

# Meeting Notes: State Community Health Services Advisory Committee (SCHSAC)

December 12, 2024 | 10 a.m. to 2:30p.m. | Hybrid | Wilder Center, St. Paul, MN

## Action items:

- Continue telling the story of public health in our communities and to community leaders.
- Watch for information about the 2025 Mentorship Program and consider signing up to be a Mentor or Mentee.
- Upcoming Meetings and events:
  - The next SCHSAC Meeting will be February 6, 2025. 10:00a.m. to 2:30p.m. Hybrid. In person location will be at the MDH offices in St. Paul. *This will be the meeting where Executive Committee Elections will be held in your regions.*
  - Announcing CCC: Coffee Conversation & Consideration dates and topics for 2025! Watch for calendar invitations. These are *optional* learning events open to the SCHSAC network.
    - February 20, 2025. 8:00a.m. Topic: What is the Social Vulnerability Index?
    - April 10, 2025. 8:00a.m. Topic: Drinking water and public health.
    - July 31, 2025. 8:00a.m. Topic: Artificial Intelligence and public health.
    - November 20, 2025. 8:00a.m. Topic: More on cannabis and public health.

## Welcome, call to order, approval of consent agenda

Tarryl Clark (Stearns), SCHSAC Chair called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Mandy Meisner (Anoka) moved approval of the Consent Agenda. Marcia Ward (Winona) seconded. The motion passed.

## Consent agenda:

- Approval of Dec. 12, 2024, amended meeting agenda
- Approval of 2024 SCHSAC retreat overview ([Meeting Notes and Retreat Summary \(PDF\)](#) )
- Approval of 2025-26 SCHSAC work plan
- Approval of updated Charter for Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) Oversight Workgroup

## Chair's remarks

Tarryl Clark, SCHSAC Chair shared her reflections on the many accomplishments that had been achieved between SCHSAC and its partners this year. Chair Clark reminded the group of their role as community connectors and partners and how important that work is to achieve our shared vision of a seamless, responsive, and publicly supported public health system.

Our work is changing the environment and landscape for our grandchildren, such as how we handle water quality or the quality of food in food insecurity programs, and how we take care of our lands. Everything that happens upstream impacts downstream.

## Commissioner's remarks

Dr. Brooke Cunningham, Commissioner, MDH, reflected that it had been two years since she started as Commissioner. Some of her reflections included:

- Big rooms of strangers become small rooms with colleagues and friends.
- Nitrates: A year ago, we were responding to the EPA about nitrate levels in well water, now we have developed education tools, conducted free water testing, and installed 92 reverse osmosis systems to remediate the nitrate levels in water.
- Infectious disease: trend line with COVID is improving (get your COVID vaccine!), now seeing increased pertussis incidence in the state (largely in teens and young adults as their TDAP vaccine is wearing off), continuing to watch Mpox and Measles, watching H5N1, and other viruses that may be emerging in the state.
- WIC turned 50 in September. Minnesota is a state that reaches a high percentage of those eligible for WIC.
- MDH leadership is visiting as many counties as possible (78 of 87 to date). Thank you to everyone who has made time to meet with us.
- Our new data analytics officer Nila Hines will provide leadership in the data modernization efforts, bringing in the health statistics section closer to the data modernization work.

The Commissioner shared an overview of some of the internal restructuring that is happening at MDH. More information and an updated organizational chart will be shared as it is available.

## Legislative session outlook

Lisa Thimjon, Legislative Director, MDH presented a brief overview of the outlook for the upcoming legislative Session.

Key takeaways:

- It will be a challenging session ahead.

- Hot topics expected: bonding, balanced budget, bipartisanship, procedure with close splits in both houses.
- State funding for core public health work will continue to be important as federal funding is likely to be scaled back due to sunseting of COVID funding and may decline further. Funds are also needed for foundational public health capability, data enhancement and community mental wellbeing.
- Rightsizing fees to support public health work.
- There will be some policy bills this year – watch for more information.
- We need to continue telling the story of public health in our communities.
- MDH and the Local Public Health Association (LPHA) will continue to work together to keep SCHSAC updated.

## **Foundational Public Health Responsibility (FPHR) spotlight: using the communications toolkit to tell your story to lawmakers**

Allie Hawley March, MDH gave a brief overview of the [messaging toolkit](#) that was presented at the SCHSAC Retreat. After giving everyone a chance to practice writing and delivering their own message, there was a great discussion about using the messaging framework: some may be trying to reach fellow elected officials, some may be trying to reach other audiences; for some colleagues with a certain level of understanding, research and thoughtful positioning to reach an “aha” moment is a possible strategy. Knowing the audience can help with understanding their needs so you can find the most effective tools (talking points, information) to inspire them.

## **Approval of Local Public Health (LPH) Data Modernization Workgroup**

Dave Johnson (Hennepin) & Gabby Cahow, MDH presented an overview of the proposed charter for this new workgroup.

They emphasized that:

- This is a space for local public health and MDH to come together to achieve a data system that provides equitable public data across our entire public system, capitalizing on different strengths.
- Membership includes representatives from across the state, rural and metro rep and elected official and strives for balance in representation.

Sarah Hollie (Hennepin) moved approval of the Workgroup Charter. Steve Heinen (Benton) seconded. Motion carried.

## Approval of recommendations from the Performance Measurement Workgroup

Amy Bowles (Beltrami) Workgroup Co-Chair & Ann March, MDH, gave a brief overview of the CY2023 Performance Measures Key Findings report from the Workgroup. They then reviewed the 2024 recommendations from the Workgroup.

Key findings from the CY2023 report were summarized in a document provided in advance of the meeting. Presenters reminded the group of three key observations:

- 74.5% (38) report being able to fully or substantially meet over half of the measures.
- Community health boards serving more than 100,000 people were more able to substantially or fully meet measures.
- Population size is not the only factor.

Recommendations for annual reporting expectations for community health boards for 2024 as required by statute were presented along with rationale for each. They included:

### **Recommendation 1: Performance measures for community health boards and the Minnesota Department of Health**

Community health boards and the Minnesota Department of Health self-report on their ability to meet 46 national measures. This base of measures will be reported in March 2025, looking back on calendar year 2024, and annually thereafter.

### **Recommendation 2: Include data from major grant programs in future reports**

Include system-level data already collected through grant reporting such as the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP), Response Sustainability Grant, and Public Health Emergency Preparedness Grant in future performance reports.

### **Recommendation 3: Calendar year 2025 performance-related accountability requirement**

Community health boards will demonstrate their ability to meet the following national measure from the Public Health Accreditation Board:

*Measure 2.2.5 Maintain a risk communication plan and a process for urgent 24/7 communication with response partners.*

Community health boards will submit information about their risk communication plan and process in March 2026, completed in calendar year 2025. The information will be used to assess how well they meet the measure.

Steve Gardner (Kandiyohi) moved approval of the recommendations of the Performance Measurement Workgroup. Mandy Meisner (Anoka), seconded. Motion carried.

## **Mentorship program announcement**

Commissioner Sheila Kiscaden shared her experience as a Mentor in the 2023 SCHSAC Mentorship program. She shared about her own experience in finding value in being mentored by public health professionals early in her career and how that contributed to her becoming a champion for public health. That served as a foundation for her push to have SCHSAC create a mentorship program in 2023. She encouraged everyone to think about participating – either as a mentor or a mentee when the program is launched again in 2024.

## **Recognition**

Chair Clark thanked all of the currently serving members and alternates of SCHSAC who will not be returning to serve in 2025. She recognized the retirement of Commissioner Sheila Kiscaden (Olmsted) who has served on SCHSAC for many years and is the immediate Past Chair and thanked her for her many years of service and advocacy.

Local Public Health Association (LPHA) Chair Nick Kelley presented the LPHA Partnership Award to the SCHSAC Leadership Team: Tarryl Clark, DeAnne Malterer and Sheila Kiscaden. Calling them “three incredible public health champions,” Chair Kelley cited their partnership with local public health on many things, but in particular their leadership on the Joint Leadership Team (JLT) and their constant advocacy at the Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC).

## **Election of officers**

Tarryl Clark, SCHSAC Chair presided and announced that nominations for SCHSAC Chair were now open. Mandy Meisner (Anoka) moved a unanimous ballot be cast for DeAnne Malterer (LeSeuer-Waseca) for Chair. Barb Weckman Brekke (Scott) seconded. Motion carried.

Commissioner Malterer accepted and expressed her appreciation and excitement.

Chair Clark shared the statement from Laurie Halverson (Dakota) who had been nominated for Vice Chair in advance of the meeting. She asked if there were any other nominations for Vice Chair.

Marcia Ward (Winona) moved that nominations cease and a unanimous ballot be cast for Laurie Halverson for Vice Chair. Steve Gardner (Kandiyohi) seconded. Motion carried.

Commissioner Halverson had given her acceptance in advance.

## Recognition

De Malterer (LeSeuer-Waseca), SCHSAC Vice Chair presented her Chair's Plaque to Chair Clark and thanked her for her leadership over the last two years.

### *Three Simple Rules of the State-Local Public Health Partnership*

- I. Seek First to Understand*
- II. Make Expectations Explicit*
- III. Think About the Part and the Whole*

Minnesota Department of Health  
State Community Health Services Advisory Committee (SCHSAC)  
651-201-3880 \* [health.schsac@state.mn.us](mailto:health.schsac@state.mn.us) \* [www.health.state.mn.us/schsac](http://www.health.state.mn.us/schsac)

Updated December 19, 2024

*To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-201-3880.*