



**PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, April 12, 2023**

THIS MEETING WAS CONDUCTED BY REMOTE PARTICIPATION.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Christina Wagar, Kamori Cattadoris, Mary Selecky, Wes McCart, Nancy Churchill, Mike Martinoli, Dr. Leslie Waters, Cheri Petersen

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dr. Artzis, Katie Swain, Debra Wulff

GUESTS: Dr. Caleb Holtzer, Shelly Nelson

NETCHD STAFF PRESENT: Jeanie Beegle, Jon Ness, Matt Schanz, Molly Corvino, Sonja Moore

CALL MEETING TO ORDER: Christina Wagar called the meeting to order at 8:01 am.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES OF MARCH 08, 2023: Kamori Cattadoris moved, and Mary Selecky seconded the motion to approve the minutes of March 8, 2023. Motion carries.

PUBLIC APPEARANCES OR COMMENTS: None.

ADDITIONS OR CHANGES TO AGENDA: None.

FERRY COUNTY PHAB APPOINTMENT: Mike Martinoli has resided in Republic for 6 years. He currently works at Ferry County Memorial Hospital as the Chief Nursing Officer.

COUNTY HEALTH RANKINGS: Matt Schanz provided an overview on the current county health rankings from www.countyhealthrankings.org. The County Health Rankings model measures the various elements that affect health outcomes, as follows:

- Tobacco use
- Access to care
- Education
- Air & water quality
- Housing & transit
- Diet & exercise
- Quality of care
- Employment
- Community safety
- Alcohol & drug use
- Sexual activity
- Income
- Family & social support

Currently, the rankings are as follows; Ferry County #39 out of 39, Pend Oreille #38 out of 39, and Stevens County at #19 out of 39.

Christina Wagar commented that in our rural counties, there's nothing enticing younger generations to stay in the area or to move here. Unfortunately, the demographics in our rural communities of lower populations are typically older, sicker, and poorer which can impact the rankings.

Dr. Caleb Holtzer mentioned the Rural Urban Commuting Area (RUCA) which looks at health disparities on a census tract level.

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Michael Martinoli commented that food disparity in Republic is a huge issue with rising costs in the grocery store, and the food pantry truck can often be impacted in the winter due to road conditions.

Christina said we should continue to use the county health rankings to look for public health focus areas that need to be addressed.

NETCHD OPIOID RELATED PROGRAMS: The Department of Health has released an Opioid and Drug Overdose dashboard; it takes 12 - 18 months for DOH to collect complete hospitalization and death information at this time. Counts below 10 are suppressed for privacy. There has been a substantial increase in overdose-related deaths since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, with fentanyl dominating the drug scene. As a result, there is an urgent need and demand within our communities for naloxone, which reverses the life-threatening effects of fentanyl and other drugs. While the Federal Drug Administration has approved an over-the-counter naloxone spray which may hit the market in August or September 2023, the cost will range from \$30 to \$125 per kit depending on insurance coverage. However, community members seeking free naloxone can get a free kit mailed to their residence by ordering online through The People's Harm Reduction Alliance at [Order FREE Naloxone \(a.k.a. Narcan\) — The People's Harm Reduction Alliance \(phra.org\)](#). It should be noted that Xylazine, a veterinary tranquilizer used in horses is now being cut into some supplies of fentanyl, and unfortunately naloxone does not reverse its effect.

Following complaints of used needles within the community and a spike of Hepatitis C in 2018, NETCHD started a Syringe Services Program (SSP). Molly provided an overview of the services that NETCHD's SSP provides, as follows:

- Needle exchange and safe disposal
- Wound care kits
- HCV rapid screening
- Naloxone distribution
- Education
 - Overdose prevention
 - Harm reduction
 - Safe sex
 - Safe disposal
 - Supportive counseling
- Referral to services, such as those offered through the Tri County Health Opioid Treatment Network (TCOTN)

Since 2018, NETCHD's SSP has helped to dispose of over 146,000 syringes and over 300 naloxone kits; SSP services are offered at each of NETCHD's office locations. Offsite and mobile exchanges are under consideration as well. In addition, there are secure sharps disposal units outside each NETCHD office; while this is not an exchange, the drop boxes are available 24/7 for community members to safely dispose of needles. Residents can also safely dispose of unused prescription and over-the-counter medications in a no cost, pre-paid, and pre-addressed Medicine Mail-Back Package, available at NETCHD locations and at local libraries.

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Staff have continued to provide outreach and education at community events, meetings, fairs, and through various media. In recent months, staff also distributed hygiene products, tents, sleeping bags, naloxone, resources and support to those residing in the homeless camp.


Providers in our area have been working to reverse the impact of the opioid crisis within our communities by limiting the duration of pain prescriptions, connecting individuals to treatment when necessary, and more. As we go forward, NETCHD is looking at how we best provide supportive services and support those organizations and programs that are doing similar work.


Dr. Holtzer said it is important to remember that those who are struggling with opioid addiction are not just people who are sordidly and socially disadvantaged, these are people who have jobs and families, and ranges from high-functioning members of our society all the way down to people who have lost their homes or are experiencing other forms of crisis. It can affect anyone, and we must be cognizant of that.

FRED HUTCH GRANT OVERVIEW: Tabled until next meeting due to time constraints.

YOUTH CAMP PROGRAM: Tabled until next meeting due to time constraints.

ADJOURNMENT: Christina Wagar adjourned the meeting at 9:00am. The next meeting of the Public Health Advisory Board of Northeast Tri County Health District will be on May 10, 2023 by remote participation.

DocuSigned by:

By _____
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Jeanie Beegle
Administration Office Manager

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Christina Wagar
Public Health Advisory Board Chair