



CATTARAUGUS COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

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

Mayor David L. Smith, President

Legislator Kelly Andreano, Vice-President

*Joseph Bohan, MD
Zahid Chohan, MD
Thomas Spigel, MD
Kathryn Cooney Thrush, NP, MSN
Shane Pancio
Theresa Raftis
Legislator Ginger D. Schroder, Esq.*

MINUTES April 2, 2025

The 931st meeting of the Cattaraugus County Board of Health (BOH) was held at the Old Library Restaurant on April 2, 2025.

The following members were present:

Zahid Chohan, MD

Thomas Spigel, MD

Kelly Andreano, Legislator

Theresa Raftis

Ginger Schroder, Legislator

David Smith, Mayor

Kathryn Thrush, NP

Also present were:

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

Haley Germain, Asst. County Attorney

Ray Jordan, Senior Public Health Sanitarian (Virtual)

Debra Lacher, Secretary to the Public Health Director

James Lawrence, Emergency Preparedness Director

Lynne Moore, Director of Nursing

Dave Porter, Hearing Officer

Robert Ring, Environmental Health Director

Erin Washburn, Health Education Assistant

Gilbert Witte, MD, Medical Director (Virtual)

Mayor Smith welcomed everyone to the Board of Health (BOH) meeting, the roll was called, and a quorum was noted.

Mayor Smith welcomed (2) attendees. Haley Germain, Assistant County Attorney, filling in for the County Attorney, Ashley Smith. In addition, Erin Washburn, Health Education Assistant who played a large part in preparing the 2024 Annual Report.

Mayor Smith asked for a motion to approve the March 5, 2025 BOH meeting minutes. A motion was made by Ms. Raftis to approve the meeting minutes as presented, the motion was seconded by Legislator Andreano, and unanimously approved.



Mayor Smith asked for a motion to approve the January 15, 2025 Professional Advisory Committee meeting minutes. A motion was made by Ms. Raftis to approve the meeting minutes as presented, the motion was seconded by Legislator Andreano and unanimously approved.

DIRECTORS REPORT: Dr. Watkins thanked Ms. Washburn and Dr. Hoffman for their efforts in preparing the 2024 annual report and to all staff members who contributed data for the report.

Dr. Watkins reviewed the annual report with those in attendance. He informed the board that nursing has one of the largest divisions within the department and oversees multiple programs including homecare, which provides medical services to those in need of medical care and want to stay in their homes. In 2024, homecare had an average daily census of (229) patients and cared for (1,045) individuals compared to 2023 where they had an average daily census of (250) patients and cared for (1,347) individuals. Dr. Watkins stated that there are two reasons why the census and the number of individuals cared for, decreased in 2024; 1) a competing certified home health agency in the area, Visiting Nurse's Association (VNA) who has affiliation with Kaleida Health/Olean General Hospital and 2) the department no longer accepts certain insurance providers, Humana, and United Healthcare. In 2024 there were (33,227) visits made by various disciplines within the homecare agency. Visits by disciplines includes skilled nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, home health aides, nutritionist, social worker, and speech therapy.

Nursing also oversees the maternal child health program. The Medicaid Obstetrical and Maternal Services (MOMS) program's goal is to improve birth outcomes. In 2024, there were (5) eligible individuals without insurance who received presumptive Medicaid, thus promoting early prenatal care and there were (9) visits made through the MOMS program in that year. Comparatively, in 2023 there were (4) eligible individuals without insurance who received presumptive Medicaid and there were (4) visits made through the MOMS program.

Additionally, nursing oversees the community health clinics; one of which is the family planning clinic, which provides services with a goal to reduce adolescent pregnancies and unintended pregnancies in all age groups. Another goal is the prevention of disease that commonly afflicts the reproductive organs. In 2024, CCHD recorded (4) teen pregnancies which is substantially lower than the previous year when the department recorded (16) positive teenage pregnancies. The lower rate of teen pregnancies in 2024 could also be due to a change in providers during the year. Another health clinic overseen by nursing is the sexually transmitted infection (STI) clinic, which tests and treats most common sexually transmitted infections, (i.e. chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, trichomonas, herpes, and HIV). In 2024, the most common sexually transmitted infections were chlamydia, followed by gonorrhea and syphilis.

Nursing also oversees the lead poisoning prevention program. In 2024, the program monitored (78) children with blood lead levels of (5ug/dl or above) compared to (97) in 2023.

In 2024, the Lead Capacity Building Grant allowed the department to cover the cost for training programs and certifications for contractors. This grant was awarded in 2023 and was for (2.5) million dollars. Training workshops have been well attended and certified contractors will be working on the third phase of the lead capacity grant; which will include renovations of lead-based homes in the County.

The environmental health (EH) division has several programs under its umbrella as well. One of them is to make sure that residents of Cattaraugus County have safe drinking water.

In 2024, the EH water system program worked with operators and management personnel at (164) public and (9) non-public water systems throughout the county to ensure the provision of safe drinking water. During 2024, the EH staff performed inspections at (95) public and (322) private water systems.

Routine facility inspections are performed at restaurants to make sure that they are in compliance with the NYS and Cattaraugus County sanitary codes. In 2024, (560) food service establishments were regulated by EH staff compared to (563) in 2023.

Additionally, EH staff works with the public to make sure that domesticated animals are vaccinated against rabies. All dogs, cats, and ferrets that are (4) months of age or older, are required to be immunized against rabies. In 2024, there were (1,463) animals vaccinated compared to (1,442) animals in 2023. Staff in EH also responds to any potential exposures of animal bites, or scratches that are reported. In 2024, EH staff responded to (230) potential exposures to rabies.

EH staff is also responsible for carrying out the Clean Indoor Air Act (CIAA) smoking compliance checks conducted in establishments around the county. There were (43) compliance checks made with no violations found as a result of these unannounced visits.

In 2024, the EH staff performed (83) Adolescent Tobacco Use Prevention Act (ATUPA) compliance checks at (56) licensed establishments. There were (5) sales of tobacco products to minors.

In 2024, there were (20) formal enforcement actions initiated against various violations of the NYS Public Health Law, State and/or County Sanitary codes. Of these actions initiated, (7) enforcement actions were taken.

The Health Education program provides education on a number of subject matters including; hand-washing, dental hygiene, nutrition, communicable disease, lead poisoning, rabies, catch my breathe (youth nicotine vaping prevention program), reproductive health, kids in safety seats, and veggie wheels.

In 2023, the department received a grant for \$250,000.00 from Blue Cross Blue Shield to purchase a refrigerated truck for the Veggie Wheels program. The truck arrived in Little Valley, and the department is now waiting for the wrap to be put on the truck. Legislator Schroder asked what would the department be doing with this vehicle and where would it go. Dr. Watkins stated that the truck will go to senior citizen homes like our senior housing projects. The truck will also service low income or low access communities as they often lack access or can't afford fresh fruits and vegetables. The truck has (4) refrigerators therefore the plan is to expand the produce to include dairy products, (i.e. eggs, milk, cheese, etc.). Currently, the veggie wheels program service area includes Olean, and Salamanca but this vehicle will allow the program to expand to more rural localities.

Other programs within the Health Department include Early Intervention, Early Intervention Child Find, Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs, Women Infants and Children (WIC), Clinical Laboratory, Public Health Emergency Preparedness, and Healthy Neighborhoods program.

The department celebrated its sixth year as a nationally accredited health department. In February 2024, CCHD submitted standards and measures documents to PHAB to support reaccreditation.

The CCHD adopted revenue for 2024 was \$15,039,171.00; (42%) was collected from fees, (22%) federal funds, (26%) county share, and (9%) NYS aid. Of the collected fees (80%) is from homecare. Expenditures in 2024 was also \$15,039,171.00 with homecare at (41%) followed by EH at (20%) and Community Health at (14%).

Dr. Spigel stated that all the actions against restaurants left him curious as to what they were and how does it compare to previous years. Dr. Watkins stated that our inspectors go into restaurants and identify violations based on sanitary codes from NYS and Cattaraugus County Health District. Violations are categorized as red or blue violations. Red violations (critical violations), requires action to be taken immediately as it can be an imminent danger to the public (ex. holding food below required temperature requires food to be thrown out immediately as it can lead to a food borne illness). A blue violation (non-critical violation), does not directly cause food-borne illness but could negatively affect the operation of the restaurant. This type of violation relates to the design and maintenance of the establishment as well as cleanliness (i.e. droppings from a mouse, grease spilled on the floor, etc.). Every time an inspection occurs at a restaurant, the report is posted on the department's website page.

Mayor Smith called for a motion to accept the 2024 annual report. A motion was made by Dr. Spigel to accept the annual report as presented; the motion was seconded by Dr. Chohan and unanimously approved.

Dr. Watkins reported that the county health rankings came out in March. The primary funder of the report, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, has decided to end funding for this national report therefore, the 2025 annual data released, will likely be the last.

In 2022, the five leading causes of death in Cattaraugus County were heart disease, cancer, COVID-19, unintentional injury, and chronic lower respiratory disease. Life expectancy is age (75), and death before age (75) in a community, adds to a community's years of potential life lost (YPLL). Based on the 2025 county health rankings, Cattaraugus County, YPLL was 10,700, compared to NYS, YPLL which was 6,600. Dr. Watkins stated that in 2022, the five leading causes of premature death in Cattaraugus County were cancer, heart disease, unintentional injury, COVID-19, and diabetes. Comparing Cattaraugus County to NYS in several morbidity categories, (i.e. poor or fair health, poor physical health days, and poor mental health days), Cattaraugus County fared just slightly worse than NYS.

When comparing Cattaraugus County population health and well-being to NYS and the nation; Cattaraugus County fared worse than the average county in NYS for population health and well-being and about the same as the average county in the nation.

Based on the 2025 County Health Rankings, Cattaraugus County fared worse than NYS, when it came to: health behaviors (i.e. smoking, obesity, etc.); clinical care (i.e. # of primary care and mental health providers to the number of residents,); and Health infrastructure (i.e. Preventable Hospital Stays).

When comparing Cattaraugus County's Community Conditions to NYS and the nation; Cattaraugus County fared worse than the average county in NYS for community conditions, and slightly worse than the average county in the nation. Dr. Watkins stated that there is still work to be done as a community and we need to work together to make these changes.

ENFORCEMENT REPORT: Mr. Porter reported that there was one enforcement case, docket # 25-004, the administrative hearing was held on 3/11/25.

Respondent: N&A Olean Holdings, Inc., 405 W. State Street, Olean, NY, 14760 DBA/ Sparks Smoke & Vape.

Violations: NYS PHL Article 13-F Section 1399-ee(2). During a partial compliance check, it was documented that the respondent was still selling tobacco and vape products after their Tobacco & Vape registration was suspended for two years effective 12/3/24 by NYS Department of Tax and Finance (DTF).

Recommendation: The \$2,500.00 civil compromise offered be changed to a \$2,500.00 fine and then doubled to \$5,000.00 for no show to the administrative hearing. The \$5,000.00 fine must be paid on or before 4/30/25. In addition, a \$10.00 per day per diem will be levied for every day not in compliance.

A motion was made by Legislator Andreano to accept Mr. Porter's recommendation; the motion was seconded by Legislator Schroder and unanimously approved.

Legislator Schroder asked how are we notified or tasked to go visit these locations with suspended registrations. Mr. Ring replied that this particular place was permitted for a while, and the department is provided a list from the State when the State revokes their licenses. It is the department's responsibility to follow-up to see if they are still selling as there are further ramifications.

NURSING DIVISION REPORT: Mrs. Moore shared that the homecare census was currently (220). In March, there were (77) admissions, and (63) discharges.

Lead program update: In the month of March, there were (113) lead tests conducted. There was (1) child with an elevated blood lead level (BLL) of (19.8ug/dl), this child was much higher last year at (30.2ug/dl) [normal is < 5ug/dl], a second child's BLL was (11ug/dl) decreased from a high of (47ug/dl) in July of 2024. Remaining BLL's include; (4) children with a BLL between (5-8ug/dl). The remaining (107) children were all (<5ug/dl). The total lead caseload is (64) children.

HIV testing; in March, there were (5) tests conducted in Olean; (0) in Salamanca and (1) in Machias, all results were negative.

In March, there were (2) rabies pre-exposure vaccine series given, and (2) post-exposure vaccine series given, one was due to a feral cat exposure and the other was a bat exposure.

Reportable diseases: in March, there were (3) cases of Chlamydia; (0) cases of Gonorrhea; (2) chronic cases of Hepatitis C; (1) case of Giardiasis; (1) case of Salmonellosis; (219) cases of influenza A, with (2) H1N1; (26) cases of influenza B; (52) cases of RSV which was double the number of cases last month; (35) cases of COVID-19; and (3) cases of Strep Group B.

Mrs. Moore reported that some of the department's nursing staff will participate in the Remote Area Medical (RAM) clinic that will be held on September 13th and 14th at the Olean YMCA and they will administer vaccines to the RAM participants.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH REPORT: Mr. Ring shared that there is a free animal rabies clinic coming up next month, Saturday, May 3, 2025 at the DPW garage in Little Valley, from 9:00AM-11:00AM.

The Community Development block Grant for well and septic systems, which was received from NYS Office of Community Renewal, should begin accepting applications next month. That grant targets low to moderate income individuals living in single family homes. For two people living in a house, the combined annual income must equal (\$65,000.00) or less to qualify.

The Town of Yorkshire has historically lacked a public sewer system and is characterized by numerous small residential lots. Within Yorkshire, the Village of Delevan features densely spaced homes, further emphasizing the need for centralized wastewater management. Currently, an extensive sewer infrastructure project is underway, designed to convey sewage to the neighboring Town of Arcade for treatment. This initiative aims to eliminate hundreds of aging septic systems. To date, several hundred properties have already been successfully connected to the new public sewer system, with the Village of Delevan anticipated to be included in the next phase of the project.

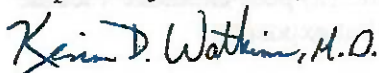
The mosquito program has applied for the larvicide permit this week with NYS Department of Conservation (DEC) as they provide the department with the permit to spray.

EH staff designs over (200) septic systems every year, mainly residential systems. The DEC has changed their wetland procedure, which use to be mapped as wetlands. DEC now wants to make jurisdictional determinations on every area that is low lying and wet. When staff designs a septic system that could potentially be a wetland, the department now has to get DEC's opinion on whether they think it's a wetland or not. They are asking for (90) days to respond to our septic systems design which could hold up new construction, and real property transfers that have a failing septic system.

Old/New Business: The next BOH meeting will be held at noon, on Wednesday, May 7th.

A motion was made by Dr. Chohan to adjourn the meeting, the motion was seconded by Dr. Spigel and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,



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