

New Jersey Public Health Association

Advocating For Public Health in the State of New Jersey

Summer 2016 Issue

Training Workshop on Public Health Advocacy **By Kevin McNally, MBA, NJPHA President**

On May 19, 2016, the New Jersey Public Health Association (NJPHA) co-sponsored *How Do We Advocate to Improve Health?*, an interactive learning session to help public health professionals improve our ability to advocate for policy changes supporting public health in our communities.

In her keynote, Assemblywoman Shavonda E. Sumter (35th District) spoke about advocates' effective communication with legislators. The most important factor is the ability to explain an issue clearly and simply to lawmakers. Critical information includes who is affected and what needs to be done, with supporting data. Advocacy needs to be bipartisan: health is an issue that does not choose a party.

Next, a panel of four experts discussed public health advocacy: Vicky Bass (National Association of County and City Health Officials) on educating and lobbying elected officials at all levels, from local to federal, emphasizing the importance of building relationships and telling a story; Kerri McGowan Lowrey (Public Health Law Network) on advocacy versus lobbying and the laws governing lobbying by non-profit organizations; Merle Weitz (Southern New Jersey Perinatal Cooperative) on non-legislative advocacy through educating the public; and Jeannine LaRue (Kaufman Zita Group) on her experiences as a lobbyist and state government official.

During the afternoon breakout sessions, Ms. Bass led a role-playing session on meeting with policymakers, while Ms. Lowrey and Ms. Weitz further discussed advocacy and education. Michael Richmond (NJ Local Boards of Health Association (NJLBHA)) described the role of members of local boards of health in establishing public health policy.

This learning session was sponsored by the Public Health Associations' Collaborative Effort (PHACE). Its members are NJPHA, NJLBHA, the NJ Association of County and City Health Officials (NJACCHO), the NJ Association of Public Health Nurse Administrators (NJAPHNA), the NJ Environmental Health Association (NJEHA), and the NJ Society for Public Health Education (NJSOPHE). Video of the speakers and the slides from their presentations will be posted on the NJACCHO website (www.njaccho.org) in the near future.

Editor's Note: For information on APHA's Public Health ACTION (PHACT) campaign, go to <http://bit.ly/1ZatyrM>



New Public Health Work Experience Eligibility Criteria for Certified in Public Health (CPH)

In addition to students and graduates of CEPH-accredited schools and programs of public health, individuals who have at least a **bachelor's degree and at least five subsequent years' of public health work experience** may be eligible to take the CPH exam.

Applications will be reviewed based on public health work experience, indicating the scope of foundational knowledge that has been acquired based on the ten essential public health services.

[Read More](#)

CPH Computer-based Exam Dates

***Paper & Pencil exams are offered throughout the year*

February 1 – 28

June 1 – 30

October 1 – 31

For more information, contact Info@NBPHE.org.



Zika Virus Testing Begins in New Jersey **as Department of Health's #ZapZika Campaign Continues**

By Cathleen Bennett, Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Health



At the end of May, blood and urine testing for Zika, dengue and chikungunya viruses began at the New Jersey Public Health and Environmental Laboratories (PHEL) located on the grounds of the State Police headquarters in West Trenton. The lab is among a select group of state and local public health labs outside the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that is currently prepared to test for Zika. The ability to test samples for Zika and similar viruses will further enhance New Jersey's preparedness and response to this evolving health emergency unfolding in the Caribbean and Central and South Americas. The New Jersey PHEL can perform three diagnostic, CDC-developed Zika tests to detect the virus and differentiate it from similar illnesses. This testing takes place in the highest security area of the lab.

Early on in this public health emergency, the Department of Health began collaborating with its partners and sharing information with the public to raise awareness. The Department continues to do so through its #ZapZika education campaign that features radio advertisements in English and Spanish, NJ Transit bus ads and targeted social media efforts.

To date, there have been no reports of Zika spread by mosquitoes in the continental United States, but nearly 600 cases have been reported in travelers, including [16 in New Jersey](#). As New Jersey enters into mosquito season, residents should be aware that the best way to prevent mosquito bites is by using EPA-registered mosquito repellent, wearing long-sleeved shirts and pants, and using air conditioning and window screens. If local Zika transmission occurs in the U.S., outbreaks would likely be small and limited in scope, based on experiences with chikungunya and dengue. New Jersey has a long history of robust mosquito control that helps limit the spread of mosquito-borne diseases. County mosquito control agencies partner with the Department of Environmental Protection to address concerns at the local level.

As part of the #ZapZika campaign, Department staff and local health partners traveled to Atlanta in April to attend CDC's Zika Action Plan Summit where more than 300 local, state and federal officials, health experts and other partners collaborated to ensure a coordinated Zika response. The Department's top doctors and epidemiologists have been meeting with pregnant women in health centers and hospitals, physician groups, college students, professional medical societies and public health officials. Deputy Commissioner Dr. Arturo Brito, a bilingual pediatrician, continues to meet with Brazilian and Hispanic populations to share information in English and Spanish and host conference calls with physicians to review CDC guidance.

The American Red Cross has recommended that asymptomatic blood donors who have traveled to Mexico, the Caribbean, or Central or South Americas postpone blood donations until 28 days after returning to the U.S. The CDC [maintains a list](#) of active transmission areas.

Physicians and local health officials should contact the Department's Communicable Disease Service at 609-826-5964 if they believe they have a patient who meets testing criteria. Physicians may contact the PHEL for laboratory questions related to Zika at zika.phel@doh.nj.gov. The Department and the New Jersey Poison Information and Education System (NJPIES) have partnered to open a call line for providers and the public available at 1-800-962-1253.

It is important to check the [Department's Zika website](#) daily, as well as the [CDC's Zika webpage](#). Let's Zap Zika together as we increase our preparedness and protect New Jersey residents from this virus and its health consequences for pregnant women and their children.



Outside the NJPHEL in West Trenton, NJ (photo: NJDOH Office of Communications)

Using Law to Address Barriers to Health Equity

By Gwyneth M. Eliasson, JD, MPH

On April 21, 2016, the Network for Public Health Law (NPHL) and the American Society of Law, Medicine and Ethics (ASLME) presented a webinar on “Addressing Socioeconomic Barriers to Health Equity through Law,” part of their Public Health Law Webinar Series. Moderated by Donna Levin, JD, NPHL’s National Director, the webinar featured three speakers: Jennifer Bernstein, JD, MPH and William Tilburg, JD, both from NPHL, and Virginia Dario Elizondo, JD, Office of the San Francisco City Attorney.

To preview the September 2016 Public Health Law Conference, three session topics were presented: lessons learned from the Flint water crisis; efficient, healthy, and safe housing; and the custody and care of people with mental illness in jails. In the first presentation, Ms. Bernstein discussed Michigan’s emergency manager law, public health considerations during a financial crisis, and legal tools, e.g., declaring a public health emergency or regulating businesses and professions.

For more on Flint, read these NPHL blog posts:

<http://bit.ly/1WsB7vQ> (public health challenges and legal interventions)

<http://bit.ly/1RAfP7s> (policy measures to address health consequences of lead poisoning)

NPHL’s “The Flint Water Crisis: Lessons in Public Health, Law, and Ethics” Webinar:

<http://bit.ly/250ia5c>

In the second presentation, Mr. Tilburg discussed the link between housing and health (including disparities in access to safe and healthy homes), common housing hazards and health risks, and policy approaches in Connecticut (healthy homes program); Greensboro, NC (code enforcement); and Seattle, WA (breathe easy homes).

To view/download the slides or listen to/watch the playback of the webinar:

<http://bit.ly/22QSg0Z>

2016 Public Health Law Conference – Lead, Connect, Innovate: Strategies for Achieving Health Equity www.phlc2016.org

Career Corner: Resources for Job Hunters

Compiled by Gwyneth M. Eliasson, JD, MPH

- Idealist Careers on “Acing Your Nonprofit Phone Interview”
<http://bit.ly/1oxKjjO>
- From Forbes: “The Interview Question Job Seekers Hate Most”
<http://onforb.es/1OTSmyp>
- U.S. News and World Report “On Careers” Blog: “5 Things You Should Never Say During a Phone Interview”
<http://bit.ly/1RifPKB>

A Message for New Graduates

From NJPHA President Kevin McNally

This is a message for anyone who recently received a degree related to Public Health. On behalf of the members of the New Jersey Public Health Association (NJPHA), I congratulate you on this achievement.

To those of you who are working public health professionals who went back to school to earn an advanced degree, I acknowledge your commitment to improve your knowledge and skills in order to contribute even more to the health of our population than you already have.

To those of you for whom this degree is the beginning of a career in public health, I welcome you to the public health community. For public health is just that. More than just a job, public health is a community of dedicated individuals who seek to combine their efforts to the vision of healthy communities, and better health for everyone who lives and works in them. If *you* are willing to dedicate yourself to this vision, and to bring your passion to everything that you do, it can be among the most rewarding careers that you could choose.

You have chosen a particularly challenging and at the same time crucial time to enter the public health arena. You've learned about the challenges we face in your classes: new and re-emerging diseases, environmental hazards, increases in chronic diseases due to lifestyle choices, a changing climate, and global transportation that means that a disease outbreak half a world away can be in our own communities tomorrow. At the same time we must deal with all these with limited and too often shrinking resources.

And yet many of the challenges you will face in your careers are unknown to you today, just as many of today's challenges – AIDS, Ebola, bioterrorism, and climate change – were unknown when I received my Master's Degree 40 years ago. Just one year ago, few of us had heard of the Zika virus. So earning your degree, while a major milestone, is not the end of your education. A commitment to lifelong learning is more vital now than it has ever been.

I have just one piece of advice: In my experience, the best way to integrate yourself into the community that is public health is by joining and participating in a professional association. Through this participation you will get to meet and collaborate with other public health people and find opportunities for networking and professional development. In particular, the organization that brings together people from all aspects of public health is the American Public Health Association (APHA). NJPHA is an affiliate of APHA. And NJPHA is made up of dedicated people, like you, who are committed to public health and to making a difference.

I am pleased to be able to offer all recent graduates a free one-year membership in NJPHA. To take advantage of this offer, please go to <http://njpha.org/join/> and sign up by selecting the "New Professional (Recent Graduate – 1st Year)" category.

Congratulations and good luck!

Public Health Practice Night at Rutgers School of Public Health

By Ndome Yvonne Essoka, MPH



On April 15, 2016, the Student Government Association (SGA) held its first annual Public Health Practice Night at the New Brunswick location of Rutgers School of Public Health (RSPH). Health professionals from all sectors were invited to participate in round table discussions with students and to share their public health experiences and insights. The event was promoted through student listservs, EventBrite, and other forms of social media. The Rutgers School of Public Health Alumni Association (SPHAA) and the New Jersey Public Health Association (NJPHA) were the event's biggest supporters.

Public Health Practice Night kicked off with introductions from the SGA's Executive Board and a catered dinner. Following dinner, Dr. Michael Gusmano, Associate Professor in the Department of Health Systems and Policy at RSPH, gave a riveting keynote about his nontraditional journey to public health. His speech was funny and informative, and it captivated the audience; it highlighted the diversity of the field and touched upon the variety of career options available to students. After the keynote, the SGA helped transition the crowd to the round table discussions. One to two health professionals sat at each table with a group of students. Every fifteen minutes, time was announced to encourage students to switch tables and meet new people; however, some students were so engaged in their conversations that they stayed longer at certain tables.

Finally, the night ended with a job search workshop presented by SPHAA representative Gwyneth Eliasson, JD, MPH. She provided students with tools and hard copy materials to help in internship, fellowship, and job searches. She collected email addresses and provided attendees with information on public health resumes the next day.

This Public Health Practice Night was a success, and RSPH students are excited for bigger and better things in the years to come.



New Jersey Public Health Association

NJPHA's quarterly Newsletter offers you an opportunity to hone your skills and enhance your résumé by writing about public health topics.

Deadline for Fall 2016 Issue: Friday, August 26th

Articles on ANY public health-related topic are welcome, such as:

- Internship or fieldwork (capstone/practicum) experience
- Work with a public health program or research project
- Public health events or news at your school
- Thoughts on a policy with public health implications
- Commentary on a public health issue
- Public health career advice
- Local, state, or national public health events, projects, or advocacy efforts
- Other news of public health importance

Please include this information:

- Title of article
- Byline with:
 - Your name and degree(s)
 - Your academic institution or employment affiliation
- A head shot or picture of yourself (if available)

Please follow these article submission guidelines:

- In Microsoft Word with 12-point, Times New Roman font
- Single-spaced
- 300-word maximum
- References (if applicable)

For examples of published articles, please see the Winter/Spring/Summer 2016 issues, posted on NJPHA's website: <http://njpha.org/>

Email your article (or any questions) to an Editor -

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