



# CATTARAUGUS COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

1 Leo Moss Drive, Olean, NY 14760, Tel. (716)373-8050, Fax (716) 701-3737



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect  
Cattaraugus County  
Health Department  
Established 1923

*Mayor David L. Smith, President*

*Giles Hamlin, MD, Vice-President*

*Joseph Bohan, MD*

*Zahid Chohan, MD*

*Legislator Kelly J. Andreano*

*Kathryn Cooney Thrush, NP, MSN*

*Shane Pancio*

*Theresa Raftis*

*Legislator Ginger D. Schroder*

## MINUTES March 6, 2024

The 920<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Cattaraugus County Board of Health (BOH) was held at the Old Library Restaurant on March 6, 2024.

*The following members were present:*

Joseph Bohan, MD

Zahid Chohan, MD

Giles Hamlin, MD

Legislator Kelly J. Andreano

Kathryn Cooney-Thrush, NP, MSN

Shane Pancio

Theresa Raftis

Legislator Ginger D. Schroeder

Mayor David L. Smith

*Also present were:*

Kevin D. Watkins, MD, MPH, Public Health Director

Ashley Smith, County Attorney

Ray Jordan, Senior Public Health Sanitarian (Virtual)

Debra Lacher, Secretary to the Public Health Director

James Lawrence, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Director

Colette Lulay-Pound, Administrative Officer

Rick Miller, Olean Times Herald

Lynne Moore, Director of Nursing

Dave Porter, Hearing Officer

Robert Ring, Environmental Health Director

Matt Tyssee, Public Health Educator

Gilbert Witte, Medical Director

Mayor Smith welcomed everyone to the Board of Health (BOH) meeting, he thanked Board member Donna Vickman, for her two years of service on the BOH. Ms. Vickman's replacement is County Legislator Ginger Schroeder whose term will expire December 31, 2027.

Roll was called and all BOH members were in attendance.

Mayor Smith called for approval of the February 1, 2024 meeting minutes. A motion was made by Ms. Raftis to approve the minutes as presented, the motion was seconded by Dr. Bohan, and unanimously approved.



**DIRECTORS REPORT:** Dr. Watkins presented one action item for the Board's approval which was a change to the physical examination policy in the certified home health agency division. A copy of the policy was emailed to all Board members for their review, and was distributed to those in attendance. Dr. Watkins explained that a TB skin test section was added to the policy. A motion was made by Mrs. Cooney-Thrush to accept the updated policy as written, the motion was seconded by Ms. Raftis, and unanimously approved.

Dr. Watkins informed the board that March is colorectal cancer month, and colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in United States. Every three years the American Cancer Society (ACS) provides an update of colorectal cancer statistics from the National Center for Health Statistics. Based on the ACS, in 2024, there will be approximately 152,810 individuals diagnosed with colon-rectal cancer. Of these, 106,590 cases will be colon cancer (54,210 in men and 52,380 in women), and 46,220 cases will be rectal cancer (27,330 in men and 18,890 in women). ACS estimates that 53,010 people will die from colorectal cancer in 2024, a slight increase over last year's estimate of 52,550.

In Cattaraugus County, between 2016 and 2020, the average rate of men and women diagnosed with colorectal cancer was 37.8 and the average rate of deaths from the disease for men and women was 13.2.

The gold standard for screening for colorectal cancer is a colonoscopy. When it comes to screening, Cattaraugus County is doing pretty well. A 2018 analysis of residents aged 50-64 years, shows that Cattaraugus had a colorectal screening rate of (68.8%), which is slightly above the 2024 prevention agenda objective screening rate of 66.3%.

Risk factors for colorectal cancer include age, family history, obesity, physical inactivity, high fat diet, smoking and drinking. Signs and symptoms of colorectal cancer include a change in bowel habits, fatigue, weight loss, abdominal pain, rectal bleeding or blood in the stool, iron deficiency and anemia. Things that can be done to prevent these risk factors include; eating a diet low in animal fat, high in fruit, vegetables, and whole grains, increasing physical activity, limiting alcohol consumption, and avoiding tobacco.

Dr. Watkins gave an update on measles, he stated that in 2000, measles was considered eliminated but in 2024, measles is shaping up to be a critical year for new cases. As of date, in 2024, the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has identified (41) cases of measles in the US, compared to only (3) cases of measles during the same time period last year. Seventeen states have confirmed measles cases, with the largest outbreak occurring in Florida. Most are amongst children who have not been vaccinated against measles.

The rate of vaccination with one dose of the Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) vaccine in Cattaraugus County is (77.0%), this rate is lower than other western NY counties MMR vaccine rate, mainly due to the large number of Amish residents in Cattaraugus County who often opt out of vaccines. Measles is one of the most contagious viral diseases, about 90% of people who haven't had measles or been vaccinated against measles will become infected when exposed to someone with the measles virus.

Symptoms include, fever up to (104°F), cough, runny nose, and watery eyes. After symptoms occur, (3-4) days, rash usually begins as flat red spots that appear on the face at the hairline and spread downward to the neck, trunk, arms, legs, and feet.

Complications can include, diarrhea, ear infections, pneumonia, brain swelling, miscarriages, and low birth weight infants. Treatment includes medication for the appropriate symptoms (i.e., ibuprofen, antibiotics, and hospitalization for severe symptoms). For prevention, vaccination is very effective, one dose is (93%) effective, while two doses are (97%) effective. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends that the first dose of the measles vaccine should be given between (12-15) months of age, and the second dose given between (4-6) years of age.

Measles spreads so easily that an estimated (95%) of a population needs to be vaccinated to achieve herd immunity. Providers are asked to consider measles in their differential diagnosis when a person presents with measles symptoms and a travel history to an endemic area.

Mr. Miller asked if there were any measles cases in Cattaraugus County, Dr. Watkins replied no.

Dr. Watkins updated the Board on the new Respiratory virus guidance just released by CDC. He stated that the new guidance brings a unified approach to addressing risks from a range of common respiratory viral illnesses, such as COVID-19, influenza, and RSV, which can cause significant health impacts and strain on hospitals and health care workers. He stated that based on the new guidance, it is recommended that when people get sick and symptomatic (i.e., cough fever, chills, fatigue, etc.) due to a respiratory virus, that they should stay home and away from others. The recommendations suggest returning to normal activities when, for at least 24 hours, symptoms are improving overall, and if a fever was present, it has been gone without use of a fever-reducing medication. Once people resume normal activities, they are encouraged to take additional prevention strategies for the next 5 days to curb disease spread, such as taking more steps for cleaner air, enhancing hygiene practices, wearing a well-fitting mask, keeping a distance from others, and/or getting tested for respiratory viruses.

Finally, he added that CDC also recommends that those who are (65) years of age or older who are not immunocompromised should be offered an updated COVID-19 vaccine at least (4) months following their previous dose. People who are immunocompromised and are between (12-64) years of age, they may receive an additional dose or more of any updated COVID-19 vaccine. Those that are immunocompromised and are 65 and older should receive an additional dose or more of any updated COVID-19 vaccine as well.

**ENFORCEMENT LIST:** There were no new enforcement cases for discussion.

**NURSING DIVISION REPORT:** Mrs. Moore shared that the homecare census is (250).

The NYSDOH showed up to conduct an anticipated survey (audit) of the department's homecare agency on November 29<sup>th</sup>. The plan of corrections was received by the department on Friday of last week and must be resubmitted to NYSDOH by the close of business today.

Lead program update: in February there were (105) lead tests conducted with the highest blood lead level (BLL) tested being (19.8ug/dl), [normal is  $\leq$  5ug/dl] this child previously had a BLL of (33.3ug/dl) in November of 2023. Another child had a BLL of (13.4ug/dl), down from (21.5ug/dl) in May of 2023, and finally, another child had a BLL of (10.2ug/dl), down from a previous level of (14.2ug/dl) in May 2023. There were (12) children with BLL's between (5 and 9.6ug/dl) and (90) children with BLL's below (5ug/dl). The total case load is (85) children.

There are (2) staff members that are required to attend a Lead Hazard Control and National Healthy Homes Conference in Minneapolis in April. The department will be sending one community health nurse and one environmental health sanitarian.

The clinic now has a mass vaccination software application (app) in their electronic medical records which will allow consumers to access a site where they can schedule their own Flu/COVID vaccinations when community clinics are offered. This app will streamline the appointment and billing process for staff. The department is hoping to test this tool in April at an upcoming COVID vaccination clinic.

HIV testing; in Olean there were (5) tests conducted in February and there were no positive results identified; no tests were conducted in Salamanca or Machias for the month of February.

Communicable diseases: there was (1) child with campylobacteriosis, this child has had Campylobacteriosis a couple of times due to drinking of raw milk and cream, and the parents also use formula mixed with spring water, the department is following up with education, and making sure the hospital does the same. In February, there were (26) positive cases of chlamydia; (10) positive cases of gonorrhea; and (3) positive cases of Syphilis; there were (6) chronic cases of Hepatitis C; (98) cases of influenza A; (40) cases of influenza B; (34) cases of Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) and (68) cases of COVID; there was (1) case of salmonellosis, this individual has traveled internationally and through the USA with no known source; there were (3) cases of Strep A invasive; (2) cases of Strep pneumoniae invasive; and there were (19) individuals tested for Lyme with no positive cases.

Rabies update: there were (2) post exposure rabies series given one for a cat bite, and one for a bat exposure. Legislator Andreano asked if the bat was positive. Moore replied no, she added that most of the time the bats are not captured to be tested so the department must offer the post exposure rabies series as rabies is a fatal disease.

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH REPORT:** Mr. Ring shared that the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) currently has (19) active projects, with room for (4-5) more, based on the amount of funding remaining which is about (\$50,000.00), from the original (\$400,000.00). The goal is to wrap up all the projects by the end of the construction season. At this time, the department is still adding names to the waiting list, and it has been confirmed that this program will be available again in 2025.

Preparation for the summer mosquito program is underway. The department has met with a few college students who are applying for the (2) program aide positions and have spoken with Jeff Duflo who is the pilot that does the spraying for the mosquito program.

The department is preparing for possible large gatherings at campgrounds, and temporary food permit's locations due to the huge interest in the solar eclipse. Normally, campgrounds are not open in early April, but due to the eclipse being on April 8<sup>th</sup> it is anticipated that there will be those who want to view the eclipse from their campground.

Capital projects; as of date there are (8) municipalities with active construction projects, (South Dayton, Franklinville, Little Valley, Ellicottville, Olean, Machias, Yorkshire, and Randolph).

March 6, 2024

Page Five

State funding to develop and implement community-specific drinking water source protection programs/projects is being funneled to municipalities, which is great to see. There are at least (4) municipalities with projects that are in the design phase for engineering that the department has yet to review. All of the municipalities are required to submit a drinking water lead service line inventory by October 2024.

**Old/New Business:** Mayor Smith asked if there was any other old or new business. Dr. Witte, suggested that the department emphasize how to safely view the eclipse. The next BOH meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, prior to the eclipse.

A motion to adjourn was made by Legislator Andreano, the motion was seconded Mr. Pancio, and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

*Kevin D. Watkins, M.D.*  
Kevin D. Watkins, M.D., M.P.H.  
Secretary to the Board of Health