

North East Public Health Alliance

September 4th, 2025 Meeting Minutes

11:00 am - 1:00 pm EST

In-Person: 50 Billerica Rd #11, Chelmsford, MA 01824

Virtual: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87533291697>

Voting members in attendance:

Shelagh Collins, Billerica

Donna Greenwood, Chelmsford

Shannon Gillis, Tewksbury

Kerri Oun, Tyngsborough

Non-voting members in attendance:

Christine West, Billerica

Haleigh Schultz, BME Strategies

Taryn Angel, Chelmsford

Darcy Beall, Chelmsford

Siobhan LaFreniere, Tewksbury

Ashley Pavlakos, Regional Public Health Nurse

Elise Pierce, Regional Health Inspector

Voting members absent:

Kristel Bennett, Billerica

I. Opening

4/4 voting members present, quorum was met.

Motion to start the meeting

Donna Greenwood made a motion to start the meeting. Shannon Gillis seconded the motion.

Billerica: Y

Chelmsford: Y

Tewksbury: Y

Tyngsborough: Y

All in favor.

Haleigh Schultz called the meeting to order at 11:05 am.

Motion to table the approval of outstanding meeting minutes

Shannon Gillis motioned to table the August 7th meeting minutes. Kerri Oun seconded the motion.

Billerica: Y
Chelmsford: Y
Tewksbury: Y
Tyngsborough: Y
All in favor.

II. Announcements & Reminders

A. Tobacco Training Opportunities

MHOA is offering two upcoming tobacco training opportunities. The first, Model Tobacco Sales Regulation Information Training, will take place from 1:00pm - 2:30pm on September 15th via Zoom. The second, Retail Tobacco Inspection Training, will take place from 1:00pm - 2:30pm on September 25th via Zoom.

B. Fall USDA/FDA Training Opportunities

The USDA/FDA Office of Training, Education and Development (OTED) offers virtual trainings for food establishment inspectors. Some upcoming training opportunities include:

- 11/3 - 11/7, 11:00am - 5:00pm: FD207 Plan Review for Food Establishments
- 11/17 - 11/19, 11:00am - 4:00pm: FD312 Special Processes: Fundamentals for Retail Establishments
- 11/20, 11:00am - 5:00pm: ER310 Food Safety Issues in the Event of Disasters

C. Attend or Testify at SAPHE 2.0 Virtual Public Hearings

Join OLRH at upcoming public hearings on SAPHE 2.0. The Department of Public Health is seeking input from partners to identify ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of local public health service delivery. Hearings will be held on Zoom on September 18th from 11:00am - 12:30pm, September 29th from 2:00pm - 3:30pm, and October 8th from 6:00pm - 7:30pm.

D. MHOA Mentorship Program

Applications are now open for the MHOA Mentorship Program. Applications are open for mentors and mentees. The program is designed to provide partnership and learning to public health professionals at all stages of their career, not just those early in their careers. Once matched, mentors and mentees engage in a series of ongoing, monthly conversations over the course of the 9-month program. Goals include developing skills and knowledge, fostering career development, creating a supportive community, and building a sustainable workforce. Applications are due on September 8th.

E. IMA Expiration & Proposed Amendment

Haleigh Schultz reintroduced the proposed IMA Third Amendment. Following the last coalition meeting, Haleigh circulated a draft Amendment to the Health Directors. Feedback received thus far is to update “Tyngsborough Board of Health” to “Tyngsborough Health Department.” Health Directors are asked to review the amendment or forward for internal town review, and reach out to Haleigh with any questions or proposed changes. Donna Greenwood confirmed that Chelmsford will review in the coming weeks, and Shannon Gillis noted that the Amendment was forwarded to Tewksbury’s Town Manager.

The Health Directors agreed to review and propose feedback before the next coalition meeting, such that the coalition can vote to accept the amendment at the October meeting. Following approval, towns will seek signatures for execution by the November meeting.

F. New Regional Website Update

Haleigh Schultz noted that the new regional website development is well underway. To complete the development, the coalition discussed their preferences on various design elements and outstanding details, including:

- *Meetings & Events Calendar*: Each town will follow up with Haleigh to provide a list of upcoming events and details.
- *Regional Staff Spotlights*: The coalition voted to maintain the “About Us” page, which highlights each coalition member and their role. Each coalition member is to send Haleigh an updated headshot to be featured on the page.
- *Resource Center*: The coalition does not currently have ready-made NEPHA materials other than the Community Resource Guide, but some of the towns have resources that the coalition can leverage. Ashley Pavlakos and Darcy Beall will work on developing additional educational materials and fact sheets.
- *Contact Page*: The coalition suggested including emails rather than phone numbers for regional staff, as well as the phone number of each municipal health department.

III. **FY26 Planning**

A. Maternal, Child, and Family Health

Following NEPHA’s participation in the FY25 Maternal, Child, and Family Health (MCH) Community of Practice, NEPHA committed to MCH-related activities in the FY26 Workplan. This year, the group committed to participating in the Northeast MCH Working Group, maintaining a NEPHA MCH Working Group, planning and hosting a Community Baby Shower, engaging community partners and vendors, and sharing public health information related to maternal, child, and family health.

The NEPHA MCH Working Group recently had their kickoff meeting, in which they discussed initial planning and logistics for the Community Baby Shower. Lots of questions came up, which they presented to the coalition for open discussion and collaboration. Questions included:

- Where should the Baby Shower be held to ensure space and accessibility?
- What is the goal of the Baby Shower?
- Is the Baby Shower meant to provide supplies, or information?
- Who should be involved? Who is the target audience, and who are the ideal vendors?
- When should the Baby Shower take place?

The group discussed logistics, preferences, and options for hosting the event. Ashley Pavlakos volunteered to contact the Tyngsborough Old Town Hall to find out about availability. The group expressed a preference for early June, as to not interfere with spring Health Fairs and graduations in the area.

Donna Greenwood raised the question of marketing the event, as “Baby Shower” implies the distribution of gifts or supplies, rather than only presenting information and referrals from event attendees. Christine West expressed an interest in still providing information and referrals, which new parents, expecting parents, caregivers, and providers could benefit from. The group discussed options for funding the event, noting that much of the draw for attendance will likely come from giveaways and supplies. If vendors are unable to provide giveaway items, the group suggested they offer some sort of presentation or demonstration. Other activities were proposed as potential marketing opportunities, such as car seat safety checks conducted by municipal partners.

The NEPHA MCH Working Group will continue to explore these questions and report back at future meetings. In the meantime, if coalition members have any ideas or leads that would support the planning process, they are encouraged to reach out to Haleigh in the meantime.

B. Community Outreach & Engagement

Haleigh Schultz reintroduced Sustainability Objective #2, Community Partnership Development. The objective includes completing a process to identify new partners and expand partnerships to fill gaps and build capacity. To accomplish this goal, the coalition will follow three activities:

- *Activity A:* Utilize the FPHS Shared Services Review to select one Foundational Area to prioritize, then complete a partnership mapping exercise.
- *Activity B:* Develop an outreach and engagement strategy to connect with identified partners.
- *Activity C:* Use the insights gained from the partner mapping exercise to optimize partner relationships and enhance collaboration.

As outlined in the FPHS Shared Services Review Community Partnership Mapping Guide, the first step to explore community partnership is choosing a Foundational Area or Capability to prioritize. The group considered different priority areas, how external partnerships might impact

capacity or services, and how the group would like to engage with different types of partners. The group collectively decided to focus on Maternal, Child, and Family Health, given the opportunity to build important community partnerships and complement ongoing MCH programming efforts.

The group discussed the state's guidance for community partnership identification and mapping. Before the next meeting, the MCH working group will begin to identify and map existing community partnerships.

C. Coalition Fact Sheet

Haleigh Schultz introduced the NEPHA Coalition Fact Sheet, which is meant to provide a broad overview and introduction to the coalition. The fact sheet contains a summary of the PHE grant and each town's commitment, the services and programming priorities that the group commits effort to, and contact information. The group reviewed the fact sheet and provided feedback on the page's formatting, language, and components. Suggestions included adding more color, stating a focus on health policy and health promotion, and including regional staff emails in place of phone numbers. There was also a suggestion to add a QR link to the bottom that leads directly to the resource page of the new website.

Haleigh will make the proposed changes and recirculate the updated Fact Sheet for the group to review. The group will vote to approve the Fact Sheet at the next coalition meeting.

IV. Community Updates

- Billerica is focused on their upcoming Yankee Doodle Homecoming event and table at the upcoming farmer's market.
- The Chelmsford team was selected for NACCHO's Policy Implementation Program. Darcy Beall and Taryn Angel will be traveling to St. Paul next week to participate in the program. Only 8 communities were chosen, and Chelmsford is the only town. The program supports policy implementation at the local level to improve maternal mental health.
- Chelmsford's Vaping Symposium will take place in October. The event will feature an interactive display and speaker from DPH's Tobacco Education program.
- Tewksbury is hosting an Aging at Home-themed Health Fair on September 18th at the Tewksbury Senior Center. They'll also host a Halloween event this fall.
- Tyngsborough's Health Fair is coming up on September 27th.

V. Adjournment

The next regular coalition meeting will be held on Thursday, October 9th, from 11AM-1PM in Tewksbury.

North East Public Health Alliance

September 4th, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Motion to adjourn the meeting

Shannon Gillis motioned to adjourn the meeting. Kerri Oun seconded the motion.

Billerica: Y

Chelmsford: Y

Tewksbury: Y

Tyngsborough: Y

All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 1:05 PM.

Documents used by the public body during the meeting:

- NEPHA September 4th Meeting Slides
- NEPHA Fact Sheet

NEPHA Coalition Meeting



September 4th, 2025



BME STRATEGIES

Meeting Opening

Agenda

- I. Opening
- II. Announcements & Reminders
- III. Fiscal Year '26 Planning
 - A. Maternal, Child, and Family Health
 - B. Coalition Fact Sheet
 - C. Community Outreach and Engagement
- IV. Community Updates
- V. Adjournment

Meeting Minute Approval

August 7th Meeting Minutes

Announcements & Reminders

Announcements & Reminders

Upcoming Tobacco Trainings

Model Tobacco Sales Regulation Information Training

- September 15th, 1pm - 2:30pm
- Virtual - register [here](#)

Retail Tobacco Inspection Training

- September 25th, 1pm - 2:30pm
- Virtual - register [here](#)

Announcements & Reminders

Fall USDA/FDA Training Opportunities

Office of Training, Education and Development (OTED):

- 11/3 - 11/7, 11am-5pm: [FD207 Plan Review for Food Establishments](#) (Virtual)
- 11/17 - 11/19, 11am-4pm: [FD312 Special Processes: Fundamentals for Retail Establishments](#) (Virtual)
- 11/20, 11am-5pm: [ER310 Food Safety Issues in the Event of Disasters](#) (Virtual)

Announcements & Reminders

Attend or Testify at SAPHE 2.0 Virtual Public Hearings

Join OLRH at upcoming public hearings on SAPHE 2.0. The Department is seeking input from partners to identify ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of local public health service delivery. Hearings will be held on Zoom:

- **September 18th:** 11am - 12:30pm - [Register here](#)
- **September 29th:** 2pm - 3:30pm - [Register here](#)
- **October 8th:** 6pm - 7:30pm - [Register here](#)



Announcements & Reminders

MHOA Mentorship Program

- Applications are now open for the [MHOA Mentorship Program](#)! Register now to become a mentor or mentee. The program is designed to provide partnership and learning to public health professionals at all stages of their career.
- Once matched, mentors and mentees engage in a series of ongoing, monthly conversations over the course of the 9-month program. Goals include developing skills and knowledge, fostering career development, creating a supportive community, and building a sustainable workforce. Learn more and apply [here](#)!

**Applications Due:
September 8th**



Announcements & Reminders

IMA Expiration & Proposed Amendment

Haleigh circulated the proposed IMA Third Amendment to Health Directors on August 22nd. So far, feedback includes:

- On the signature page, change “Tyngsborough Board of Health” to “Tyngsborough Health Department”

Any additional feedback?

Group decision: Goal date for signature and execution

Announcements & Reminders

New Regional Website Update

The new regional website is almost ready to go! Some last updates include:

- Meetings & Events Calendar
 - Any upcoming events in any of the four communities?
- Regional Staff Spotlights
 - Additional staff features?
- Resource Center
 - Community Resource Guide (all languages)
- Contact Page

FY26 Planning

Maternal, Child, and Family Health

FY26 Priorities

In this year's workplan, and as a follow-up to last year's participation in the MCH Community of Practice, we've committed ourselves to:

- Participating in the Northeast MCH Working Group
- Maintaining a NEPHA MCH Working Group
- Planning and hosting a Community Baby Shower
- Engaging community partners and vendors
- Sharing public health information related to maternal, child, and family health

Community Baby Shower Planning

Yesterday, the NEPHA MCH Working Group met to kickoff the Community Baby Shower planning process. Questions to answer include:

- Where should the Baby Shower be held?
 - Venue? Accessibility?
- What is the goal of the Baby Shower?
 - Visibility? Information sharing? Community building?
- Who should be involved?
 - Target audience? Community partners? Providers?
- Date?

FY26 Planning

Community Outreach & Engagement

Sustainability Objective #2

Community Partnership Development

Complete a process to identify new partners and expand partnerships to fill gaps/build capacity.

Activity A

Utilize the FPHS Shared Services Review to select one Foundational Area to prioritize, then complete a partnership mapping exercise.

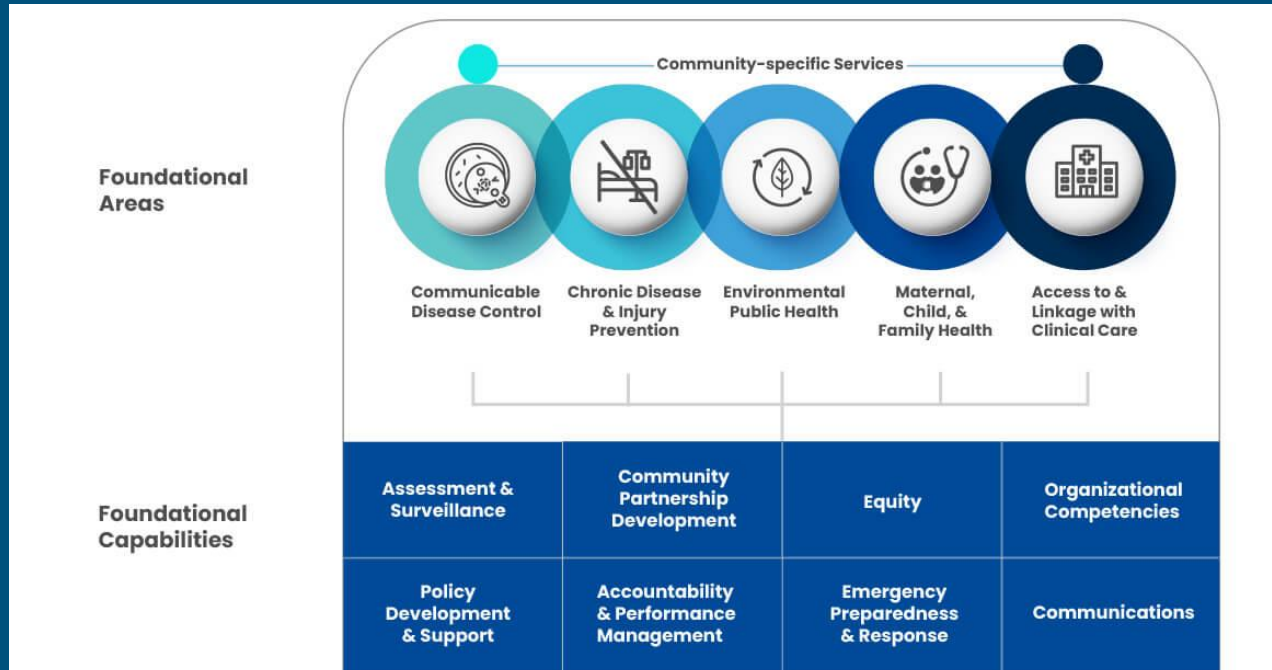
Activity B

Develop an outreach and engagement strategy to connect with identified partners.

Activity C

Use the insights gained from the partner mapping exercise to optimize partner relationships and enhance collaboration.

Step 1) Choose a Foundational Area to Prioritize



Questions to consider:

- Why prioritize this community need?
- How will external partnerships impact capacity or services?
- In what new ways do you want to engage partners?

Step 2) Map Existing and Potential Partners

Guidance for Identifying Potential Partners

Partners are individuals, organizations, or agencies external to the Local Public Health entities in the Shared Service Arrangement.

Partners contribute to or collaborate on the selected Foundational Area or Capability.

Partnerships may be formal (e.g., structured collaboration, written agreements, defined roles) or informal (e.g., flexible, relationship-based, built on shared interests).

List all potential partners for the selected Foundational Area or Capability.

FY26 Planning

Coalition Fact Sheet

Community Updates

Meeting Adjournment

Next Meeting

Our next meeting is scheduled for:

- Thursday, October 9th

Volunteer to host?