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Penquis Public Health Council Meeting

Wednesday, November 5th, 2025

[Zoom](#)

9am – 10:30 am

MINUTES

Elizabeth Clark, Vaccine Educator / Project Coordinator, Maine Immunization Program, Maine CDC, **Jane Danforth**, Director of Grants and Community Wellness, Millinocket Regional Hospital, **Matt Dexter**, Executive Director, Christine B. Foundation, **Roxane Dubay**, Bangor Public Health, **Jessica Fogg**, Penquis District Liaison, Maine CDC, **Megan Kelley**, Midcoast Field Epidemiologist, Maine CDC, **Jen Laferte-Carlson**, Community Health Manager, Northern Light Acadia Hospital, **Heidi LeBlanc**, COO, Penquis, **Lynn Lugdon**, Division Manager HEAP, Penquis, **Matt Donahue**, United Way, **Rachel Robbins**, Public Health Educator, Maine CDC, **Edie Smith**, Bangor Office, Senator Angus King, **Jessica Taylor**, St. Joseph Healthcare

1. Welcome Jennifer Laferte Carlson, Chair of Council

2. Immunization Updates & Outreach (*see pdf of presentation*)

Presenter: Elizabeth Clark, Project Coordinator and Vaccine Educator, Maine CDC

The Maine Immunization Program provides routine vaccines at no cost to enrolled providers for children and eligible adults. Immunization records are maintained in ImmPact, and individuals may access their records through the Docket mobile app.

COVID-19 vaccination is recommended for everyone 6 months of age and older, including high-risk individuals, adults 19 and older, and individuals who are pregnant. Standing orders are in place to support access at pharmacies and health care providers.

Key Points

- No-cost vaccines available to enrolled providers for children and eligible adults
- Docket app allows patients to view immunization records
- COVID-19 vaccine recommended for ages 6 months and older
- Focus on high-risk and pregnant individuals
- Reliable sources include AAP, Immunize.org, and CHOP Vaccine Education Center

Links

- ImmPact Record Request: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/forms/impact-immunization-record-request>

- Immunization Record Mobile App: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/news/maine-cdc-launches-immunization-record-mobile-app-wed-08282024-1200>

3. Flu Season Preparedness and Communication *(see pdf of presentation)*

Presenter: Megan Kelley, Field Epidemiologist, Maine CDC

The 2025-2026 respiratory season began September 28. Severity is expected to be similar to last year. The Maine CDC continues statewide surveillance for influenza, COVID-19, and RSV.

Prevention strategies include staying current with vaccination, practicing good hygiene, improving indoor air quality, and staying home when ill. Early antiviral treatment is recommended for individuals with suspected or confirmed influenza who are hospitalized or at higher risk. Maine CDC requests select influenza specimens and requires reporting of positive SARS-CoV-2 tests and influenza-related hospitalizations.

Key Points

- Expected severity similar to last season
- Vaccination, hygiene, and staying home when sick encouraged
- PCR testing available for influenza, COVID-19, RSV
- Early antiviral use recommended for high-risk or hospitalized flu patients
- Reporting required for positive COVID-19 tests and flu-related hospitalizations

4. Heating Assistance Updates

Presenter: Lynn Lugdon, Penquis

Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

HEAP provides a one-time seasonal payment to heat vendors for eligible households in Penobscot and Piscataquis counties.

Program link:

<https://www.penquis.org/services/heating-utilities/heating-assistance-liheap/>

Applications are accepted from August through May. Priority groups include adults 60 and older, children 72 months or younger, and individuals living with disabilities.

Eligibility is based on income, dwelling type, fuel type, and location. [*Required documentation found on site.*](#)

Additional support: weatherization, emergency fuel, and heating system repair or replacement.

Other Home Heating Programs Link: <https://www.penquis.org/services/heating-utilities/other-home-heating-programs/>

Presenter Notes

- 4,800 applications received as of October 31
- Over 6,500 priority households scheduled through year-end
- Appointments booked into early February; waitlist and Friday options available
- SNAP or TANF Notices of Decision may help verify income
- Barriers include lack of identification or citizenship documents

Other Programs

- Low-Income Assistance Program (LIAP): electric bill discounts; households must maintain account payments
- Arrearage Management Program (AMP): supports households with electricity arrears; two-strike rule limits future eligibility

Phone

207-973-3500 or 1-800-215-4942

5. Closing**Edie Smith, Office of U.S. Senator Angus King**

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Encouraged members/public to reach out with any questions or needs.

Closing comments shared.

6. Adjourned at 10:28 AM.