



Cumberland District Public Health Council
Full Council Meeting
January 16th, 2026
Virtual

Present: Regina Angelo (CCM), Liz Blackwell-Moore (CCPH), Anna Bullett (WIC), Mufalo Chitam (MIRC), Elizabeth Clark (MIP), Glenn Damon (MECDC), Deqa Dhalac (CCCS), Dr. Steve DiGiovanni (MaineHealth), Jim Fraser (CCEMA), Ellen Freedman (MaineHealth), Rachel Gallo (USM), Barbara Ginley (MaineHealth), Susie Guthro (TOA), Eden Hale (DPHE), Lori Huot (MEDOE), Amanda Hutchins (PPH), Kristine Jenkins (MECDC), Josephine Kamagaju (Project Home), Courtney Kennedy (GSFB), Janet Lewin, Nina Misra (UWSM), Bridget Rauscher (PPH), Katie Rutherford (Frannie Peabody), Preston Sanborn (PPH), Jennie Summers Shea (Spurwink), Hannah Siladi (UNE), Lane Simsarian (DPHE), Ann Tucker (GPH), Kathy Vezina (MCOA), Andrew Volkers (Preble Street), Kristina Wilson (CMHC/Bridgton Hospital)

Topic	Discussion	Notes/Actions
MIP Briefing on Recommended Changes to the Vaccination Schedule, Elizabeth Clark	- On January 5, 2026, the Acting Director of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (U.S. CDC) signed a decision memorandum that reduced the number of immunizations routinely recommended for all children on the U.S. CDC Child and Adolescent Immunization Schedule. - The Maine Department of Health and Human Services' Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) continues to recommend clinicians follow the pediatric immunization guidance provided by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) as the evidence-based recommendations for childhood vaccinations. The Maine CDC is not aware of any changes in disease trends, product availability or vaccine safety concerns that would warrant changes to the schedule. - The Maine Department of Health and Human Services' Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) continues to follow the guidance of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), American	-Presentation attached with notes - www.immunize.org is a good site for translated materials on vaccines

	Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), and American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologist (ACOG) on vaccine recommendations. - Families are encouraged to consult qualified health care professionals and rely on trusted medical sources when making decisions. Vaccines are our most effective defense against vaccine-preventable illness. - In Maine, vaccines remain available at no cost to eligible children through the Maine Immunization Program. Maine's school and childcare immunization requirements remain unchanged by federal actions to date.	
A Pediatrician's Perspective on Vaccine Recommendations, Dr. Stephen DiGiovanni	- Despite changes to recommendations from federal CDC, in Maine, we still have a science-based and collaborative infrastructure, and continue to have relatively good immunization rates - Regarding vaccine hesitation, it's important to not judge, and to build a trusting relationship with parents, as well as making information available and lowering any other barriers to care (like location of health clinics) that might keep families from getting vaccinated. - Increases in vaccination rates have been shown, when the focus is on lowering barriers. Ex: We went from 45% to 75% vaccination rate for HPV when this approach was used - VIS (vaccine information sheets) are available, but not very accessible as public health information The American Academy of Pediatrics has good materials on vaccines ***The MaineHealth Pharmacy and vaccination team, including Heather Stewart and Isabelle Brindley, and Portland Public Health's Sarah Sheldon, as well as student volunteers from UNE, were recognized and thanked for the incredible effort they made during this season, vaccinating at school and community-based clinics.***	Questions: Is there concern that vaccines will not be covered by insurance? No. Click here for Maine CDC's Health Advisory on vaccine schedules. Is Maine in agreement with other members of the Northeast Collaborative for Public Health? Yes.

Update on HIV in Portland, Bridget Rauscher	• In routine surveillance, Maine CDC noted an increase in the number of HIV cases amongst injection drug users in Cumberland County – up from an average of 1 new case per year for the past 4 years, to 5 new cases recorded in 2025. • Maine CDC recommends increased frequency of testing for those in high risk categories, and testing of all pregnant people. • Portland Public Health is convening monthly meetings for partners, which are open to all (January meeting date tbd). • Partners, including PPH, GPH, Frannie Peabody, and Preble Street, are increasing testing opportunities; training testers: distributing at-home tests, especially with people who use injection drugs • PPH has administered over 100 tests through the syringe exchange, finding no new HIV cases, but identified a few people with Hep C and Syphilis, who were then connected to care. • Frannie Peabody asks that anyone who is able to hang flyers about testing do so (flyers attached with notes) • If any agency is interested hosting walk-in testing or distributing self test kits, request form is available from Frannie Peabody	-View the Maine CDC HIV Prevention and Care Plan (2022-26) here -Find out more and register for Maine CDC Trainings for HIV Testers here
Partner Updates	• Cross Cultural Community Services and Southern Maine Agency on Aging are holding a community café on January 29th on services available for elders in communities of color (flyer attached with notes) • Cross Cultural Community Services (CCCS) will host the 6th Annual Black History Month Community Wellness Fair entitled Aging Forward: Lived Experience and Collective Resilience. This two-day event will take place on Wednesday, February 11, at 4:00 PM at the University of Southern Maine's McGoldrick Center in Portland. This interactive storytelling session features older BIPOC Mainers sharing their lived experiences and addressing the ways they cultivate resilience, connection, and hope. • The Maine Council on Aging is partnering with Trust for America's Health (TFAH) to offer public health leaders in Maine and Iowa an opportunity to participate in a pilot training program based on the new Age-Friendly Public Health Systems (AFPHS) 6Cs Framework Training and Implementation Guide (6Cs Guide). The program is designed to increase knowledge and expertise in understanding the public health roles in improving and supporting older adult health and well-being.	-There was a suggestion/question if we could compile a list of public health related bills.

	• This is the start of the legislative session and the following bills were mentioned: Good Shepherd Food Bank, LD 485 (add funding to Mainers feeding Mainers), LD 468 (Increased funds for SNAP/EBT); Cumberland County Public Health, LD 1658 (assign a % of tobacco excise tax to Fund for Healthy Maine), LD 1772 (create a commission for public health and prevention) • Upcoming Data Innovation Project training, "Grant Applications: what are you really being asked to evaluate?" https://secure.touchnet.com/C22921_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=3512&SINGLESTORE=true	
Discussion of Potential Increased ICE Activity in Southern Maine	• WIC planning, and may go completely remote. They can do appointments by phone, but any bloodwork would need to be done at a medical partner. WIC can take volunteers to help with shopping for clients, is nuanced, training provided. The WIC Director will reach out to 211 to see if they can help with some resource requests from people sheltering in place. • Greater Portland Health is revisiting previously used materials on legal questions regarding warrants, etc... They are having a Town Hall today to answer questions. They report that their “no shows” have increased. They will be sending out messaging to patients around switching appointments to telehealth when possible. • Portland Public Health is revisiting guidance and minimizing staff and patient presence – prioritizing safety. • Frannie Peabody is encouraging staff to work remotely, and focusing on getting food support to clients, and in some cases extending extra housing allowances for people who have been detained. They are having staff save key apps (WhatsApp) and materials on their cell phones. • MaineHealth Food Pantry reports that their weekly number of people served dropped by 100-150 people yesterday (typically serve 600 and above per day). They are looking at options to increase deliveries, and increase the number of volunteers in the parking lot during distributions. A few volunteers have done verifier trainings. Their legal team is reviewing documents that were prepared last winter, and they are sending a communication out to partners later today. • MIRC reported that immigrant community members are sheltering in place. MIRC is training volunteers to help with the ICE Hotline 207-544-9989, and to help people who are sheltering with groceries, and protection going to appointments, etc... The stance is planning for a 2-week shutdown, and encouraging people and employers to plan accordingly. The idea is to reduce the traffic for immigrants in the community. Services and good need to go to people where they are, and we cannot rely on ECBOs to deliver services as they did during Covid – because they are also at risk. A resource list would be good to have, like there was during	-Maine Immigrant Resource Hub and Hotline -Maine ACLU Preparing and Responding to Immigration Enforcement Activity

	Covid – and a draft of such a document was shared (included with notes) MIRC ED has met with Portland Mayor and Chamber of Commerce. • Office of Maine Refugees/State Refugee Health Coordinator shared that they are developing strategies, as the lawful permanent residents that they serve, are also at-risk of being detained • MOCA representative is connected to an interfaith group which may be a good source for volunteers • Spurwink has a network SHIFA that serves 150 families, and could have a role in helping to deliver food or other materials. TAKE-AWAYS/NEXT STEPS: • Some sort of community referral form would be great -people afraid to share information -Maine Solidarity Fund does have a request form for funds • Reminder to check information before re-posting it (about ICE updates, etc..) • CDPHC email chain will be established (opt-in basis let Kristine know) and shared google drive folder with materials and resources will be created- Smartsheets were also mentioned....stay tuned....	
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