**ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING**

**March 18, 2025**

The St. Lawrence County Board of Health (hereafter known as SLCBOH) met on Tuesday, March 18, 2025, in the Large Conference Room, Human Services Center, Canton, New York 13617.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mark Deavers, Dr. Jessica Scillieri Smith, Dr. Kathleen Terrence, Dr. Gregory Healey, Nancy Potter

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Dr. Andrew Williams, Rita Curran

**OTHERS PRESENT:**Erin Streiff, Lara Martin

 **CALL TO ORDER**

Dr. Terrence, Vice President, called the meeting to order at 6:09 pm.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Upon motion by Mark Deavers, and seconded by Dr. Healey, the minutes from the February 18, 2025 meeting were approved.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**OTHER ITEMS AND QUESTIONS**

Lara Martin, Public Health Sanitarian, presented the sanitarian monthly report, highlighting an increase in inquiries related to the septic replacement grant, noting that some town supervisors have sought information for their municipalities. Inquiries/informal complaints designated as “other” were the second most common, with topics including campgrounds, restaurants, water, and emergency housing.

Erin Streiff, Public Health Director, presented an internal memorandum to be distributed as a guide for use within the department, defining public versus private nuisances.

Members discussed the communicable disease program and downward trends in respiratory illness rates, including declining rates of influenza. Dr. Scillieri-Smith provided an update on H5N1 in New York State, including four positive live bird markets and one positive backyard flock, located in Rensselaer County, the week prior. There have been no H5N1 positive cattle in New York State, however, there have been two positive cats in New York City, with cases linked to raw cat food.

Erin Streiff reported that nationwide there have been 326 measles cases reported, with two deaths. Members discussed potential measles-related press releases and educational materials.

Members reviewed the Early Intervention (EI), Preschool, Children and Youth with Special Healthcare Needs (CYSHCN), and Maternal Child Health (MCH) program reports, as found in the 2024 Annual Report. Challenges related to the new EI database (EI-Hub) specifically in regards to billing, as well as service provider shortages in both the EI program and the Preschool Program were discussed. NYSDOH has proposed a rate increase for EI providers, as well as a rate decrease for teletherapy providers. The teletherapy rate decrease has received pushback from the New York State Association of County Health Officials (NYSACHO) and NYS counties. A rate increase for the Preschool program, to be aligned with the EI rate increase, has been considered. Erin noted that two school districts in the county have opted not to sign a contract with SLCPHD, resulting in the county being responsible for the entire cost of transporting students in those districts. Members reviewed a proposed survey for the CYSHCN program, intended to gather feedback to improve the program. The department currently has one public health nurse, with half of her time designated to the MCH program, while a public health specialist has been taking a Certified Lactation Consultant (CLC) course to assist with the breastfeeding education portion of the program. Program goals include increasing staffing and involving hospitals and providers in MCH processes. Members discussed the inclusion of maternal health in the next Community Health Assessment.

Erin noted that the federal budget passed, including emergency preparedness funding that had previously been eliminated.

Members discussed a recent inquiry about feral cats, for which there is no current program to address.

Erin provided clarification on the perinatal Hepatitis B cases reported at the February meeting - the 26.1% of cases reported as perinatal included suspected cases. Also reported were the most recently available Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) rates - 99 cases between St. Lawrence and Lewis counties as of 2022. It was noted that while SLCPHD does provide HIV testing, but all case information is handled by NYSDOH.

Mark Deavers inquired about the data source for the Overdose Dashboard and raised concerns about the accuracy of the dashboard and the potential under-reporting of overdoses. Data is provided by the North Country Crime Analysis Center (NCCAC). Dr. Scillieri-Smith noted that New York State is providing an educational campaign on xylazine, targeting veterinarians, and that there is a possibility that it may become a scheduled substance. Members discussed the utilization of the harm reduction vending machine, and whether it would be beneficial to place them in additional locations.

**ADJOURNMENT/NEXT MEETING**

**Meeting adjourned at 7:06 pm. Next meeting will take place on April 15, 2025 at 6:00 pm.**

**ACTION ITEMS FOR FOLLOW UP**

**N/A**