



Promoting Public Health in Connecticut Since 1916



6/20/2011

CPHA eNewsletter

Table of Contents

- Legislative Summary
- Save the Date!
- Roundtable Discussion
- Capacity Building Grant Sections
- BOD Changes Updates

[Check the CPHA Facebook Page.](#)

[Follow CPHA on Twitter.](#)

[Join the CPHA LinkedIn Group.](#)

[Want the most up-to-date information on CPHA's activities? Make CPHA your homepage.](#)

2011 Legislative Session Summary

This year, the Connecticut Public Health Association under the leadership of its Advocacy Committee focused its efforts on three main areas – public health infrastructure, health equity, and environmental health. Three bills fell under these priorities and were considered by the Connecticut State Legislature in 2011. They were:

- House Bill 5618 – An Act Concerning the Establishment of a Council to Promote Enhanced Communication between State and Local Public Health Officials
- Senate Bill 913 – An Act Mandating Employers Provide Sick Leave to Employees
- Senate Bill 210 – An Act Prohibiting the Use of Bisphenol-A in Thermal Receipts

After the Legislative Session ended on June 8th, two of the three bills were approved by both Chambers and were waiting for the Governor's signature.

Senate Bill 913 required employers with fifty or more employees to provide sick leave to employees. CPHA testified in favor of the bill and actively worked for its passage saying that many of the employees who do not have sick days, restaurant workers for example, pose a public health risk when they go to work with an illness. Discussion on the bill in both the Senate and the House took many hours but ended with the bill being passed.

The end result for House Bill 5618 wasn't as satisfactory. CPHA testified in favor of the bill that would have strengthened communication and cooperation between state and local public health departments. Once approved by the Public Health Committee, the bill

was referred by the House to the Government, Administration and Elections Committee. No continued action was taken on the bill. Many speculate that with the state facing an unprecedented fiscal crisis, it was because of the legislation's cost impact. Supporters remain optimistic that the initiative will be revived next year with a more positive result.

Senate Bill 210 was drafted by the Environment Committee to prohibit the use of Bisphenol-A (BPA) in thermal receipt paper used by many retailers, gas stations and banks. Originally, the bill included a provision that would have increased the duties of the Chemical Innovations Institute, but this was removed by the General Law Committee and the bill was subsequently sent to the Senate for action. When numerous lawmakers expressed concern that the Environmental Protection Agency wouldn't have a safe alternative named by the enactment date of 2013, a two-year extension was included to address that concern. With bipartisan support, the bill passed unanimously in the Senate and after nearly four hours of debate was approved by the House of Representatives with a vote of 112 to 33. The bill now awaits the Governor's signature.

Sincerely,

Noele Kidney, CPHA Project Coordinator and the Advocacy Committee

[Top](#)

Save the Date: CPHA Annual Meeting, Friday, October 21, 2011

Be sure to mark your calendar! The Connecticut Public Health Association will be holding its Annual Meeting and Conference on **October 21, 2011 from 8am - 4pm at the Aqua Turf Club in Southington, CT**. To follow up on last year's highly successful conference, this year's theme is **Public Health Policy: All Policy is Public Health Policy**. Once again, the educational program will touch on a broad range of areas, with an eye to providing the latest in best practices for the many different types of agencies and disciplines that make up public health practice in Connecticut. The

program will include two keynote speakers and CHES credits will be offered.

“There will be sessions on policies related to housing, food, oral health and women's health, as well as a session dedicated to public health students and a session for the local boards of health,” said Co-Chairs Alison Gilcreast and Katie Boyle. “We would also like to have existing students or recent graduates come and present their research in our student poster session.”

In addition to being a top event for professional networking in CT, the CPHA Annual meeting is also a unique opportunity for agencies and grant programs to promote their programs or disseminate results from studies as sponsors, advertisers or exhibitors. Last year, more than 325 professionals attended the CPHA Annual meeting, making it one of the best attended APHA Affiliate annual meetings in the nation! The CPHA Annual Meeting has many options for sponsors and all at a very reasonable price. If you would like more information about how your agency or program can participate, contact Noele Kidney at Noelekidney@hotmail.com or (860)305-7927.

[BACK TO TOP](#)

CPHA Hosts Health Equity Roundtable

To continue the dialogue from the highly successful 2010 Annual Meeting and Conference, CPHA's Advocacy Committee hosted a roundtable discussion on April 7, 2011 at the Connecticut Health Foundation in Hartford, CT. The roundtable served as a forum to solicit a variety of perspectives on potential state, local and institutional policy priorities from multiple organizations in Connecticut that share an abiding commitment to eliminate health disparities.

From the roundtable discussion, several policy priority areas were suggested, including: creating better data collection systems to document and link health and socioeconomic disparities at the state and local level; enhancing cultural competency efforts: supporting and implementing SustiNet (House Bill 6305)

and House Bill 5608 addressing health care access; expanding affordable housing; supporting Patient Centered Medical Homes (PCMH); building competencies and capacity of the current and future public health workforce to address health disparities; expanding and institutionalizing culturally and linguistically appropriate services; supporting the Housing Trust Fund; reaching marginalized populations; identifying local versus state level policy actions; and aligning efforts of organizations invested in a health disparity mission.

In addition to the CPHA Advocacy Committee, participants included representatives from the Connecticut Commission on Health Equity, Sustinet Health Disparities Committee, Connecticut Association of Directors of Health, Connecticut Office of the Health Care Advocate, Connecticut Department of Public Health, Connecticut Voices for Children, Connecticut Health Foundation, Universal Health Care Foundation, Center for Medicare Advocacy, Connecticut Health Policy Project, and the Partnership for Strong Communities. Participants spoke in turn about their organization's mission and involvement in the health equity cause and identified particular issues and priority areas to target for policy change.

CPHA will deliberate on the priority areas identified at the roundtable and identify items for further action, including ways in which we can collaborate with these partners on priority health equity initiatives. The 2011 CPHA Annual Meeting and Conference will continue the health equity theme with an emphasis on policy initiatives. Many thanks to the Connecticut Health Foundation for their support of the CPHA 2010 Annual Meeting and this roundtable event.

[Top](#)

APHA Affiliate Capacity Building Grant a Success

The multi-year grant to CPHA and 30 other APHA Affiliates is drawing to a

successful close, with CPHA able to point to a long string of accomplishments since receiving the \$90,000 award back in 2007. APHA implemented the “Affiliate Capacity-Building Initiative” with funding from the Kellogg Foundation with three aims in mind: 1) ensuring state Affiliates have resources for basic operations, such as non-profit incorporation and communication tools; 2) expanding Affiliates’ ability to educate policy-makers on public health issues and 3) enhancing APHA-Affiliate and Affiliate-Affiliate communications.

“It has been a lot of work, but in the end, worth every minute of it,” said Past CPHA President Joan Segal. “We have come far over the past four years and owe much of it to the support this APHA grant provided. Now we just need to keep up the momentum. But our accomplishments would not have been possible without the highly engaged, talented members of our Board who have worked diligently to move CPHA forward.”

One of the major benefits provided by APHA through the grant was to give Affiliates access to non-profit marketing and business planning consultants. For example, CPHA was able to undergo a professional branding process that resulted in an updated logo, a new membership brochure and a whole “new look” to the CPHA website. Some other highlights of improvements brought by the grant:

- Purchasing a membership information system
- Obtaining our own shared office space near the State Capitol
- Contracting with a program coordinator, administrative assistant, and IT coordinator
- Implementing an online advocacy system—initially CapWiz and now Convio -- to enhance the members’ ability to engage in advocacy
- Developing an attractive CPHA “Get Ready” exhibit that has been taken to many different venues across the state, further enhancing the visibility of CPHA
- Enabling members to join, renew, and register for events online
- Engaging in a strategic planning process

A new mission statement and case statement have been formally adopted by the Board of Directors, and both are currently being used as communication tools. At this time, CPHA is working with the University of Connecticut’s

Graduate Program in Public Health and its strategic planning instructor to develop a final strategic planning summary. CPHA recently completed a survey of members with the assistance a business planning consultant from APHA and a business plan is in process.

CPHA was highly successful in meeting another objective: *Submit at least one grant proposal for state or foundation funding.* Since 2007, funding CPHA has received included:

2008

- Aetna Foundation health literacy grant
- WellPoint Foundation (Blue Cross/Blue Shield) Vote and Vax grant in conjunction with the CT Influenza and Pneumococcal Immunization Coalition
- Belden and Merck Foundation grants for safe chemicals education and advocacy

2009

- Aetna Foundation train-the-trainer health literacy grant
- Belden and Merck Foundation grants for safe chemicals education and advocacy

2010

- National Association of Local Boards of Health (NALBOH) grant of \$500 to begin planning for establishment of a State Association of Local Boards of Health (SALBOH) as a section of CPHA
- Lawson Valentine Foundation grant of \$6,667 for environmental health advocacy
- Merck Foundation grant of \$10,000 for environmental health advocacy focusing on safe chemicals
- CT Health Foundation grant of \$15,790 to support the 2010 CPHA annual conference focusing on health inequities
- CT Department of Public Health/ASTHO subcontract of \$5,000 to train high school educators to teach public health concepts and to foster building a health career pipeline. (The Hartford Public High School Nursing Academy provided some additional Perkins Grant dollars for this activity)

In 2011, our success in grantsmanship has continued, even after the APHA grant period ended. We have received an additional \$1,000 from NALBOH to

help establish a SALBOH section and we anticipate continued funding for our safe chemicals advocacy work from the Lawson Valentine and Merck Foundations. Also in 2011, we received a small amount of profit (\$500) from a \$2,000 contract from CREC to organize an educational workshop for teachers on teaching 21st century skills to high school students through public health curriculum. We are currently in process of receiving a contract for \$3,200 from the Connecticut Department of Public Health to assist with a DPH/Healthy People Action Project.

One of our greatest successes has come from having the resources to contract with an advocacy coordinator. This year, CPHA's advocacy and the work of several other partners have led to some significant legislation. Connecticut has become the first state in the nation to provide mandatory sick leave to certain categories of hourly workers, and the first of 50 states to protect consumers and workers alike from the health risks associated with BPA exposure from thermal receipt paper.

[Top](#)

CPHA Board of Directors Votes to Add Sections

It's official! On June 15, the CPHA Board of Directors voted to change the CPHA By-Laws to allow sections to exist within the CPHA organizational structure. Similar to [APHA sections](#), CPHA members will soon be able to form or join sections, which are designed to allow members with shared interests to come together to develop educational program content and policy papers in their areas of interest or fields of practice and to provide professional and social networking, career development and mentoring. Sections will be able to develop their own by-laws and will elect a Chair to represent the section on the CPHA Board.

Major support for this initiative has come from the National Association of Local Boards of Health (NALBOH) in the form of two small grants to plan for

the establishment of a State Association of Local Boards of Health (SALBOH) as a section of CPHA. It is hoped that a SALBOH will be the first section within CPHA. Another group exploring the possibility of forming a section is the CT Association of Public Health Nurses. CPHA members will be asked to vote to approve changes to CPHA's Certificate of Incorporation at the Annual Meeting in October. These changes were triggered by the revisions to the By-Laws.

[Top](#)

Changes to CPHA Board of Directors

Spring 2011 has brought some new faces and changes to the CPHA Board of Directors. Renee Coleman-Mitchell stepped down as CPHA President-Elect, due to increased work commitments that would have made it difficult for her to fully serve as CPHA President. However, Renee will continue her involvement with CPHA as she has been designated by Dr. Jewel Mullen, the Commissioner of the Department of Public Health (DPH), to represent DPH on the CPHA Board.

"I am so pleased that Renee will now be the DPH liaison to CPHA, as DPH is among our most important partners," said Tracey Scraba, CPHA President. "This liaison position is one that CPHA has wanted to fill for many years, and I cannot think of a better person than Renee for this role."

To fill the resulting President-Elect vacancy, the CPHA Board of Directors approved Kathi Traugh as CPHA President-Elect, with a term to run through December 31 of this year. Kathi has a long history with CPHA, serving as the Association's part-time Executive Director from 1994-1999. Since that time, she has filled a number of roles on the CPHA board including Director-at-Large, Program and Communications Chair, and most recently, Secretary. Kathi is expected to continue to serve as Secretary until a replacement is found. Due to the vacancy, the Association's By-Laws require a special election be held this year for CPHA President. Kathi has indicated her

interest in running for President for the 2012-2014 term. Elections will be held at the annual meeting in October and will go into effect January 1, 2012.

There have also been some changes in committee chairs. Vani Anand is the new Advocacy Committee Co-Chair, stepping in for Pat Wrice, who had to leave due to the extraordinary demands on her agency, Operation Fuel. Much thanks to Pat, who did a wonderful job on the Committee. Also new this year are the Co-Chairs of the Program Committee, Alison Gilcreast and Katie Boyle. Both come with experience in program planning, as well as tremendous energy and enthusiasm.

[Top](#)

Other CPHA Updates

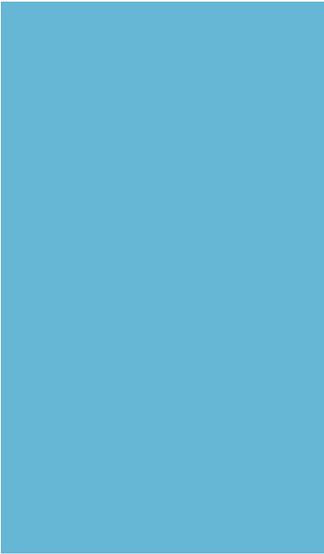
CPHA introduces its brand new blog, *Covering Health in Connecticut*. With posts by our own Membership Co-Chair Monika Haugstetter, the CPHA blog will cover a range of topics that CPHA has, and will continue to, advocate for as well as topics that effect the lives of everyone in Connecticut.

[Read Covering Health in Connecticut](#)

There are only 2 opportunities left to earn CHES credits through CPHA's Health Education Committee meetings. The final 2 meetings will be held on September 14th and November 9th at the American Heart Association. Each meeting consists of 2 speakers who present for 1 CHES Credit hour each. Cost for CHES credits are \$3 per hour or \$6 per meeting.

[Visit the Health Education Committee page for more info.](#)

The 2011 CPHA Annual Meeting Call for Awards will be announced soon. Individuals can be nominated for 1 of 3 awards. The C.-E.A. Winslow Award is presented to a public health professional that has demonstrated leadership and achievement in practice, research and/or education. Ira V. Hiscock Award is presented annually to a Connecticut layperson or organization that



has made notable contributions to the advancement of public health through public service, education, advocacy and/or leadership. Charles G. Huntington III Award recognizes a health care practitioner who has demonstrated public health leadership and a commitment to the health and well-being of populations. More information will be available in the coming weeks.

[Top](#)

CPHA eNewsletter is a subscription-based email publication from the Connecticut Public Health Association to its members. If you would prefer not to receive the newsletter anymore, to unsubscribe and enter "[Unsubscribe](#)" in the subject line of the email reply.

Copyright © 2011 Connecticut Public Health Association. All rights reserved.