilization of it going forward. The inability to know whether EDSs will be activated by the state during future outbreaks makes the recruiting and training of volunteers particularly difficult. This is of special concern as it pertains to medical volunteers, including those qualified to handle</p>

	<p>vaccines. The inconsistency of some third-party vaccine vendors contracted by the state – and the resulting need for local volunteers and staff on short notice – was discussed, too. Walker indicated that DPH will likely orient future vaccine distribution toward Public Health Excellence districts.</p> <p>b.) Sylvain and Neitsche summarized the draft Ardent AAR: The necessity of more robust public health staffing was a key finding, and conversations regarding local issues – including the need for greater agility to respond to “no notice events” – have begun, they said. The incoming administration of Healey and Driscoll appears receptive to these concerns; continued communication with Senator Comerford will be important.</p>
<p>4. New business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Region 1 PHEP Health Equity Project b) WRHSAC Updates c) HMCC Updates 	<p>a.) Martin noted the scope of the Region 1 PHEP Health Equity Project and asked attendees for help identifying hazards of greatest concern, as well as vulnerable populations and their needs, and in the MAPHCO region. Hazards mentioned included several related to weather and climate change (especially flooding, but also high heat, blizzards and ice storms), threats posed by the changing nature of the arbovirus, and the next pandemic. Other concerns include food insecurity, especially the inability to feed oneself from a stocked pantry during a weather emergency or lockdown, and cybersecurity weaknesses.</p> <p>While <i>some</i> individual senior centers, emergency responders, boards of health, public health nurses, and town clerks (to name examples provided) have lists of individuals, privacy concerns may prevent their distribution amongst each other and with regional organizations.</p> <p>Among the vulnerable are senior citizens, the homebound, people living with oxygen tanks, those with mobility challenges, people with disabilities (including many children), residents without vehicles, and many low-income and senior citizens with little or no internet access or ability. Also vulnerable are the un-housed and under-housed: people living on the street, in shelters, or “couch surfing”; migrant farm workers; those living in manufactured housing; and residents of informal group homes. Over-housed people – often senior citizens who remain alone in a large home – are also at-risk. Individuals facing language or literacy barriers may not receive adequate or timely emergency-related information from public officials. Getting to health care appointments, increasingly located in Springfield rather than Greenfield, is difficult for individuals unable to drive or take public transportation.</p> <p>Suggestions made by MAPHCO members included bi-lingual messaging, enhanced communication channels (including newsletters), a template to gather information about vulnerable individuals, and improved Reverse 911 by-in among residents.</p>

	<p>Martin asked attendees to contact her with additional ideas of how PHEP planners might be able to reach and serve these populations. Further, she requested direct referrals to knowledgeable municipal and community officials who would be amenable to being interviewed by a member of her team in the next two months.</p> <p>b.) None?</p> <p>c.) Surges of influenza, Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) and COVID-19 are taxing hospitals, and HMCC is expecting a busy winter of assisting them with load-balancing. In particular, pediatric units are beyond capacity, with some individuals being sent to adult facilities. Thankfully, Boston Children’s Hospital is providing tele-consulting until appropriate placements can be made. In-patient behavior health units around the region are also at capacity.</p>
<p>5. Business not reasonably anticipated 48 hours prior to the meeting</p>	<p>None.</p>
<p>6. Wrap up and adjourn</p>	<p>The Ardent AAR findings will be presented again at the public health roundtable meeting; Shores Ness asked staff to send a reminder. There was a brief discussion about the need to boost meeting attendance and recruit MAPHCO members.</p> <p>Gibson moved to adjourn the meeting, Pease seconded the motion, and the meeting adjourned at 5:45 PM</p>
<p>Documents Distributed / Presentations Viewed:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda • DRAFT Minutes of September 12, 2022 Meeting