

Norwalk Health Department Board of Health Actions

November 14, 2006

8:00 AM

Library

Call to order at 8:10 AM

Present: Board of Health – Ken Lalime, RPH, John McNamara, MD, and Edward Tracey, MD

Staff – Tim Callahan, Director of Health, Tom Closter, Director of Environmental Health, Darleen Hoffler, Clinical Supervisor and Pam Bates, Coordinator Immunization Action Program

Minutes of October 10, 2006 meeting

A motion to approve the minutes as corrected was made by Mr. Lalime, seconded by Dr. Tracey and passed unanimously.

Influenza Clinics and Mass Dispensing Drill

Norwalk clinic attendance: 11/7/06, 426 of 465 scheduled and on 11/13/06, 370 of 435 scheduled. Additional clinics are scheduled for November 14, 16, 20 & 27. The locations are St. Mary and St Phillip's halls and the Health Department.

Scheduled appointments are fewer than expected. The target is now 2,500 doses down from the initial goal of 4,000. The vaccine order was reduced. Flu vaccine provided earlier in the season and at new outlets such as box stores and supermarkets and by health plans, as marketing tools to Medicare a participant are some of the reasons for the decline in demand for health department clinics.

Several ideas for adjusting the health department program were discussed including partnering with health plans, advertising the convenience of health department clinics and including more payors.

The Mass Dispensing Drill took place on October 28th at Saxe Middle School in New Canaan. All scheduled Norwalk Health Department staff and a large cadre of New Canaan volunteers staffed the clinic. School nurses from Norwalk and New Canaan also assisted. There were two objectives for the day; exercising the health department mass distribution plan using the Incident Command Structure and immunizing 1,000 people with influenza vaccine. Both objectives were met. In total 1,143 people were vaccinated. The average time a patient spent at the clinic from registration through exiting was 6.2 minutes.

Tall Grass & Weeds

In follow up to the Board's request, Mr. Callahan met with the Inspectors to get their input on the enforcement of tall weeds and grass. The inspectors made several observations. If an ordinance is written, the Inspectors recommend that it be in the Housing Code since aesthetics are included in this code. An example made by one of the Inspectors is peeling paint. If the paint contains lead there is a health risk. If there is

peeling non-lead containing paint, a violation of the Housing Code exists. In this latter case there is no health hazard, rather an unappealing condition exists. Similarly tall weeds and grass may pose a health risk when pollen bearing. However tall weeds and grass might be considered a violation of the Housing Code for aesthetic reasons, as with non-lead peeling paint. The Inspectors also recommended consulting with the State's Attorney since prosecution for non-compliance is through this office. Mr. Callahan requested the assistance of Assistant State's Attorney Judith Hayes. Attorney Hayes is the prosecutor assigned to the Norwalk Housing Court. Attorney Hayes has not yet responded.

Geese

The Board discussed this matter and the following conclusion was reached. Several studies found pathogenic materials including e-coli in geese feces. There is an abundance of geese in city parks and their feces are found on playing fields, in playground areas and in the runoff, which makes its way to watercourses including Long Island Sound and the rivers. Children and adults use the parks. Contact with geese feces exposes these people to pathogens. There is also a potential for injuries resulting from unsure footing created by geese feces on playing field. The Board of Health unanimously recommends the city develop and implement a comprehensive program to address this public health problem.

Childhood Immunization Program

Pam Bates, Immunization Action Plan Coordinator, reviewed the objectives and accomplishments of this project. As a result of extensive outreach to pediatricians, mothers of infants and other interested parties Norwalk 90% of Norwalk children have received age appropriate immunizations by age 2. Ms Bates report was reviewed. The Board applauded the efforts of the staff, local pediatricians and the community. There was a discussion on steps to simplify the system. Including managed care companies in the process might eliminate the duplicate entry of immunization administration. Another idea was to investigate the inclusion of the immunization registry in the e-health Connecticut project.

Adjourn at 9:10 Am