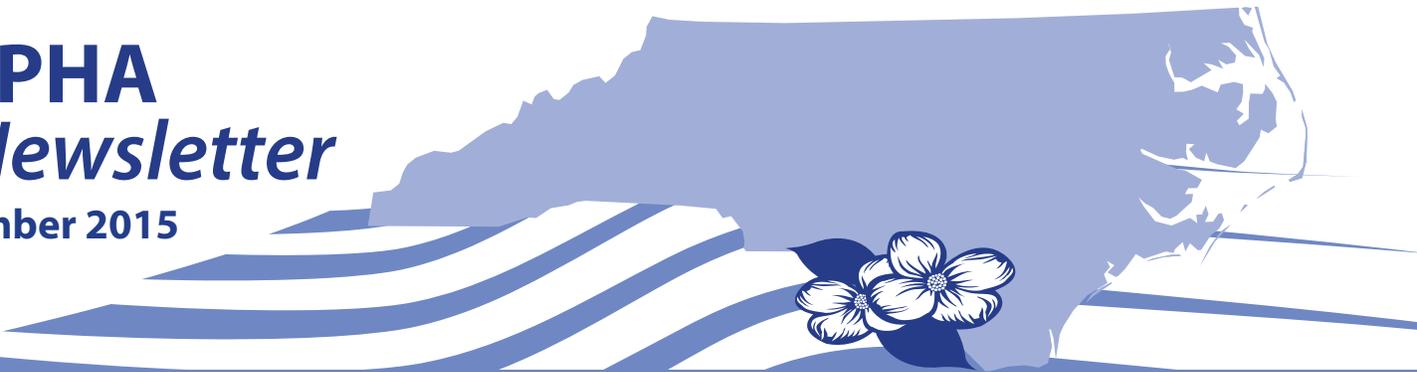


NCPHA E-Newsletter

December 2015



Newsletter from the NC Public Health Association and the NCPHA Public Awareness Committee

Message from the President

– Suzanne Lea, NCPHA President



For over 100 years, NCPHA has been the leading professional association promoting public health improvement through prevention. As the role of public health has expanded in recent decades, NCPHA has a goal to broaden our reach to proactively engage *all* individuals who embrace their role within public health systems in our state. At our 2015 annual meeting in Winston-Salem, the APHA President, Dr. Shirki Kumanyika, challenged us to “**build a public health movement**”.

Goals during my president year 2015-2016 include two initiatives that will help build our public health movement in NC:

- 1) creating stronger inter-sectoral partnerships at the local and state levels, and
- 2) engaging our young professionals to be future public health leaders.

We’ve already started on these initiatives. The theme of the Spring 2016 meeting (May 5, 2016) is “Health in All Policies” which will highlight early successes of inter-sectoral partnerships improving public health. Britain Wood writes about the Spring 2016 meeting in this issue. In addition, our Young Professionals Group, led by Membership Chair, Leah M. Acheson, has some bold ideas for NCPHA. Six young professionals represented their

Section at their first NCPHA Governing Council meeting in November. Transition is happening now!

NCPHA leadership met with the Hon. Rick Brajer, the new Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services on October 27, 2015. He provided some challenging questions for NCPHA, such as, “What can public health do better than anyone that is valuable?” “Who [which segments] will public health partner with?”, referring to the focus on population health improvement. Peg O’Connell has a complete report in this issue-read on!

Another initiatives that I hope to complete is NCPHA hosting a website for internship opportunities. Remember that internship required as part of your public health training? Did you scramble trying to find an agency or interesting project? Are you getting too many phone calls for internship placement? I am glad to report NCPHA will be hosting a website to pilot test a new concept: 1) preceptors post internship positions and 2) students post their interest in particular internships. Beginning in December 2015, the pilot, involving NCPHA, State DPH, Local Health Directors, NC Institute for Public Health, East Carolina University and UNC-Wilmington, will test the feasibility and worth of this approach. We will run the pilot from December 2015 to May 2016. NCPHA will serve as the website host. More information will be forthcoming as the project gets launched. Many thanks to Mary Beth Wooten and Penny Slade-Sawyer for working through the details to arrive at this point.

One more note, the events in Paris on November 13 should remind us that emergency preparedness and response is an essential service of our public health practice. Reach out to a colleague outside of your traditional public health network to expand our partnerships to build a bigger and better public health movement. Feel free to contact me with questions, comments or suggestions (leac@ecu.edu).



New DHHS Secretary Brajer Shares Vision for Public Health in North Carolina

“Please tell the members of the North Carolina Public Health Association that I really value what they do,” said new NC Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services Rick Brajer in a recent conversation with the leadership of the North Carolina Public Health Association.

Brajer, a former healthcare executive chosen by Governor Pat McCrory in August to serve as NC Secretary of Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), is heading a department with 18,000 positions, a \$20.2 billion budget, and responsibility for health programs that affect millions of North Carolinians. DHHS, which is one of the largest departments in state government, oversees the Division of Public Health, state’s Medicaid program, mental health, social services and a variety of other programs. He sat down with NCPHA President Suzanne Lea, Immediate Past President Lisa Harrison and Executive Director Lynette Tolson on October 27 to discuss some of the big issues facing public health in North Carolina and his vision for DHHS during this time of great change.

By his own account, Brajer has taken an interesting route to his current job of Secretary of DHHS. He was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, the child of immigrants from the former Yugoslavia. “It is my parent’s influence that brought me to public service,” he said. “They gave me a strong sense of duty and serving our state is one way of saying thanks to a country that made a home for my parents. They truly believed that the United States was the greatest country on earth and I have that same belief as well, so that continues to motivate me.”

Brajer comes to DHHS after two decades of serving in leadership roles in the healthcare and medical technology industries. These roles have ranged from change leader in public and private equity environments to entrepreneurial leader in a venture backed environment. From 2003 to 2013, he served as the CEO and director of LipoScience, Inc., a personalized diagnostics company which established a new clinical standard of care in cardiovascular management.

As Secretary, Brajer cites behavioral health, infant mortality and substance use as the three biggest issues facing public health in North Carolina, saying these three are huge cost drivers in our healthcare system and have a devastating impact on the health and wellbeing of citizens. He also indicated that if North Carolina is going to transform its healthcare system and the health of its population, the state must look at the whole spectrum of health — mental health as well as physical health.

“We can do things in short order, at least in certain areas, much tougher lift in other areas, to really get behind this. Those are the things that are very much on my mind,” he said.

Brajer also touched on Medicaid Reform and how it will change the healthcare landscape in North Carolina.

“I’m bringing change leadership capabilities to a process that involves many people. I state that as a way of saying the first part of my vision is a North Carolina solution. That’s something that’s been very important to the Governor and his administration. And that’s really first and foremost what I’m taking forward. The second is that we’re moving more and more toward an outcome driven, capitated approach toward delivery of healthcare that ultimately puts the patient and patient wellness at the center.

“And while those things may sound obvious, it’s not really the way healthcare has been designed or delivered in the United States today.

“We’re really designing a system for everyone. And the backbone of that system, ultimately, will be both providers and information. Providers you know about because they are the people you interact with every day, but we’re also putting in place capabilities from a health information exchange standpoint to ensure we can benefit from best learning and disseminate that as rapidly as possible.”

continued on next page



DHHS Secretary Brajer continued...

“We very much view provider-led entities as core to our success and we’re doing everything possible to ensure providers have a chance to succeed in this process. So, I’m spending a lot of time with provider advocacy groups, healthcare systems and people they touch to ensure they know, not only where we’re going, but that I’m getting their input, their ideas in that process. So, it’s a North Carolina solution that many, many people are participating in.”

Public health at the state and local level will have a great opportunity to help shape this new vision of improving health in North Carolina, according to the Secretary.

He encouraged local health leaders to come forward and have input on the role of public health in the various areas it serves, both rural and urban, and articulate their capabilities and service needs to be part of the conversation.

“Bring your best ideas in terms of what the role of public health should be in a go-forward state.”

As a former CEO of a healthcare company involved in the management of cardiovascular disease, the new Secretary has an interesting and exciting public health perspective on the prevention of chronic disease.

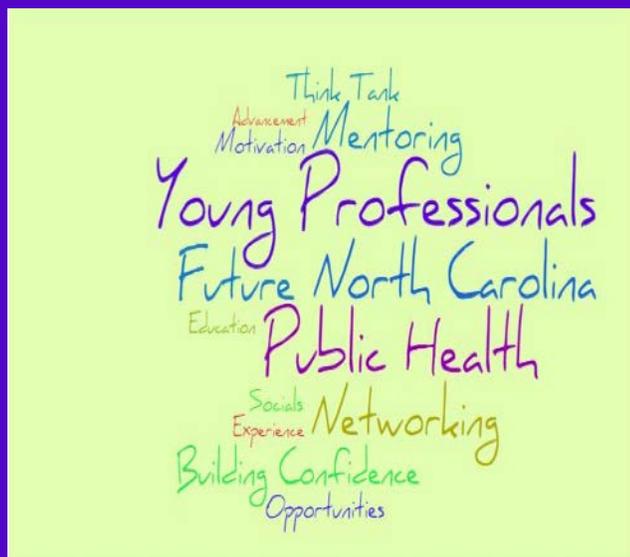
“There’s relatively little money in preventing cardiovascular disease. Most is invested after an event occurs,” he said. “Instead of being shocked when it happens, we should have been doing things all along the way to prevent it.”

“And I know we can solve it, because some of the very brightest minds in healthcare are in cardiology. I’m convinced, if we align payment and incentives with the incredible brains and resources in cardiovascular disease, we can really knock this down.”

At the conclusion of his conversation with NCPHA leadership, Brajer was asked what was the one thing that he wanted he tell the members of NCPHA. He quickly responded with, “I really believe in engagement; I really believe in collaboration” and a firm statement of the sentence that opened this article, “And I really value what they do.”

[Brajer earned a Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering from Purdue University and a Master of Business Administration from the Stanford Graduate School of Business.]

North Carolina Public Health Young Professionals Kick-Off Breakfast



NCPHA's Young Professionals Group hosted an exciting and engaging kick-off breakfast at the 2015 NCPHA Fall Educational Conference in Winston-Salem. Breakfast attendees included a variety of students and early to mid-level career professionals from around North Carolina. The word cloud captures some of the common themes from the breakfast discussion. We plan on using the information gathered at the kick-off breakfast to develop an action plan for the future of the young professionals group. Please be on the lookout for our Facebook page coming soon! If you would like to learn more about the young professionals group and be added to the listserv, please contact Leah Mayo Acheson at mariel.mayo@arhs-nc.org.



NCPHA Legislative WrapUp

This past legislative session was a mixed bag for public health, according to NCPHA executive director Lynette Tolson.

“We did have some successes this year. Local health departments were recognized as an essential community provider in the Medicaid reform legislation and we were fortunate to get \$2.5 million for child health improvement in the 2015-16 budget bill,” said Tolson. “Unfortunately, Environmental Health took some hits this year as part of regulatory reform and the food stand bill.”

The omnibus regulatory reform bill, HB 765, contained language that established a **Private Option Permit (POP)** as an alternate path allowing a professional engineer (PE) to design and supervise the installation of an on-site wastewater system. This POP is subject to minimal regulatory oversight by the Department of Health and Human Services or local health department (LHDs) as compared to requirements in prior statutes and Commission for Public Health (CPH) rules.

Senate Bill 7, which allows food stands to provide tables and chairs for customers to use while consuming drinks or food upon the premises, was also problematic roll-back of food safety requirements for local public health. “We were concerned about the ability of these food stands to meet the proper septic and sanitary levels to protect the public’s health,” said Tolson. “SB 7 gives owners to option to set up eight seats without upgrading the sewage system,” she said.

The legislation also contained a provision that would authorize pushcarts or mobile food units to prepare and serve food on the premises, provided they are based from a commissary or restaurant located on the premises of a facility containing three thousand permanent seats.

Tolson also indicated that despite these legislative setbacks, the situation could have been worse. “Even these two pieces of legislation were not as bad as they could have been had our public health advocates, and especially NCPHA, not been active and involved. Our public health grassroots were very vocal in communicating with members of the legislature on these and a variety of other issues this past session,” she said.

One key success for public health was the recognition of local health departments as an essential community provider (ECP) in the 2015 Medicaid reform legislation.

“Because NC did not create its own marketplace for the Affordable Care Act, NC did not define who the ECPs were. Now that the Medicaid Reform legislation has defined ECPs, we are very much relieved,” said Tolson. “What this means is that the newly developed provider networks under Medicaid reform will have to include our local health departments as a one of the providers of care. There are still lots of concerns from safety net providers regarding rates and contracts and there is still lots to do, but now that NC has designated LHDs to be an ECP we are in the game,” she said.

Tolson also indicated that the passage of the Medicaid reform legislation was not the end, but only the beginning of Medicaid change in our state. “There is much left to be decided in how public health will fit into the new world of healthcare in North Carolina. We will continue to advocate for reform that funds prevention and that will ultimately improve the public’s health, improve our quality of life and save taxpayer dollars,” she said.

The other big success for local public health during this legislative session was the addition of \$2.5 million in the 2015 state budget for child health improvement. While the details of this funding are still being worked out at the state level, the basics of the program will include a competitive grant programs for local health departments to apply for funding for new and innovative programs to improve children’s health in their local community.

In closing, Tolson urged NCPHA members to stay involved and active. “2016 is an election year, so I encourage all our members to become informed and involved in the election process their communities. Ask those running for office what they think about key public health issues, locally and at the state level,” she concluded.



Environmental Health Awarded \$350,000 FDA Food Safety Grant

Cumberland County's Environmental Health Division was awarded a \$350,000 grant from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to advance food safety and regulatory standards within the county. This grant funding will be distributed in \$70,000 increments over the next five years to support a new position, the Program Standards Coordinator, whose focus will be on the implementation of the FDA Retail Program Standards.

The FDA Retail Program Standards' (RPS) purpose is to promote active managerial control of the risk factors most commonly associated with foodborne illness in retail food establishments, establish a recommended framework for retail food regulatory programs within which the active managerial control of the risk factors can best be realized and create a more uniform inspection program. Conformance with the FDA Retail Program Standards enhances Environmental Health's capability to improve and build upon their existing retail food program.

"We look forward to implementing the new FDA standards. Food safety is a priority to the citizens of Cumberland County and all visitors who dine here," Environmental Health Director Daniel Ortiz said. "We are extremely excited to be selected as the first county in North Carolina awarded this prestigious grant from the FDA."

Darkness to Light "Partner in Prevention"



Organizations and businesses can demonstrate their commitment to stopping child sexual abuse by participating in the "Partner in Prevention" program. A "Partner in Prevention" commitment includes:

Making prevention a priority by training staff and volunteers using the Darkness to Light: Stewards of Children curriculum. Darkness to Light: Stewards of Children is a national child sexual abuse prevention training curriculum for adults, which is evidence-based and makes an impact. The training was provided in Cumberland County by the Child Advocacy Center at no charge. Cumberland County Department of Public Health has the designation of being the only health department in the United States with this seal of distinction.

To learn more about the specific criteria for your organization and to begin the process of becoming a "Partner in Prevention", contact Darkness to Light at D2L.org.



CCDPH members accept Darkness to Light "Partner in Prevention" distinction on behalf of the staff who completed training from the Child Advocacy Center's representative, Faith Boehmer.



Because it's impossible to be two places at the same time, we thought you'd like to see the winners of the various section awards and scholarships. Congratulations to all the winners!

2015 NCPHA Section Award and Scholarship Winners!

(all were presented at the 2015 Fall Educational Conference, Winston-Salem)

Dental Health Section

Becky S. Bowden Award - Dawn Jolly



Environmental Health Section

Stacy Covil Specialist of the Year - Teresa Clark

Rookie EH Specialist of the Year - Tracey Langley

Bill Broadway Award - Phil Kneller

Dewey L. Padgett Scholarship - Kurt Lewis, Jr.

Stacey Covil Scholarship - Daniel Allen

Practicing EH Specialist Scholarship - Victoria Hudson

EH Section Scholarship - Melinda Fields



Nursing Section

Margaret B. Dolan Award - Cynthia Harris

Social Work Section

Outstanding Contributions to Public Health Social Work -

Carolyn Barnes

Social Work Student Scholarship - Rebecca McLemore



Wellness and Prevention Section

Bertlyn Bosley Award - Hispanos Saludabes Program, Mecklenburg County Health Department

Jeanne Palmer Award - Phyllis McLymore

Sparkle Project Award - WIC Healthy Harvest Demonstration Garden, Randolph County Health Department

Golden Project Award - Movin' an Grovin' Walking Club, Wake County Human Services



For a list of all the winners of NCPHA Major Awards, NC GSK Foundation Awards, Wolfe Mini-Grants and NCPHA Scholarships since 2009, [go here](#).

Farm to School Coalition Aims to Connect Kids to the Food They Eat

Statewide group works with local farmers to supply healthy nutritious food to schools.

Thanksgiving and Christmas are times of big family meals, the creation of special dishes and the sense of family and community that is created around a shared table. The Farm to School Coalition of North Carolina is working to make sure that the children around these tables learn where the food they are eating comes from, who grows it and why they might want to try new and different locally grown fruits and vegetables this holiday season.

Farm to school programs connect teachers, schools, local agriculture and the community to improve student nutrition, health and academic performance. How this plays out locally varies across settings but always includes one or more of the following components: school gardens and garden education, healthy eating education, local food education and procurement of local food for school lunch tables.

“The purpose of the farm to school movement is to reconnect kids to the local sources of food on their table,” said Laurie Stradley, Director of State and Community Collaboration at the NC Center for Health & Wellness. “Our mission is to help children learn about food in school—where it comes from, how it grows, how it is prepared and why healthy eating is so important,” she said.

Although farm to school programs have worked hard to open doors for local farmers to get their produce into their local schools, the goal of the program is much broader than just procurement. “We expose school children to the entire food system,” said Stradley. “We want them not only to meet the farmers who are supplying school cafeterias, but to actually dig in the dirt and grow their own vegetables and fruit. It is important that kids actually put their hands on the food where it grows,” she said.

North Carolina schools educate nearly 1.5 million students annually and children spend nearly half their waking hours and consume more than half of their daily food at school. Because of this schools are the optimum location to help students learn to make healthy choices that will last a lifetime. Access to nutritious local foods and education can improve the health of children while creating strong local economies and engaged communities.

There are currently farm to school coalition programs in 98 of North Carolina’s 100 counties. Over the past four years organizations from across the state have come together to create resources and tools for schools and communities that want start or enhance the farm to school programs in their locales. The website farmtoschoolcoalitionnc.org contains a searchable directory for all the farm to school programs across the state. In addition, the Farm to School Coalition of NC has just completed its first statewide strategic plan which lays out an ambitious vision for the expansion and evaluation of the program.

“With the help from a grant from the US Department of Agriculture we have been able to convene partners from across the state and create a real vision for the future of healthy local food in our schools. I hope that the tools we have developed will be useful and used to improve the health of North Carolina,” said Stradley.

SAVE THE DATE

2016 NCPHA Spring Conference

Health in All Policies

May 5, 2016 • Brownstone-University Hotel, Raleigh • More information in early January



NCPHA E-Newsletter

2016 Annual State Health Director's Conference

Public Health and Primary Care: Intersecting to Improve Lives

January 21-22, 2016 North Raleigh Hilton

Click here to register for the conference and for more information

Registration Fee - \$125/person

Plenary Speakers

Dr. LaMar Hasbrouck (NACCHO Executive Director) – Public Health Change Forces; Provider and Hospital Intersections with Public Health

Brian Castrucci (Chief Program and Strategy Officer, de Beaumont Foundation) – Practical Playbook; Integrating Public Health and Primary Care

Pam Pontones (State Epidemiologist, Indiana State Department of Health) – Indiana's Scott County HIV Outbreak Response (integration of public health partners in infectious disease, substance abuse, and preparedness & response)

Rob Dunn (NC State University Ecologist) - Citizen Engagement in Science, Ecology, and Health

Dr. Richard Wender (Chief Cancer Control Officer, American Cancer Society) – Colorectal Cancer and the “80% by 2018” Campaign

Brian A. King, PhD, MPH (Office on Smoking and Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) – E cigarettes

Workshop Topics

Community Health Assessment I and II

Evidence-based programs related to communications and the use of social media in public health

Radon in homes

Botulism outbreak

On-site septic permitting private options

Records retention and electronic medical records

Cancer cluster investigations

Health equity program development

Day to day functions of a local health department (financial reporting, agreement addenda with the State)

Local health departments and 3rd party billing

Increase in Hepatitis C virus

Emerging infections

Sexual Violence Prevention and College Campuses: Where we have been, where we are, and where we are going?

NC Violent Death Reporting System

Framing/re-framing prevention and community change issues for success

NC Alliance of YMCAs – Partnering with your local Y

Local health department integration with primary care

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