



**Executive
Committee
2025**

**Angela Fochesato,
Chair**
Executive Director,
*Beth C. Wright Cancer
Center*

**Tracy Parker, Vice-
Chair**
Nurse Care Manager
*CHCS-ACFS
Behavioral Health
Home Program*

**Maria Donahue,
SCC Rep**
Community Health
Director
*Healthy Acadia
(Hancock)*

Helen Burlock
Maine Hospice Council
President

Andrew Sankey
Director
*Hancock County
Emergency
Management Agency*

**Kawther
Mohammed**
Public Health Educator
Maine CDC

Alfred May
District Liaison
Maine CDC

**Downeast Public Health Council
Friday, May 16, 2025: 10:00 am – 12:00 pm
In-person at Eagle Hill Institute, Stueben.**

Minutes

Location	Name	Organization
<18>	Angela Fochesato	Beth C. Wright Cancer Resource Center
	Maria Donahue	Healthy Acadia
	Andrew Sankey	Hancock County EMA
	Kawther Mohamed	Maine CDC Public Health Educator
	Sarah Wright	AMHC
	Al May	Maine CDC Downeast Public Health
	Faith Reece	Hancock County EMA
	Sydney Bebus	Harrington Family Health Center
	Pamela Harriman	Community Member
	Clem Deveau	AMHC
	Stephanie Lavigne	Maine CDC Public Health Nursing
	Dante Zanon	Community Caring Collaborative
	James Markiewica	Maine CDC
	Jamie Bourque	Maine CDC
	Kelly Barnes	Maine DHHS
	Danielle Day	Mount Desert Island Hospital
	Maura Lockwood	Maine CDC
	Michael Farrell	St Croix Regional Family Health Center



Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Council Business/Events
- Meet Your Downeast Neighbor: The Connection Initiative
- What is District Public Health? Infectious Disease Epidemiology Program: Maura Lockwood
- County Health Rankings
- Develop 2025-2030 District Improvement Plan: Current and Emerging Issues
- Action/Evaluation
- Concluding Remarks and Adjourn

Minutes of Meeting

- **Welcome and Introduction**
 - Angela Fochesato welcomed all to the meeting.
 - Attendees were asked to briefly introduce themselves and sign their names on the attendance sheet.
 - Mission of the Council: Promote the health of all our communities by providing public health information, coordination, collaboration, and advocacy.
 - Vision of the Council: Downeast Maine Communities are among the healthiest in the state
 - 2025 Meeting Dates and Time: 10:00 am to 12:00 pm.
 - January 17; March 21; May 16; July 18; September 19; and November 21.
- **Council Business**
 - Minutes of March 21, 2025 Meeting: Andrew made a motion to approve the minutes; Michael seconded; all approved.
 - DEPHC Communications Briefing: Kawther Mohamed, Public Health Educator
 - The Council issues a monthly newsletter that goes out to over 3,000 subscribers. Facebook posts are planned and posted weekly that offer information related to monthly health observances, disease awareness topics and available resources (local and national), that align with the newsletter content.
 - A bulletin board has been set up at the Ellsworth DHHS office to offer employees public health information.
 - Highlight: One Facebook post of the HAN on the Pediatric Influenza- related death in Maine, gained tremendous exposure with 84 thousand vies, 48 new followers and 257 shares.
- **Meet Your Downeast Neighbor: The Connection Initiative** Dante Zanoni
 - Dante introduced the Community Care Collaborative, which was launched in 2007, it was grant funded and brought partners together with a focus on families and children connecting them to resources. The pandemic in 2020 helped start a



- Washington Basic Needs Group for older adults to meet their needs which was combined to Mentor Neighbor until TCI's full implementation in 2021-2022.
- Zendesk is the main platform for TCI, which is HIPPA compliant and helps connect individuals to resource partners, agencies or groups. What makes TCI stand out is the follow-up process which starts within 1 week and can last for up to 2 months; this helps with reaching back to resource partners if the need was not reasonably met the first time.
 - A new initiative starting is the Downeast Population Health Initiative which focuses on improving the health of older adults in Washington county and the Passamaquoddy communities using the Community Health Worker approach. This initiative employs a screening and evaluation tool for older adults' needs. The D-PHI has started its implementation and already onboarded DECP and EAAA.
 - Comments:
 - What makes TCI different is the warm hand-off and the follow-up duration lasting for two months.
 - TCI gets creative at what the need is and there are several layers to it.
 - Creation of specific resource guides that are updated for substance use guides built by youth for youth, and a Maines Families guide which TCI will act as its gatekeeper and work on maintaining it.
 - Suggestions to adopt and expand the model to Hancock County.
 - Zendesk platform has a lot of useful data, which is efficient and provides real-time connections.
 - **Infectious Disease Epidemiology Program: Downeast Update** Maura Lockwood, Field Epidemiologist
 - This segment of the meeting is to introduce Maine CDC Programs working in the district.
 - Maura gave a brief introduction about the Maine CDC, ID-EPI program under the Division of Disease Surveillance. The functions and activities performed by field epidemiologists were explained and presented: investigate disease outbreak and public health problems.
 - The respiratory diseases data presented showed high number of COVID cases, unlike Flu and RSV cases which are displayed in outbreaks only, COVID-19 cases are expected to move to the regular respiratory illness outbreak classification. TB cases are in the rise in Maine.
 - With the beginning of tick season make sure to use EPA- approved tick repellents, wear protective clothing, perform daily tick checks, rake leaves and mow lawn. The typical Lyme Disease rash is no longer stereotypical, and it is recommended to send a picture of the tick as treatment varies.
 - Rabies is endemic in Maine; recommendations are not to handle sick wild animals.
 - Avian Flu/H5N1 is a Flu A variant, however not all positive Influenza A samples are being sent to the state lab unless the cases are exhibiting symptoms of conjunctivitis, respiratory illness or are individuals working with animals. The public health risk of Avian Flu is low nationally, however in Maine it is considered high. ID-EPI team is



- continuously monitoring the situation case by case for 21 days and sending suspicious samples to the lab.
- Nationally, measles cases have reached 1001 cases in 31 states, however, no measles cases/outbreaks have been reported so far. There have been some suspected cases sent to the state lab for verification and the program has been conducting great surveillance efforts.
 - Comments:
 - The origin of Malaria cases in Maine is related to travel abroad.
 - Not all tick bites require medical attention unless an individual exhibit symptom as currently it is not recommended to prescribe doxycycline for asymptomatic tick bites.
 - 96% of measles cases nationwide are in the unvaccinated population.
 - **County Health Rankings Report** Alfred May, District Liaison
 - The County Health Rankings data report is published out of the University of Wisconsin annually, and what distinguishes it from the Shared CHNA is that it ranks counties based on certain indicators that could be like CHNA reports but are analyzed differently to provide rankings.
 - Hancock county is usually ranked in the top quartile.
 - Washington county on the other hand has been ranked lower, 16th out of 16 counties in Maine, which highlights a large disparity in the Downeast regions where one county is doing well, and the other is doing worse.
 - These reports give a different perspective than the Shared CHNA data and it is recommended to review them and reflect about them for future planning discussions.
 - **Downeast Public Health Council 2025-2030 District Plan**
 - In 2024, we spent several meetings reviewing the Shared CHNA Data for both counties and the district level Local Public Health System Assessment data to create a one-year plan.
 - This process created the four committees that we would want to build a five-year plan.
 - For this meeting, we asked attendees to join one of the four committees break out group:
 - Emergency Operations
 - Older Adult Health and Safety
 - Mental Health (focus on adult and crisis response)
 - Primary and Secondary Prevention focused on Chronic Disease (cancer, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease)
 - Each committee leader gave a summary of the committee's goal, key areas, objectives and an update on the work performed and facilitated discussions using prompts:
 - How do you think your organization fits with this goal?
 - Do you think these objectives align with the set goal?
 - How does this goal fit with your interest and your community's best interest?
 - What new possibilities can you see in achieving this goal and objective?



Vision: Downeast Maine Communities are among the healthiest in the state.

- Do you see this goal benefiting you personally, your community or your organization?
 - What changes, you think may impact community engagement and partnership collaborations, especially as related to achieving these objectives?
 - Do you think there are other key areas or objectives that can be developed to reach the goal?
 - What existing resources are available to support this collaboration?
 - What potential activities can we explore to help us in reaching this goal?
 - How can we track the progress and impact of this collaboration?
- Each group leader reported out what their committees' discussions yielded in terms of success so far, future ideas and possible partnerships.
- Thanks were given to all participants who were able to attend the meeting in-person.
 - Homework/Action:
 - Review of the County Rankings Reports for Washington and Hancock Counties.
 - Link will be sent in the follow-up email to capture participants' commitment to one of the committees and an evaluation for the meeting.
 - Thanks were given by Angela to all attendees and were asked to reach out with ideas for the agenda.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 pm

Next meeting is Friday July 18, 2025 from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm.