



**PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING  
Wednesday, June 14, 2023**

**THIS MEETING WAS CONDUCTED BY REMOTE PARTICIPATION.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Christina Wagar, Kamori Cattadoris, Mary Selecky, Wes McCart, Nancy Churchill, Dr. Leslie Waters, Cheri Petersen

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Katie Swain, Mike Martinoli, Debra Wulff

**GUESTS:** No guests.

**NETCHD STAFF PRESENT:** Jeanie Beegle, Matt Schanz, Sonja Moore, Jon Ness, Rae Lamp, Molly Corvino, Dr. Sam Artzis

**CALL MEETING TO ORDER:** Christina Wagar called the meeting to order at 8:00 am.

**CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES OF MARCH 08, 2023:** Kamori Cattadoris moved, and Nancy Churchill seconded the motion to approve the minutes of May 10, 2023. Motion carries.

**PUBLIC APPEARANCES OR COMMENTS:** Nancy Churchill shared there will be a fly-in event in Republic on July 1, 2023, from 7:30am – 11:30am. From FerryCounty.com, “The annual event brings upwards of 100 private aircraft and their owners to Ferry County Airport (FAA identifier R49)”. The event is open to the public and proceeds will fund airport improvements.

**ADDITIONS OR CHANGES TO AGENDA:** Commissioner McCart mentioned to the group that complaints have been coming in from community members regarding sharps being improperly disposed of at parks and other recreation areas. He would like to bring this issue to the PHAB as an agenda item for discussion.

Christina Wagar added Public Health Advisory Board membership update, introduction of the Childhood Immunization Coordinator, and sharps disposal to the agenda.

**COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CHIP) UPDATE:** CHIP meetings have been held in Ferry and Pend Oreille County, with the Stevens County meeting to occur on June 21, 2023. The purpose of the CHIP meeting is to select a singular focus area within each county from the top three issues identified during the community health needs assessment process. Each county has selected their focus and created a goal statement as follows:

- **Ferry County Focus Area: Housing**  
Goal Statement: “Residents and potential residents in Ferry County have access to sustainable housing.” This encompasses issues such as affordability, sanitation, accessibility, and connection for internet/phone.
- **Pend Oreille County Focus Area: Childcare**  
Goal Statement: “All families in Pend Oreille County have access to childcare.”

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- **Stevens County Focus Area: To be determined**

Goal Statement: To be determined

Meeting Date: June 21, 2023.

Sonja stated during the final CHIP meetings, the group will identify what activities and strategies can be used to achieve each county's goal.

**CNA LOCAL TESTING CENTER SITE:** Matt Schanz stated that a small group has met including Nancy Churchill, Christina Wagar, Matt Schanz, Casey Scott, and Mike Martinoli to work through challenges and identify possible testing sites.

Mike Martinoli has been working with Credentia and the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) to prep one of the rooms at Ferry County Memorial Hospital to be a certified testing site for CNAs. A staff member at the hospital is a former nursing assistant certified (NAC) instructor and has offered to be a tester for the exams once the site is active. In addition, Judy Hutton (former community health director at NETCHD) has offered to possibly renew her registered nurse (RN) license to assist as an evaluator at the testing site. The site is intended to be a resource to residents of all three counties, however, this will need to be cleared through DOH and Credentia to ensure participation could be limited to residents of tri-county area only.

Nancy Churchill commended the team for their work in establishing the testing site for Ferry County.

**OPIOID COMMUNITY MEETING PLANNING:** Molly Corvino and Dr. Caleb Holtzer are working to host an informational meeting for the community regarding the opioid crisis and its impacts on our three counties, as well as highlight resources and services available within each county. The meeting will be held remotely via Microsoft Teams on June 27, 2023 and will be available as a recording for viewing after the meeting as well. The event will be shared out with community partners, the PHAB, and advertised on NETCHD's website and Facebook page.

**PHAB MEMBERSHIP TERMS:** Christina Wagar stated that Dr. Leslie Waters has opted to continue membership with the PHAB. Matt indicated that he would connect with Katie Swain to determine her interest in continued service.

**CHILDHOOD IMMUNIZATION COORDINATOR:** NETCHD's new Childhood Immunization Coordinator, Rae Lamp, provided an overview on what has been accomplished in the first few months since accepting the position at NETCHD. The following activities have occurred:

- Surveyed school nurses across the tri-county area to identify and address barriers that parents experience regarding immunizations.
  - Barriers identified through the surveys include vaccine hesitancy stemming from the Covid-19 pandemic, lack of access to medical providers, and transportation.
  - One solution will be to establish back-to-school wellness fairs. Rae will collaborate with the medical providers and nurses in Colville, Newport, and Republic to establish these.
- Working with WSU Range Health and the DOH Caravan to improve access to immunization opportunities in our rural areas.
  - Range Health is a non-profit academic health network designed to bring health care to Washington's rural and underserved areas.

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- Preparing for an open discussion/forum with medical providers within the community to focus on the barriers to immunization in the clinic setting.
- Working to establish an immunization liaison program which will be on a volunteer basis.
  - Currently targeting school nurses as the potential liaisons for the program to provide immunizations under the standing orders.
  - The program will serve as a safety net for children who may slip through the cracks due to barriers and will help to ensure they are up to date on required vaccinations when the school year starts.

Rae has a Master of Social Work with a focus in community organizing, planning, and administration.

**INDOOR AIR QUALITY AND MOLD:** Matt Schanz stated NETCHD's environmental health staff receive frequent calls and complaints from tenants concerned about mold and water leak issues in their residence. Unfortunately, due to the housing crisis across the US and within our three counties, tenants experiencing these issues are hesitant to pressure their landlord to remediate the issues for fear of losing their housing. In addition, there are typically no other rental options, and no regulatory requirements that allow NETCHD to act as an authoritative or enforcement entity on the matter. The only regulations that exist are within the Residential Landlord-Tenant Act (RCW 59.18). Where the tenant can request NETCHD to complete a third-party inspection. Environmental health staff will document the mold or water issue by taking pictures and completing a report which is then submitted to the tenant and landlord. The issue may go to litigation if the landlord does not remediate the issue.

Jon Ness said homeowners will also contact NETCHD regarding mold due to dampness or leaking pipes and this is often seen in older homes. However, even newer houses that are well-sealed are prone to mold when air remains stagnant. Jon said NETCHD provides resources around prevention and clean up to community members facing these issues.

In addition, environmental health staff routinely visit schools within the tri-county area to evaluate air circulation and air quality as part of the School Health and Safety program. ESD101 has an industrial hygienist on staff that can provide support, evaluation, and consultation to schools as well.

Cheri Petersen said it may be beneficial for NETCHD to take a proactive approach with outreach across our three counties to bring awareness to these issues. NETCHD could provide information about what to look for, how to remediate mold, and what resources or services are available to tenants and homeowners facing these issues.

Nancy Churchill asked if NETCHD provides resources and education to the community on mold cleanup. Jon stated there is information available on the WA DOH that outlines mold cleanup which NETCHD will often refer community members to.

Dr. Sam Artzis said he has seen many patients in the past several years that are experiencing the adverse effects of mold exposure. Mold can often be present behind drywall and not visible to the naked eye. Unfortunately, the landlords that he has spoken with typically do not have the resources to be able to remedy the mold issues and/or there is nowhere for their tenants to go while they remediate.

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**FUTURE MEETINGS PUBLIC HEALTH FOCUS AREAS:** Christina Wagar said topics already covered include radon and mold; bed bugs are still on the list for discussion. She asked the group what other topics they would like to include.

Mary Selecky suggested that Rae Lamp could share additional findings with the PHAB as she progresses in her work. The group agreed and this will be added as a permanent agenda item for future meetings.

Wes McCart spoke about the complaints he has received from community members regarding improper sharps disposal and sharps appearing in many public places and recreation sites. He referenced Lucky Duck Park in Springdale, a pond where only youth under the age of 16 can fish, noting there is a significant number of sharps littering the area. In addition, Colville's Yep Kanum Park frequently has needles found throughout the area.

Matt Schanz said this was the driving force behind NETCHD's Syringe Services Program, with a goal to get sharps off the streets by incentivizing the return and safe disposal of needles, and to prevent the spread of Hep C. Prior to the needle exchange, significant volumes of needles were being found in communities. NETCHD accepts all needles at each of its three offices through the exchange program. In addition, needle drop boxes are available 24/7 at each office; these are located outside.

If there are prolonged and persistent problems within certain communities, NETCHD can work with those communities to install additional drop boxes in parks and other high-volume areas. The additional boxes could potentially be purchased through a solid waste management grant.

Cheri Petersen said in some counties the syringe exchanges are not enough, stating that some counties have partnered with the city and hospital to distribute sharps containers throughout the community. Much like our counties, transportation is an issue for many community members, so it was most effective to deliver the solutions to where the issues are most prevalent.

Wes McCart said with fentanyl being more prevalent, he is concerned that kids or those picking up needles during clean up may come into contact with drug residue.

Matt said NETCHD will work with Department of Ecology to fund additional drop boxes for disposal and work with communities to distribute and set up.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Christina Wagar adjourned the meeting at 9:01am. The next meeting of the Public Health Advisory Board of Northeast Tri County Health District will be on July 12, 2023, by remote participation.

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*Melanie Vaagen*  
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Melanie Vaagen  
Administration Office Manager

DocuSigned by:  
*Christina G. Wagar*  
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Christina Wagar  
Public Health Advisory Board Chair