

Public Health Council of the Upper Valley
Partner Meeting
June 19, 2020
9:00 to 10:30 am (via Zoom)

This document includes notes from both our conversation and from the Chat feature of the PHC Partner Meeting Zoom (June 19, 2020). Notes are in no particular order.

Thanks so much to those of you able to join us this morning. I think we had about 45 people on the Zoom, though I can't be certain. Either way, a very good meeting. Here are notes, comments, and resources shared during the meeting:

Introductions/Announcements:

We did not do individual introductions, but did invite people to share information and updates.

- Today is Bridget Aliaga's last day as Continuum of Care Coordinator for the Upper Valley and Greater Sullivan County Regional Public Health Networks. She is moving to Connecticut with her partner. She will be missed by all.
- Today is also the Juneteenth Holiday, when many African Americans celebrate their freedom from enslavement. We join them in marking this day and look forward to discussion, later in this meeting, of what the PHC can do to help bring an end to racism in the Upper Valley.
- Upper Valley Strong Updates (Barbara Farnsworth): Robust food distribution continues; the Child Care Committee is working hard on identifying and supporting child care programs and summer camps as they begin opening up.
 - From Elizabeth Craib: Here is a link to an up-and-coming resource for childcare that includes a link to summer program options in the UV as well. It is a growing database updated regularly. Check back often! <https://eceaouv.org/search-listings/>
- Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention (Alice Ely): We are hosting a Lead Safe Renovation Practices online training next Tuesday as part of our new grant to reduce childhood lead poisoning.
- Young Child Wellness Council (Holly Gaspar): As part of our Strengthening Families priority and along with Project Launch partners, we are planning an organizational meeting next week to prepare for creating a Young Child Wellness Council to bring together providers from the Upper Valley, Greater Sullivan County, and parts of Orange/Windsor Counties in Vermont.
- Public Health Emergency Preparedness Update (Nenia Corcoran): NH added 17 positive cases yesterday; Grafton County has had 76 cases so far, one new one yesterday, and a total of 1 death. Testing is now available for asymptomatic people. Heather Rigney (VT) added that VT will be doing 10 more weeks of testing for asymptomatic people' otherwise they are focused on testing at institutional sites.
 - For both states, asymptomatic testing is available to people who live or work in the state. No PCP referral is required for asymptomatic testing. This may be different for people with symptoms.
 - From Kirsten Vigneault: Link where people can sign up to be tested for COVID 19 in NH below. They have not been extremely busy in Claremont and we have been hearing that people can register in the am and get in for that same day to be tested. Free of charge, and no referral required. The State of NH will follow up with your results a few days after being tested. https://business.nh.gov/DOS_COVID19Testing/
 - From Heather Rigney : The VT testing process requests registration, but they usually have room for about 25 walk ins. Testing is free, and not restricted to state of residence. Results are provided within 48 hours. The only requirement is that the person must be asymptomatic.
- Support for People with Developmental Disabilities (Havah Walther): It has been affirmed that people with disabilities have the right to have a support person accompany them to medical

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appointments and in the hospital during COVID-19. This is an ADA accommodation. Here is a link to a plain language video about the rights of people to bring a support person with them to the doctor's office or to the hospital, created by Green Mountain Self-Advocates:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9y1rOWyf_XM&t=6s&fbclid=IwAR3_KIPf3SDuavrEyPO2eXPCyVDYgM2s-Lk0axzkfK9RV7FQ4vN8t0yas4s

- Update from Good Neighbor Health Clinic (Dana Michalovic email): Red Logan Dental Clinic and Good Neighbor Medical Clinic are slowly re-opening. They have been providing medical care by phone throughout the pandemic and welcome new patients. Currently, they are transitioning to a lean schedule of in-person visits and implementing a tele-health platform. In collaboration with The Haven, Geisel School of Medicine, and Good Neighbor volunteer medical providers (with Peter Mason as the catalyst), screenings and medical outreach have been offered and provided via a Homeless Healthcare program to people living in the WRJ motels. The Red Logan Dental Clinic has a fourth year extern here from BU and they have been providing exams, cleanings and extractions. Also, AnneJane Kemon, RDH and Clinic Manager, will be retiring at the end of the month, which will temporarily reduce the number of cleanings they can provide.
- Update from Vermont Department of Health (Rudy Fedrizzi email): Guidance for opening VT schools in the fall was released today. Except for the Winooski outbreak that involved more than 80 people, the number of cases in VT remains very low – 0 cases today. Attention is turning to proactively supporting the homeless shelters as they someday return to sheltering guests rather than the motel vouchers. One of my nurses is working with the Haven to provide support.
- Twin Pines Housing (Faye Grearson): Twin Pines has been experiencing email problems (6/8-18). Please resend if you have not receive a response or call for follow up on any emails you've sent over the past 2 weeks. We apologize to all, and hope we are all set now.

“Reopening the Upper Valley”

1. What does reopening look like for some of our more vulnerable groups of people?
 2. What are some of the barriers we face as organizations and providers and how can we address these?
- Regie Cooper (DHMC, UVStrong) has heard from a number of places that having volunteer drivers available to provide rides for people who need them is a barrier.
 - Elena VanZandt (HALO) says they opened their Canaan office and now have outdoor spaces for groups; they are using masks and face shields. She says that some people are still afraid to come. They have started to waive their no-show fees and make special arrangements to get people comfortable with the setting. They are continuing to offer telehealth options.
 - Ryan Fowler (HIV/HCV Resource Center) says his syringe exchange program has evolved through the shut-down to allow for secondary exchange. It used to be that he only worked directly with an IDU (IV drug user) to provide syringes and get them back; now he has some people who take supplies for themselves and a network of others and then they return them to Ryan for the group. He is also training people in safety procedures and providing some PPE. He reports that more people are getting Hepatitis C treatment because of telemedicine. He would like to expand syringe exchange to Northern Grafton County and Coos County, but would like to see some data on the numbers of IDUs. He is also advocating that jails give our Naloxone upon discharge.
 - Ryan also mentioned that he is seeing many places (restaurants) where staff and customers are not wearing masks. He sometimes feels like people are stigmatizing him for wearing the mask.

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- Others said they had similar experiences. He also says that his clients are not expressing any concerns about COVID-19.
- If there are concerns about restaurants or other businesses not following guidelines, there is an email address in NH where concerns/complaints can be sent: publichealth@dhhs.nh.gov. This will operate until the Attorney General's office sets up their site.
 - This is the link to the Vermont AG's consumer concern hotline: <https://ago.vermont.gov/covid-19-updates-and-information-from-the-attorney-general/>
 - Margaret Caudill-Slosberg (Lyme EMD) suggests contacting the Town Health Officer. Each town has one. Tell them your concerns. Can find name or contact through the Town office.
- Stacey Chiochio reminds everyone that Hypertherm is manufacturing face shields. If any nonprofit needs them and hasn't yet asked for them, please email travis.lahaye@hypertherm.com. Please provide the organization name, your name, the quantity you need and the address where the face shields should be mailed.
 - Courtney McKaig (MAHHC) works in the pediatric clinic in Windsor and Woodstock and works with high-need families. She identifies that partner organizations have differing protocols/guidelines for service provision, meaning that not all the places they refer to are ready to serve the people who need them.
 - Kathleen Vasconcelos (GCSCC) reports that their biggest challenge is numerous people who are eager to come to the senior centers, but don't practice social distancing or wear masks. Next week, 2 of their centers will add drive-thru meal pick-up with hot meals. Transportation remains a challenge; they remain cautious about starting up their own transportation program and may start with medical appointments only. They are hearing from folks who think COVID-19 is all a hoax. Carol Stamatakis (Senior Solutions) says there is a need to balance people's individual choices about going out and continuing to follow guidance.
 - Hilary Davis (VNH) says they have had to re-examine some of their community wellness programs and have decided to pause the foot clinics and flu clinics for the time being.
 - Havah Walther (Start Change) reports trying to come up with language to express that some people are still vulnerable even when the rest of the community is healthy. Staff who work with vulnerable people are making choices not just for themselves, but also for the people who depend on them.
 - Faye Grearson (Twin Pines Housing): She is looking for funding resources for health-vulnerable residents (senior, adult and child) to get floor-based air conditioning units, as they can no longer allow any window units. Most people at TPHT are working remotely. SASH VT has developed an approach that may allow SASH providers to start meeting with people next week. She and the Supportive Services Team are prioritizing residents they need to meet with in person and have 70 people on a weekly call system. Her concerns are seniors not going to medical appointments out of fear. The Crafts Hill renovation has paused but it will be starting up again soon with procedures to keep people and workers safe.
 - Elizabeth Kelsey (Green Mountain Alliance) wants to know if anyone has an especially effective campaign on social media, etc. to encourage community members to wear masks in public regardless of personal beliefs? Jeana Newbern (LSRVNA) would love to see something we could all use and get out at the same time throughout the Upper Valley and Greater Sullivan County.
 - Alice mentioned that some Geisel students are working on developing something like this. They are looking to see what else is out there first.

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Addressing Racism as a Health Equity Issue

- a. How are we as organizations having this conversation?
 - b. What gaps can we fill over the next year?
 - c. What can we be learning and doing to eliminate racism in our communities?
- Ryan notices that on most of his Zoom meetings, all the attendees are white. He also notes that people of color he speaks with feel they should be treated as “experts” when asked for their input and, in some cases, compensated. [Courtney: Paid Content Experts]
 - Havah reports that the Start Change Board of Directors, all white, have agreed to change their by-laws to direct more diversity on the Board.
 - Barbara says that they have spent a great deal of time within DH and DH Community Health talking about racism. They have had uncomfortable and good conversations. Other Boards she sits on are having similar conversations. She hopes this conversation today can identify things that we can put into the PHC workplan to accomplish over the next year.
 - Courtney McKaig appreciates the Agenda and has already shared it with MAH as it’s important to keep this on our agendas going forward. Mindfully facing our whiteness/privilege.
 - Martha asks if we can more explicitly include law enforcement in the conversations. Alice shared that she has been in conversation with a few other people and has offered to reach out to law enforcement leaders to engage in a conversation.
 - Angela thinks saying that we want to hire diverse individuals is easy, but functionally she has run into many barriers in getting hiring managers to understand cross cultural differences and deal with implicit biases. She sees a lot of rejecting diverse candidates because they would be a "bad culture fit", so there's some internal work to be done.
 - Laurie Harding reports that the Headrest Board Chair (Matt McKinney, Hypertherm) is considering bringing in some training that relates to diversity in hiring. Alice should connect with Matt and Stacey Chiocchio to see if this is training we can host for the region.
 - Hypertherm has an excellent equity and diversity professional on their staff now, Gabrielle Lucke. They hired her from Dartmouth College.
 - Lauroe also mentioned that the Endowment for Health has a diversity program.
 - Peter Mason reports The Haven just put out a powerful statement on their institutional policy on racism, diversity and inclusion.
 - Elizabeth shares that Granite United Way has adopted a Diversity and Inclusion Statement, which they are starting to share with partners.
 - Ryan encourages us to “take the work of health out of the hands of law enforcement.” Alice is confident our local law enforcement leaders would agree with this sentiment and have begun establishing relationships to all them to do this.
 - Angie Raymond Leduc shares that the DH Community Health Team has been gathering resources for our own personal learning and exploring steps we can take. Please take a look and add more that you may have to share: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1YIRdaOrMuF03Mm7-jZ0i1mBd2TvHhdJTEjk9woVqQcs/edit?usp=sharing>
 - Courtney suggests many podcasts are available to learn more and reflect. Scene On Radio "Seeing White" Unlocking Us with Ibrahim X Kendi
 - Kim Pruettt-Ilg suggested Overlook, from your local library, has some great options as well!
 - Courtney: <https://whiteawake.org/self-education/themes-and-resources/>

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Angie Zhang suggests that there are programs in the Upper Valley that are very racist and that we should take a look at these. Faye Grearson has heard the same. Angie is willing to be part of a conversation to look at what is happening and provide a different perspective.

Racism Action Items:

1. Alice to engage with law enforcement leadership in the region;
2. Alice should connect with Matt McKinney and Stacey Chiochio to see if diversity in hiring training could happen the region.
3. Consider adopting a diversity and inclusion statement for PHC.