

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Sara Gagné-Holmes
Commissioner



Maine Department of Health and Human Services
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention
11 State House Station
286 Water Street
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011
Tel; (207) 287-8016; Fax (207) 287-2887
TTY: Dial 711 (Maine Relay)

Penquis Public Health Council

MINUTES

Date: August 6th, 2025

Zoom: 9 am – 10:30 am

Attendance: **Nicole Breton**, Rural Health and Primary Care Program, Maine CDC; **Jamie Bourque**, Office of Injury and Violence Prevention, Maine CDC; **Jane Danforth**, Director of Grants and Community Wellness, Millinocket Regional Hospital; **Matt Dexter**, Executive Director, Christine B. Foundation; **Matt Donahue**, Heart of Maine United Way; **Roxane Dubay**, Bangor Public Health, Tobacco Prevention and Treatment; **Lisa Dunning**, Tobacco Prevention and Treatment, Bangor Public Health & Community Services; **Erica Dyer**, Rural Health and Primary Care Program, Maine CDC; **Cynthia Grass**, Public Health Nurse Supervisor, Maine CDC; **Kristin Jenkins**, District Liaison, Cumberland District, Maine CDC; **Laura Lacasse**, Community Health Coordinator, Eastern Maine Medical Center; **Heidi LeBlanc**, Chief Operating Director, Penquis; **Tom Malcolm**, CEO, LHO, LPI, Town of Millinocket; **Rachel Robbins**, Public Health Educator, Maine CDC; **Susan Russell**, Associate Director, Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies, University of Maine; **Edie Smith**, Regional Representative, Bangor Office of U.S. Senator Angus King (Piscataquis, Penobscot, and Washington Counties); **Kate Stearns Luce**, LCSW, CourageLIVES; **Jessica Taylor**, Senior Director, Population Health and Care Transitions, St. Joseph Hospital, Bangor

9:00 AM – Welcome and Introductions

Kristine Jenkins opened the meeting and welcomed participants.

9:10 AM – Presentation: Jamie Bourque, Maine CDC

Jamie Bourque introduced herself and discussed the Office of Injury and Violence Prevention's priorities.

Key topics included:

- Injury prevention strategies and community engagement
- Outreach and education
- The challenge of engaging populations most affected by injury and violence
- Use of data mapping: EMS, death data, social drivers of health, and economic factors etc.

Discussion Highlights:

- **Question:** How will people with disabilities be represented, especially non-verbal individuals?
Answer: Jamie highlighted partnerships with OADS and asked for other ideas.
- **Comment:** UCEDD, Disability Rights Maine, Speaking Up For Us, the DD Council, and the Maine Parent Federation to ensure inclusive engagement.
- **Comment:** Emergency responders may be a valuable group to collaborate with.
- **Comment:** Representation and equity in future grant-funded efforts. Jamie noted that the office's development is ongoing, and inclusive strategies will continue to evolve.

Minutes Approval

A motion was made and seconded to approve the previous meeting's minutes. Motion carried.

9:35 AM – Presentation: Nicole Breton & Erica Dyer, Maine CDC

Topic: Workforce Recruitment and Retention in Rural Maine

Pdf of slides included with minutes sent out to council members

Key Points:

- Resources shared: [3RNET](#), [Tallo](#)
- <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/healthy-living/rural-health/rural-health-systems>
- <https://tallo.com/>
- Highlighted EMS grant opportunities for provider training in rural counties
- Challenges related to recruitment, retention, immigration, and support services

Discussion Highlights:

- **Retention Issues:** Providers reported unexpected workload changes, burnout, inadequate coverage, and lack of support for their families.
- **Recruitment Insight:** Emphasized the importance of helping spouses find jobs and housing and integrating families into the community.
- **Immigration Pathways:** Some providers have opted not to renew contracts. Continued advocacy is needed for supportive structures, such as J-1 visa programs.
- **Comment:** Appreciation to the presenters for focusing on regions like Millinocket to Machias.

10:15 AM – Closing Remarks and Next Steps

- **Next Meeting:** November 5, 2025, 9:00 AM – 10:30 AM (Virtual Only)
- There was strong encouragement to reach out directly to **Senator Angus King’s office** regarding immigration issues and workforce challenges, particularly through the official website to access phone numbers and email contacts. *“I have heard that people like using that app ([5 Calls Ap](#)), but I urge them to also go on the 4-delegation website for numbers and emails. Look for the office you are most comfortable with,”* Edie Smith stated.