

Pompton Lakes Health CAG Meeting Summary September 21, 2011

The following is a summary of the September 21, 2011 meeting of the Community Advisory Group for Health (Health CAG). The summary is organized by topic area, and should not be considered as chronological minutes from the meeting. The main issues raised during the meeting are as follows:

Update on Community Health Profile: Joe Eldridge and Jerry Fagliano reminded the CAG of the goal of the community profile, which is to evaluate whether certain health outcomes observed in Pompton Lakes differ from surrounding towns and from the State of New Jersey. They explained that DHSS took comments and feedback from the Health CAG relating to the reports of other health outcome data previously presented, and explained that we are waiting on the birth defects data in order to complete the community profile. Jerry stated that depending on when the birth defects data is received and evaluated, the report on birth defects can be released as a separate report or included with the community profile.

Update on Community Survey: Jerry re-introduced CSTE fellow, Jessie Gleason who will be taking the lead on designing and implementing the survey. Jerry explained that the draft of the survey protocol is being finalized and the survey tool is in the final stages. Jerry also reminded the CAG that the survey is focusing on current households and former residents of current households in the plume area and that the first communication to residents should be in the middle of October. The results of the survey should be available in January or February 2012

Questions/Comments for Jerry from CAG: Lisa Riggiola asked if people can do the survey online and stated that she knows of many former residents who are very anxious to participate in the survey. Jerry explained that the survey will be done by phone interviews and clarified that not all former residents of Pompton Lakes will be included in the survey, and that it will only capture current households and former residents of current households. Lisa said that this would not be good enough since many people who have gotten sick have moved away. Jerry and Joe explained that the current survey method is the best we can do since there is no way to capture everyone who ever lived in the plume area and we would not be able to compute rates to compare Pompton Lakes to national statistics. Joe also emphasized that our methods have to be scientifically defensible. Joe reminded the Health CAG that the survey is just one part of a larger effort to gather health information about the community, and to determine if anything unusual is occurring in Pompton Lakes that would warrant further study.

Cas Stark asked how many interviewers would be surveying residents. Joe stated that we currently are planning on having ten interviewers and Jerry stated we hope to achieve an 80% participation rate. Joe stated that the DHSS website and the Pompton Lakes Borough website would be updated with survey information once the survey begins and that DHSS will make sure the survey is advertised and people are informed about the survey. Cas Stark expressed concern about sufficient information about past health

experiences in the survey. Jerry explained that since the population in Pompton Lakes is relatively stable, we should be able to capture historical experience to some extent.

Jacky Grindrod from Congressman Pascrell's Office handed out copies of a letter sent to the director of the Center for Disease Control (CDC) in Atlanta requesting federal assistance for DHSS to conduct a health study for Pompton Lakes.

Mike Serra stated that all he wants to know is whether the contamination from DuPont is causing illnesses in the community and a study is needed to do this. Jerry reminded the CAG that we need a specific health outcome to study and there are many factors that have to be considered to do such a study, including having enough people to study and being able to reconstruct exposures. Joe reminded the CAG that we have always stated that we may never have the answer to the question of linking exposures to illness.

DHSS Action Items

A link to the DHSS CAG website will be made available on the Pompton Lakes Borough website.

List of Health CAG Meeting Attendees, September 21, 2011:

Community Members (based on sign-in sheet)

Lisa Riggiola	Barbara Doka	Greg Smith
Cas Stark	Michael Keough	Ruth Paez
Debbie Priestner	Mary Anne Orapello	Karen Manneback
Gary Kennedy	George Courter	Josephine Bruno
Karen Dean	Sevgin Zoler	

Pompton Lakes Council Members

Mike Serra

Other Interested Parties

Jacky Grindrod (Congressman Pascrell's Office)

Bernard Weintraub (Weitz and Luxenberg Attorneys)

Department of Health and Senior Services

Jerry Fagliano

Joe Eldridge

Kate McGreevy

Christa Fontecchio

Pam Agovino

Jessie Gleason