

**Director's Update to the Board of Health
April, 2022**

Protecting Health – Preventing the Spread of Infectious Disease

COVID

Currently the new cases per 100,000 per day are stable with 5.2 new cases/100,000/day as of April 6. The fully vaccinated percentage is 64.7% for Nashville. Currently Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech have been approved for a second booster for people who are 50 and older. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practice have not made a recommendation for a second booster only that it is an option. The data shows some increase in immunity over a single booster but it seems to be short lived in the current data.

AIDS

Our Ryan White Part A team was invited to present about their rideshare program during TDH's Annual HIV Conference last Friday. For Public Health Week we presented the brainchild of Beverly Glaze-Johnson and Dr. Shaw Kai-Kai, a panel for People Living With HIV (PLWH) to discuss some of the current issues that affect their lives and the community. Questions were formulated based on Undetectable=Untransmittable, provider and agency care, and how to provide a more inclusive and equitable environment for clients. It also includes a chance for panelists to give advice to their younger selves. The panelist are Mr. David Sanchez, referred through StreetWorks; Brady Dale Etzkorn- Morris, a member of the Ryan White Part A Nashville Regional Planning Council and previous U=U Ambassador; Dr. Tiye Uhura-Link, a case manager who facilitates a women's groups for Nashville Cares; and Nicholas Calvin of Nashville Cares and the originator of Mahogany Honors, Inc. a non-profit in the Middle Tennessee.

TB

The Korean Veterans Memorial Bridge was lit with red lights in observance of World TB Day on March 24. There were informative postings and a video on MPHD's televisions and social media sites. Educational material about TB was delivered to providers in the community.

Improving Health - Services to Individuals & Families

Community Health Assessment

The Healthy Nashville Leadership Council last week adopted the needs identified and prioritized during the 2021-2022 community health assessment process. The community health assessment was conducted through partnership between MPHD, Ascension Saint Thomas, Vanderbilt University Medical Center and the Healthy Nashville Leadership Council. The five prioritized needs are:

- Housing/Transportation
- Whole Health
- Economic Opportunity and Job Skill Development
- Food Access/Food Insecurity
- Awareness and Navigation of Community Resources

The HNLC will over the next few months draft the new community health improvement plan (CHIP), which will be for the January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2025.

Improving Health – Community Partnerships

School Health Profiles

The School Health Profiles survey (Profiles for short) is currently in progress among principals and lead health teachers at 47 middle and high schools in the Metro Nashville Public School system. Profiles, one component of the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, monitors the current status of school health education requirements and content, physical education and physical activity, school health policies related to tobacco use prevention and nutrition, school-based health services, family and community involvement in school health, and school health coordination. By administering this survey in Nashville, we contribute to the national sampling of schools and learn more about these issues on the local level. Profiles is conducted in even-numbered years, and the YRBS survey among high school students is conducted in the odd years. MPHD, through the Maternal and Child Health and Epidemiology divisions, conducts these surveys as part of a cooperative agreement between MNPS and the CDC.

A Thank-you to our COVID Partners

We hope you got a chance to peek in on the “Partnership Appreciation Event” held just prior to this meeting in the Centennial Rooms. As you all know, Nashville’s response to COVID was a community effort. We got a lot of help, and we were, and remain, grateful for it.

Organizational Updates

Public Health Week

Public Health Week was last week, with the theme “Public Health is Where You Are.” There were staff appreciation events all week. On Monday morning there were cheerful greetings (on a Monday morning!) of staff at all MPHD locations by ELT and Public Health Week Planning Committee members. We had permitted staff time for physical and mental wellness breaks, walks for “health and solidarity” and relaxation moments; and free boxed lunches on Wednesday. There were two lunch-and-learns, panel discussions with people living with HIV/AIDS (internal and externally facing) and a Public Health 101 presentation by the Bureau of Health Equity. There was tree planting with the Nashville Tree Foundation on 1st Avenue. And there were opportunities for MPHD employees and community members to walk a dog at Metro Animal Care and Control during the “Bow-Wow Break-Out.”

None of that happened by accident. Many thanks to the coordination committee and their allies:

Billy Reagon and Joanna Shaw-KaiKai, co-chairs; committee members Rachel Franklin; Lauren Cromer; Anthony Johnson; Timothy McDaniel; Ashley Harrington; Eterial Rucker; Christian Williams; Tracy Buck; Talia Monget; Linda Nwanso; Beverly Glaze-Johnson and Sharna Lee. Able assists from Kathryn Correa, Matthew Peters and Kiana Radney.

And the Chief Line Dancer, Brenda Allen.

Short Takes

- We have requested funding in the Fiscal Year 2023 budget to complete the Board of Health’s request for a pay equity study for the entire department.
- Metro HR is currently reviewing its Civil Service Rules and will assist MPHD to evaluate and ensure our rules are fair, equitable, and properly in line with Metro’s CSRs and those of peer cities. They can assist is evaluating whether some or all functions should be maintained by MPHD or merged with Metro’s.

- Metro HR will assist us in evaluating our HR processes for effectiveness and efficiency of our hiring, onboarding, employee relations, etc.
- We began work with our ELT and Metro's Chief DEI officer, Andrea Blackman, and Central HR's DEI manager, Razel Jones, on equity within the department and leadership last week. We will be meeting every other week with them on an ongoing basis for the next several months. While we have identified funding for the Board's request to provide training to the ELT regarding equity, Andrea and Razel feel there is internal work to be done first. Additionally, the preferred provider is currently offering only remote training which would not be as effective. They are unsure when they will resume live training, but it will not be until at least 2023.
- We have identified a facilitator to begin working with ELT on change management and assist with rolling it out to all levels of the organization. His focus will be on building trust and belonging, and to help us refocus on our mission, vision, and core values over the next two years.