



**New Jersey  
Local Boards of Health Association**

# Newsletter

Volume 17, Number 1

[www.NJLBHA.org](http://www.NJLBHA.org)

Spring, 2010

## **NJLBHA Announces Board Member Certification Program**

Your New Jersey Local Boards of Health Association is pleased to announce the creation of a certification program for members of local boards of health. This voluntary program is designed to develop the knowledge and skills necessary for a member of a board of health to perform the varied tasks they are responsible for under the NJ Public Health practice standards. The program is designed in two modules. The first module will cover basic orientation and responsibilities of the members of the Board of Health. The second module will go into more detail regarding public health practice, and the development of leadership skills. Board members may take either of the modules independently; however, any board member that successfully completes both modules will be certified by the New Jersey

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## **New Board of Health Orientation Manual Developed**

The first ever Board of Health Orientation Manual, *A Guide to Roles and Responsibilities*, has been developed by the Local NJ Boards of Health Association. This manual will replace the one developed over twenty five years ago by the NJ Health Officers Association. Although there is a great deal of necessary information in the original document, it was felt that we needed an updated version to reflect the emphasis on central public health services, public health priorities, and public health practice standards. The NJ Health Officers Association has reviewed the manual and we thank them for their valuable input. We feel that it is crucial that local health officers and boards of health work together in the interest of the public. We are hoping to distribute it within the next month. It is our goal to do a joint distribution with the NJ Health Officers Association and is currently working out the specifics. Once finalized, electronic versions will be available for download at [www.njlbha.org](http://www.njlbha.org).

### **Save the Date!**

#### **NJLBHA Annual Conference October 23, 2010**

The NJLBHA annual conference will be held October 23, 2010 at the Middlesex County Fire Academy in Sayreville, NJ. There will be a variety of workshops designed to help Local Board of Health members address current issues. The program runs from 9:30 am – 3:30 pm. In order to make sure that our presentations are most current, the exact program will not be determined until shortly before the conference, but we would like you to set that date aside in your calendars.

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# CURRENT HEALTH ISSUES

## *Your Action Requested*

Each issue we will try to make you aware of legislative and funding issues that would have an impact on the Public Health in New Jersey. You are all aware of the funding crisis the state is in and its impact on your local budgets. There are however, some items that should not be cut from the budget and legislation that is not necessarily in the best interest of Public Health. The following items are of concern and we suggest you contact your legislators to urge them to take appropriate measures:

- **Funding for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Program (CTCP)**

We are deeply concerned that Governor Christie's proposed budget has deleted funding for the Comprehensive Tobacco Control Program (CTCP). The CDC recommends a funding level of 119 million dollars in order to adequately educate and protect the public regarding the dangers of tobacco use and secondhand smoke. Presently, the CTCP operates on a mere 7 million dollars. These 7 million dollars have helped save many lives, and will continue to do so, by operating quit smoking programs, educating teens and the general public on the dangers of tobacco, and funding such groups as NJ GASP. Our local health departments rely heavily on the advice and expertise of groups like NJ GASP in both formulating policy, and educational programs. Additionally, should the CTCP funding be eliminated, New Jersey would lose at least 1.2 million dollars in matching federal funds designed for anti-tobacco programs.

*Action Requested:* Please contact the Governor's office and your State Legislators to have this money restored.

- **Decrease in Tobacco Tax**

We are also concerned over assembly bill A2590 that would reduce the cigarette tax by \$0.30/pack and reduce revenue dedicated to the Health Care Subsidy Fund. It is well documented that increasing cigarette taxes decreases smoking, particularly among young people. To reduce cigarette taxes is nothing less than absurd. In fact we encourage you to increase cigarette taxes in this time of budgetary pressure.

*Action Requested:* Please contact your Legislators to see that this bill does not pass.

- **Philosophical Objection to Vaccination**

We are opposing the bill A-260 that would allow New Jerseyans to make a conscientious objection to the requirement of childhood vaccination. New Jersey already allows for medical and religious exemptions which are broadly interpreted. Expanded clauses are not needed. We are deeply concerned that many more people will make the wrong choices, either because of a lack of understanding, or financial reasons, and children who have not been immunized will have to be allowed into the schools. By allowing anyone to avoid immunization of their children we are failing our responsibility to protect the children, as well as adults, in our state.

*Action Requested:* Please contact your Legislators to see that this bill does not pass.

- **Public Health Priority Funding**

Governor Christie has proposed that the only regular funding given to health departments in NJ be eliminated. Public Health priority funding, helps support the local Public Health programs in your community. Without this funding, either the programs disappear or local taxes will have to be raised to replace the funding.

*Action Requested:* Please contact the Governor's office and your State Legislators to have this money restored.

# CHECKLISTS FOR MEMBERS OF LOCAL BOARDS OF HEALTH

## QUESTIONS A MEMBER SHOULD ASK THEMSELVES

- Do you budget for basic training and attend training?
- Does your board devote most of its time to developing and setting policies for your agency? Is your policy manual current?
- Does your board have working committees to initiate and monitor much of the board's work?
- Does a current job description exist for your board members?
- Does your board have a systematic planning process?
- Is your board knowledgeable about current issues in public health?
- Does your board have a mission statement?
- Do your board members understand their responsibility for the finances of your organization?
- Are your bylaws reviewed regularly and do you operate in accordance with them?
- Are relationships between board members and staff members characterized by openness, trust and mutual respect?

## QUESTIONS A BOARD SHOULD ASK ITSELF

- What do we want to accomplish? (Setting policy and establishing goals)
- What is the road map to follow? (Formulating guidelines, making plans, suggesting alternatives)
- How will we pay for it? (Spending money)
- How do we reach our goals? (Establishing priorities, delegating responsibilities)
- Did we succeed or fail? (Evaluating)

## NJLBHA Protests NALBOH Actions

The Executive Board of NJLBHA has protested the actions of the Board of Directors of the National Association of the Local Boards of Health regarding the removal of elected representative Walter Stein as your Mid-Atlantic Trustee. Many of you are familiar with Mr. Stein's long service in New Jersey both in Public Health, and as an emergency responder. The actions taken against Mr. Stein happened shortly after the NJLBHA led the successful attempt to stop NALBOH's Board from disenfranchising members and Mr. Stein's announcement that he would run for President of NALBOH. In a four page letter to NALBOH, Richard Lustgarten, the attorney for the NJLBHA, stressed the impropriety of NALBOH's action. The attorney for NJLBHA states "A review of the documents that we do have demonstrates egregious violations of your own bylaws and fundamental due process con-

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## Book Review

### Who's in Charge? By Laura H. Kahn

*Reviewed by John G. O'Sullivan*

*Council Member, Board of Health Member, South Brunswick, New Jersey*

"Who's in charge?" is a phrase we hear when a crisis happens. "Who's in Charge?" is also a book about leadership during epidemics, bio terror attacks, and other public health crises. The author, Dr. Laura H. Kahn is a scholar in the Program on Science and Global Security at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University. The book covers the important relationship between political leaders, public health officials, journalists and others to find out why leadership problems developed, especially in this ever changing world.



Within the book, Dr. Kahn goes over different outbreaks and how they were handled. In a section devoted to the anthrax crisis in 2001, she makes reference to the local incident occurring at the postal facility in Hamilton, New Jersey. Elected officials and members of Boards of Health should consider having this as a reference book to prepare and guide them in any public health crisis.

### **NJLBHA Appoints Legal Counsel**

The Executive Board has appointed Richard A. Lustgarten as the legal counsel for NJLBHA. He is a specialist in municipal law and is a partner in the firm of Goodman and Lustgarten, Esqs. in West Orange. Mr. Lustgarten has a distinguished background of service in New Jersey. He presently serves as the attorney for the borough of Franklin Lakes, the Englewood Board of Health, and the counsel for the Municipal Clerks Association of NJ.

Mr. Saccenti, President of NJLBHA commented, "We selected Mr. Lustgarten not only because of his depth of experience and expertise in municipal law relating to local boards of health but also for his personal integrity." His primary responsibilities are to advise our association on legal matters as well as legislative matters. We recommend that Local Boards of Health who seek professional opinions on public health issues contact him at 973-736-5333.

### **Holleran Report**

*State Public Health System  
Performance Assessment for  
New Jersey*

The final report on the State of Public Health in NJ was issued on December 18, 2009. Representatives from public and private health agencies throughout the State sat on assessment committees to evaluate the various components of Health Care in NJ. There was a member of your NJLBHA on each committee. As anticipated, the results are mixed. For your convenience we have posted a copy of both the executive summary and the full report on our website [www.NJLBHA.org](http://www.NJLBHA.org).

# Final H1N1 Summit Held

Representatives from your NJLBHA attended the last of a series of H1N1 state wide summits held this past Friday, April 9, 2010 in New Brunswick. Dr. Poonam Aleigh, The new Commissioner of Health, addressed the group followed by Deputy Commissioners Dr. Susan Walsh and David Gruber who addressed both the successes and failures of the state response to the H1N1 threat. They addressed the major concerns expressed by public health officials concerning the late and uneven distribution of the vaccine. While the state had some suggestions on how to rectify that problem and make the system work more smoothly, the audi-

ence through breakout sessions was given the opportunity to suggest activities which would make response to a future pandemic more efficient. We concur with Deputy Commissioner Gruber's assessment that the relatively lower than anticipated number of reported cases was due to the success of both the educational component stressing pro-active approaches such as hand washing and the effectiveness of local health departments and private providers in making the vaccine available once it was received. We were however disappointed that no one mentioned the key role played by local boards of health in this massive response and will discuss that with the appropriate parties in NJHDSS.

## New Officers and Board Members Elected

The following individuals were elected to the executive board of NJLBHA:

### Officers:

John C. Saccenti – President, South Brunswick; *email: saccenti@comcast.net*

Harris Levine – Vice President, Fort Lee; *email: drhjlevine@aol.com*

Steve Papenburg – Treasurer, Pennington; *email: spapenbe@sbtnj.net*

Walter Stein – Secretary, Manalapan; *email: cprmobile@hotmail.com*

### Members of the Board:

Dan Coranoto, Hampton

Anthony Depaola, Ocean County

Dianna Lachman, Englewood

Joan Valas, Park Ridge

Kim Silverstein, Manalapan

Ken McCormick, Somerville

Paul Roman, Monmouth County Regional

Valerie Williams, Victory Gardens

Vernie Ellis, East Orange

### Ex-Officio Members:

Natalie Pawlenko, New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services

Marilyn Bernstein, New Jersey Association of Public Health Nurse Administrators

Aimee DeLotto, New Jersey Environmental Health Association Representative

## President's Message

2010 will be an exciting year for public health. The response of Local Boards of Health and Health departments to the H1N1 threat has shown again how important our diligence, training, planning and resources are to maintaining the health and safety of our communities.

While the need for our oversight continues, the financial situations in the state and local governments are placing constraints on the already limited funding for public health. This year, in particular, it is very important that you become a member and join in the Association's efforts to secure the tools that enable us to fulfill our responsibilities as members of Local Boards of Health.

The New Jersey Local Boards of Health Association has set an ambitious agenda for this year. Our goals include:

- increased training sessions for members of local boards of health throughout the state
- establishment of regional training conferences, with programs designed specifically for members of local boards of health
- appointment of a legal counsel familiar with public health law who will serve as a resource
- increased cooperation with the New Jersey Health Officer Association and other public health organizations
- increased advocacy in Trenton and with the League of Municipalities to assure that your voice is heard and the health of our population is protected.

In this newsletter you will see some of our new initiatives including the voluntary certification program for members of Local Boards of Health, an update on our upcoming Board of Health Member Orientation Manual, and information on current legislative issues. If there are any issues you want us to address, please feel free to call me at 732.297.5573 or to attend one of our Executive Board meetings, the dates and times for which are posted on our website. I also urge you to occasionally refer to our website [www.njlbha.org](http://www.njlbha.org) for updates on Public Health issues that affect you and your community.

In closing, during these difficult financial times it is more important than ever that we take an active role in working within our communities and the State Legislature in ensuring the safety of our residents.

*John C. Saccenti*

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siderations." After this protest from our attorney, NJLBHA received a letter from NALBOH rejecting our position and refusing to recognize the leadership of NJ Local Boards of Health Association.

After the NJLBHA Board also protested the censorship of NJLBHA News briefs distributed through NALBOH they sent another letter to a NJLBHA past president (They refuse to communicate with your elected officers) saying that Mr. Stein and NJLBHA President John Saccenti, who is also a former President and founding Board Member of NALBOH, is now forbidden to even be a NALBOH member. NALBOH is taking all these actions while being funded to the tune of about \$900,000.00 in Federal Taxpayers Dollars in addition to the dues money we have sent in to them.

At this point in time, we are discussing options with our attorney as to what future actions we will be taking. However, the NJLBHA Board wishes to inform you of this situation, and to inform you that we can no longer urge or support your joining NALBOH unless they institute major reforms.

## More Public Health Acronyms

- ACIP: Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices
- CCV: Commercial Community Vaccinator
- CDC: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- CFR: Code of Federal Regulations
- CRA: Countermeasure and Response Administration
- HHS: Health and Human Services
- EMAC: Emergency Management Assistance Compact
- FDA: Food and Drug Administration
- FERPA: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
- HIPAA: Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
- IIS: Immunization Information System
- MSF: Medical Services Firm
- NACCHO: National Association of County and City Health Officials
- NEMA: National Emergency Management Association
- PREP Act: Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act
- RBC: Retail-based clinic
- SLV: School-located vaccination
- UCC: Urgent care clinic
- VAERS: Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System
- VHP: Volunteer health professionals
- VIS: Vaccine Information Statement
- VPA: Volunteer Protection Act

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*(Continued from page 1 - Board Member Certification Program)*

Local Boards of Health Association as a Certified Board of Health Member, and will be entitled to use the initials CBHM after their names. The training will occur in two, three hour blocks, and will be given in various regions throughout the state in order to facilitate member participation. The times of training will be announced in direct mailings, and in our future newsletters. The following is the content of the two modules:

### **Module 1:**

- Overview of Public Health structure (Federal, State, County, Local)
- Basic Public Health terminology
- Essential public health services
- Functions of a Board of Health
- Authority and powers of a Board of Health
- Responsibilities of the Board to the Health Officer
- Responsibilities of the Health Officer to the Board
- Responsibilities of a Board of Health including a presentation of those responsibilities contained in the Public Health Practices Standards of Local Boards of Health in New Jersey

### **Module 2:**

- Board Leadership/conducting meetings
- Leadership in emergency management
- Incident Command System 100
- Public Health Advocacy
- Budgeting
- Legal issues related to Local Boards of Health
- Interacting and accessing the community
- Interacting with local school board, police, emergency services, city or town council, Mayor, recreation groups and faith based groups
- Liaison with other municipal agencies including planning, zoning, and environmental commissions
- Interacting with, and use of the media

The training cost will be minimal, and NJLBHA members will receive a significant discount in order to facilitate their participation in this exciting opportunity!

**Yes, count me (us) in as a part of the Association!**

Yes, count me (us) in as a part of the Association that gives New Jersey's Boards of Health and their members a voice in Trenton, a way to communicate among ourselves, a force for progress in public health and more knowledge for board members.

**Full Board, Regular Membership \$95**

Board membership is open to municipal, county and regional Boards of Health. All board members are included for the calendar year.

**Individual, Regular Membership \$20**

Individual membership is open to current members of municipal, county or regional boards of health whose full board is not a member.

**Individual, Associate Membership \$20**

Associate membership is open to past Board of Health members, students, or other individuals interested in public health. This is a non-voting membership.

**Institutional Membership \$95**

Institutional membership is open to organizations, including environmental groups, planning boards, or other municipal or county agencies, committees, commissions, or councils. This is a non-voting membership.

Board Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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