



**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, March 21, 2025: 10:00 am – 12:00 pm
Virtual Meeting by Zoom**

Minutes

Location	Name	Organization
<27>	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
	Helen Burlock	Maine Hospice Council
	Alison Thomson	Maine CDC Public Health Nursing
	Lisa Hanscom	Washington County EMA
	Cynthia Grass	Maine CDC Public Health Nursing
	Stephanie Lavigne	Maine CDC Public Health Nursing
	Andrew Solomon	MCD
	Carrie Dwelley	Downeast Community Partners
	Christine Day	Washington County EMA
	Danielle Alteri	Caring Hands of Maine
	Clem Deveau	AMHC
	Heather Sneff	Maine CDC
	James Markiewicz	Maine CDC
	Dante Zaroni	Community Caring Collaborative
	Julie Daigle	Healthy Acadia
	Jen Hallan	Down East Community Hospital
	L. J.	Community Member
	Danielle Day	Mount Desert Island Hospital
	Michael Farrell	St Croix Regional Family Health Center
	Becky Walsh	Maine CDC
	Becca Boulos	Maine Public Health Association
	Lane Simsarian	Maine CDC



Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Council Business/Events
- Meet Your Downeast Neighbor: None for this meeting
- Maine Public Health Association Legislative Update: Rebecca Boulos
- What is District Public Health: Health Inspection Program: Becky Walsh
- Shared District Planning: Common Goal/Objectives
- Develop 2025-2030 District Improvement Plan
- Action/Evaluation
- Concluding Remarks and Adjourn

Minutes of Meeting

- **Welcome and Introduction**
 - Angela Fochesato welcomed all to the meeting.
 - The meeting was recorded for taking notes and the chat was used for attendance and questions/comments.
 - 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 January 17, 2025 Meeting: Andrew made a motion to approve the minutes; Michael seconded; all approved.
 - SCC Meeting of March 20, 2025: Angela as the alternate for Maria represented the Downeast Council. Some highlights:
 - Dr. Va, the Maine CDC Director, mentioned that we are preparing for the federal and state funding potential changes. But the Maine CDC is focused on staying focused on their work and improving the response of the agency to emerging public health threats.
 - The State Improvement Plan is an ongoing process getting committees started, Priorities are Substance Use, Mental Health, Housing, and Access to Care.
 - A new segment of the SCC Meetings is to give a presentation by each of the eight districts with Downeast and York presenting at this meeting. Al and Angela shared the presentation that Angela presented at the SCC meeting.
- **Meet Your Downeast Neighbor: None this meeting**
 - A couple of organizations were asked to present but were not available. We will seek one to present at the May meeting.



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- **Maine Public Health Association Priorities and Legislative Update** Rebecca Boulos, Executive Director
 - Becca gave an overview of MPHA, which was established in 1984. The overview contained membership, what they do and benefits of being a member such as networking and the ability for collaboration between members.
 - MPHA activities: Hosting annual conference, mentoring program, weekly advocacy update as legislatures is in session, issue briefing, job postings and many more.
 - Policy and advocacy: MPHA is engaged in advocacy, including environment, climate, PFAS, etc. and collaborating with different organizations and coalitions, using advocacy to influence policies.
 - 2025 MPHA Policy Priorities: a) Public Health Funding; b) Bolster Local Public Health Efforts (support bill on local board of health language); c) Wabanaki Self-determination; d) Reduce Tobacco Burden (increase tobacco tax); e) Transparency in Maine Cannabis (update rules for medical use of cannabis similar to recreational); and f) Promote Safer Housing (funding for impacts of climate change like housing).
 - Federal Policy Priorities: a) Public Health Infrastructure and b) Health Care Access.
- **What is District Public Health?** Health Inspection Program (Becky Walsh)
 - This segment of the meeting is to introduce Maine CDC Programs working in the district.
 - Becky provided an overview of the Health Inspection Program, how it is organized, what the program does and doesn't do.
 - There are seventeen Public Health Inspectors covering the State of Maine. The inspector areas do not match up with the public health districts as some inspectors cross over from one district to the other.
 - Regulations for licensing and inspections cover ten areas: food code, lodging, campgrounds, four types of body art, youth camps, public pools/spas, and mass gatherings. Unlike some years, we are currently fully staffed.
 - Organization: Lisa Silva, HIP manager; Becky Walsh, Supervisor; two FDA-Certified Supervisor Inspectors, each supervising six to eight inspectors. The FDA training is comprehensive and takes six to twelve months from hiring to be able to inspect by the Food code. The program has a compliance specialist responsible for correcting violations through means or fines, and four licensing clerks who process applications and answer/direct information calls.
 - The Downeast District has two inspectors: Weibley Dean has been mainly serving Washington County for ten years and a newly hired inspector, Holly Sault, will be covering Hancock County once she completes her training.
 - HIP staff have ongoing training and best practices as well as participate in the Maine Food Safety Work Group, which includes epidemiologists.
 - What businesses that HIP does not regulate?
 - Housing and bed bugs (referred to municipality and local health officer).
 - Grocery stores and convenience stores (Department of Agriculture).
 - HIP collaborates with Department of Agriculture on establishments that change from one type of food source to another type.



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- Farmers markets and home goods packing is Agriculture; however, HIP does not allow the preparation of food at home other than serving breakfast (e.g., bed and breakfast licensed sites).
- The inspectors in the program have experience with the kitchen and food handling, therefore they can educate food handlers with compliance with the code.
- For food sickness complaints, the Downeast Public Health Unit works together with the epidemiologist investigating the sickness and health of the complaint while HIP initiates a random inspection and works with the Epi team to connect the dots by following the flow of food from entry point to exit.
- Maine CDC Health Inspection Website:
<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/environmental-health/el/>
- **Shared District Planning**
 - Maine Shared Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) has been conducted every three years since 2012.
 - Hospitals need to meet IRS compliance for community health outreach and non-profit status.
 - Public Health Districts need to meet a district health improvement plan process.
 - CAP organizations need to meet their community block grant provisions.
 - Collaboration occurs up to the county CHNA forums but then partners go back to their own plans without discussing common goals, objectives and/or strategies.
 - To consider a more collaborative approach to common goals, a post-forum meeting was co-hosted by the district council and Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital at the Maine Coast Hospital on March 13.
 - During the meeting questions were directed to organizations about their strategic plans with an aim to find a common goal or objective that all can work on at the county level.
 - Example: how can organizations work together to improve screening of certain cancers, disseminate cancer prevention messaging, and support better referral and information sharing.
 - Notes were taken to consider themes. A follow-up meeting will be held to further the discussion.
 - A similar type of meeting is being planned for Washington County.
 - One suggestion is that the goal, objective, and strategies could be managed under one of the four current committees of the district council.
 - Another suggestion was regarding when the final report of the Shared CHNA will be released and bringing the forum participants back to discussing may be an opportunity to develop a common county goal.
- **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.
 - A timeline of how to develop and expand the existing committee's work was presented.



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- For this meeting, we asked each organization to consider these two ideas regarding the four committees:
 - How does your organization work in this area and Opportunities for collaboration.
 - We used the Idea Boardz for participants to add comments for each of the committees:
 - 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)
- The results will be shared with the council members.
- Thanks were given to all participants: County meetings would help in getting input from those who did not attend.
- Homework/Action:
 - Results will be sent out to be reviewed and discussed during the next meeting.
 - 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 May 16, 2025 from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm.