



Miscellaneous

CT Association of Directors of Health (CADH)

Positions held: Member; Elected to Board of Directors; Emergency Preparedness Committee Chair; Environmental Health Committee

I attended the CADH Environmental Health Committee meeting on October 2nd.

The CADH membership meeting was held in person at Riverview Bistro in Stratford on October 21st. In addition to hosting our regular meeting, we hosted representatives from the CT DPH Office of Local Health Administration and Food Protection Programs so that we could have an open forum question and answer session with them.



On October 27, 2025, I joined public health colleagues representing the East Shore District Health Department, New Haven Health Department, West Haven Health Department, Trumbull Health Department, Guilford Health Department, and Madison Health Department for a round table discussion with Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro about the impact the Federal government shutdown has on local public health. Among other topics, we highlighted challenges we are experiencing with emergency preparedness and response, challenges we are expecting with local housing regulations impacting septic systems, climate impacts affecting public health, and the OD2A Directors present also emphasized the importance of federal programming and funding for opioid-related work. Other concerns raised included ongoing funding and resource disruptions, breaks in data and infectious disease surveillance, and re-organization or firing of Federal program offices and workers.

NVHD remains committed to protecting the environmental and physical well-being of its communities through the promotion of health access, health education, regulation, community engagement and partnerships.

Statewide DPH & Local Health Meetings

I continue to attend the monthly meeting held for local health and DPH staff (co-hosted by CADH). NVHD staff also attend if their schedule permits. The meeting was held on October 8th.

Epidemiology

During the month of October, **Carissa**, Melanie and I have spent a considerable amount of time working with the Department of Public Health on several incidents. Most notably, we have been working with several DPH departments and the CDC on an investigation related to an isolated community outbreak of Legionnaires' disease, which is a type of pneumonia caused by Legionella bacteria. It is contracted by inhaling water mist containing the bacteria and is not spread from person to person. Nurse Kristie also assisted in part of the investigation helping with case interviews. The investigation is ongoing, and no further details can be shared at this time.



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Breast Cancer Awareness Month

NVHD staff and family joined thousands of others at the 2025 Seymour Pink Pounding the Pavement 5K Walk/Run on October 4th to honor and support those who have heard the words "You have breast cancer," including our own Assistant Director, Carissa Caserta. What an inspiring and empowering day of community! Members of the NVHD staff and the Board of Directors also participated on Seymour Pink Day! Awareness campaigns like these and the global Breast Cancer Awareness Month (BCAM), which was created to increase screenings and provide critical support for patients and survivors, have helped reduce breast cancer deaths in the United States by 44% since 1989. ([nationalbreastcancer.org](https://www.nationalbreastcancer.org)).

On October 14, 2025, in recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Governor Ned Lamont, Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz, and Connecticut Public Health Commissioner Manisha Juthani, MD, held a news conference to encourage women across Connecticut to obtain regular breast cancer screenings, noting that early detection of breast cancer is when it is most treatable. Additionally, the officials highlighted the availability of a program in Connecticut that connects patients to these screenings at low or no cost for those who have low income and who have no or limited health insurance. Read more in the Governor's press release here: bit.ly/CTBreastCancerScreenings.





Workforce Development

Lisa continues to chair the NVHD Workforce Development Committee. Staff continue to work on completing the required two online training courses this quarter. NVHD's staff workforce development in-person training this month was learning how to control bleeding in an emergency situation. Thank you to Lee Ives of Seymour Ambulance for providing staff important Stop the Bleed training on October 2nd!

Did you know that the development of the nationally recognized program has ties back to not only the State of Connecticut but right here in Seymour? STOP THE BLEED® "was initiated by a federal interagency workgroup convened by the National Security Council Staff, The White House. This collaborative effort was led by the American College of Surgeons Committee on Trauma (ACS COT) to bring knowledge of bleeding control to the public and build national resilience. Stop the Bleed courses train the public to save lives through three basic actions to stop life-threatening bleeding following everyday emergencies and man-made and natural disasters. Advances made by military medicine and research in hemorrhage control during the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have informed the work of this initiative which exemplifies translation of knowledge back to the homeland to the benefit of the general public."



Lisa attended the quarterly Statewide CT Workforce Development Meeting on October 7th. The Public Health Workforce Interest and Needs Survey (PHWINS) results were reviewed and discussed in detail, both looking at Connecticut-specific results as well as how CT compares to the national results and included a presentation from the de Beaumont Foundation's Workforce Council. Local health participated in the national survey but was not included in the presentation of results because to qualify, the agency needed at least 25 employees and all of whom took the survey. Not many local health departments/districts in CT qualified. The key topic areas include demographics, workforce characteristics, engagement & satisfaction, staying & leaving, workplace well-being, training needs, flexibility & benefits, and community engagement. The national results can be viewed here: <https://www.phwins.org/dashboard>.



Additionally, the meeting included updates from the New England Public Health Training Center on a new data tool that will be available to public health, toolkits for preceptor and student pathway programs, and vaccine communications trainings. DPH is continuing its Summer, Fall, and Spring internship programs. NVHD is currently evaluating our capacity to host Spring intern(s).

I attended a key stakeholder Public Health Training Academy of Connecticut (PHTAC) meeting on October 27th.

Air Quality and Climate Change

Grant: EPA Air Quality Monitoring Grant

Status: Contract is fully executed!

I attended the DPH webinar on responding to Climate Hazards on October 3rd.

Naugatuck Valley Overdose Prevention & Education (NOPE) Program

Grant: Overdose Data to Action: Limiting Overdose through Collaborative Actions in Localities (OD2A)

Status: Year 3 Sub-contract Executed with New Haven Health Department

Austin coordinated and taught multiple Narcan training sessions in October around the Valley to teach senior adults how to administer Narcan as well as how to better restrict access to medication and prevent accidental overdose. He was able to train over 30 individuals throughout the month of October and distributed more than 50 Narcan kits to participants and facilities. Lisa attended several sessions to provide additional suicide education and 988 resources (10/2 Ansonia Senior Center, 10/22 Shelton Senior Center, and 10/23 Derby Neck Library). Austin is also co-chairing the Mental and Behavioral Health CHIP Committee with Lisa (reported below).

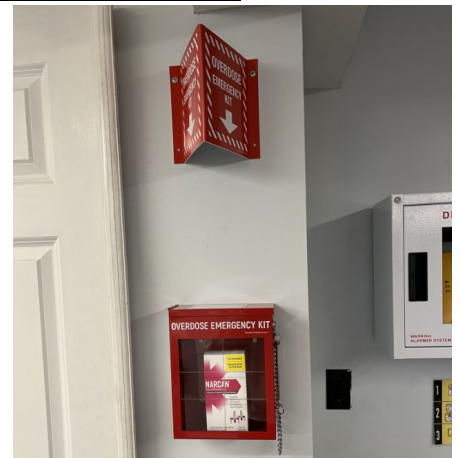
Austin attended several community events and flu clinics, where he provided education on safe medication disposal practices and distributed Deterra bags to promote safer households and reduce medication misuse.

NVHD promoted DEA Take Back Events across the Valley on Saturday, October 25th. At the time of this report, we are still waiting for the Shelton Police Department to report back how many pounds of medication were collected. Derby Police Department reported 58.5lbs and Naugatuck reported 55.3lbs.

I shared our continued opioid prevention work at the ESF 8 meeting on October 3rd. Austin and I also attended the OD2A partners meeting on October 9th and the End Stigma CT partners meeting on October 15th.

I attended a full-day High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Prevention Summit on October 29th, which focused on Prevention through Connection and mobilizing relationship science to help youth thrive. Austin was unable to attend the live Summit however it was recorded and the webinars will be shared with him so he can watch and learn.

The Milford, Orange, and West Haven Overdose Prevention Navigator position is posted. I will be conducting interviews with the Directors of Health from those respective departments in early December. The Navigator will split their time working mostly out of West Haven and Milford Health Departments.



Pictured: Narcan station mounted at the Kathleen Samela Memorial Food Pantry supplied after training by Austin and with OD2A grant funding.

End Stigma CT is an educational public awareness campaign by New Haven County public health agencies aimed at breaking down the barriers and misconceptions surrounding opioid addiction and to encourage more residents to access life-saving treatment and services.

It is funded by a Centers for Disease Control Overdose through Collaborative Actions in Localities (OD2A-LOCAL) grant. Participating public health agencies include **Naugatuck Valley Health District**, East Shore Health District, Waterbury Health Department, and the New Haven Health Department.

The campaign seeks to build compassion, understanding, and support for individuals and families impacted by opioid use disorders.

“While we have seen a decline in fatal overdoses in the region, stigma continues to be a barrier to people seeking help,” said Maritza Bond, Health Director for the City of New Haven, the lead organization for the campaign. “This campaign is an important step toward building stronger community understanding and ensuring more people get the treatment they need.”

The campaign’s theme is, “It Started With” and it seeks to educate people about stigma’s impact on people seeking help and to build empathy around how drug use can start for many people. The concept was created following research with people who shared their experiences using opioids after an injury, or to cope with emotional or mental trauma like losing a family member, a divorce, PTSD.

The campaign also provides tangible ways each of us can help to end stigma. Through media outreach and community partnerships, the campaign encourages open dialogue and promotes a culture of compassion.

“Research shows that stigma is one of the greatest obstacles people face when trying to seek help,” said Austin Telford, Overdose Prevention Navigator, Naugatuck Valley Health District. “We want our community to understand that addiction is not a moral failure — it’s a health condition that deserves empathy, treatment, and hope.”

“We all have a role to play in ending stigma,” added Sam Bowens, Prevention, Harm and Risk Department Section Chief for the Waterbury Health Department. “When we choose understanding over judgment, we help our neighbors, strengthen families, and make New Haven County a healthier place for everyone.”

“We are proud to join our fellow health departments in this important effort to reduce stigma and ensure people get the help and services they need without judgement,” said Michael Pascucilla CEO, Director of Health, East Shore Health District. “This collaborative campaign seeks to shift community attitudes and is part of an ongoing effort to prevent drug overdoses.”

The campaign runs through December 2025 in and is supported by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Overdose Data to Action: Limiting Overdoses through Collaborative Actions in Localities (OD2A: LOCAL) grant, which funds local strategies to prevent overdose and promote recovery. These efforts also include the deployment of community outreach and case management specialists who work to connect individuals with care, community resources and harm reduction education and supplies. The grant award is expected to provide approximately \$2 million per year for 5 years, totaling \$10 million from 2023 through 2028.

For more information, visit www.EndStigmaCT.com.

End Stigma CT Billboards around the Valley – 9/29/25 – 11/29/25



Rt. 34 / Gilbert St. - Derby



Howe Ave. / Maple St. - Shelton



Main St. / Columbia St. - Ansonia



Division St. / Pershing Dr. - Ansonia
Division St. / Pershing Dr. - Ansonia



S. Main St. / Rt. 313 - Seymour



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Examples of the gas pump campaign. There are 19 gas stations running the ads, including 2 in Naugatuck.

1. Citgo at 42 Prospect St., Naugatuck, CT 06770
2. Sunoco at 531 N Main St., Naugatuck, CT 06770

Radio spots are playing on two FM Radio Stations



Example of the bus ad running on the New Haven line, which has 20 stops, including:

★ Ansonia	East Haven	Milford	Orange	West Haven
Branford	Guilford	New Haven	★ Shelton	Woodbridge
Cheshire	Hamden	North Branford	Wallingford	Yale, SCSU, UNH, Quinnipiac, Gateway
★ Derby	Madison	North Haven	Waterbury	CT Post Mall



Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP)

An offer has been extended to an individual to fill the full-time Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Medical Reserve Corps Coordinator. If accepted, the individual will start in mid to late November.

I signed off on all the public school district's All Hazard School Security and Safety Plans that have been updated for the 2025-2026 school year and were due at the end of October to the State. I also received and reviewed the plan for Emmett O'Brien THS.

ESF 8: Public Health & Medical Services, Chair

I facilitated the Region 5 ESF #8 meeting on October 3rd. The Region 2 ESF #8 meeting was held on October 16th. Paulina has been attending and providing updates and Vanessa will also start attending the ESF #8 meetings with me once clinic season no longer conflicts. I attended the virtual Region 5 REPT Steering Committee meeting on October 14th and the Region 2 REPT meeting on October 17th.

I attended the statewide ESF #8 meeting on October 28th which included updates from Brian Pasquell, Program Manager for Connecticut Mental Health and Addiction Services, who provided a presentation on the Disaster Behavioral Health Response Network, Matthew Bryan from the Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response who shared an overview of the new Risk Assessment, and Kathleen Sullivan who provided us with a Partner Update from Connecticut Disability and Aging Services.

Statewide Training and Exercise Workgroup (STEW)

There was no STEW meeting in October as we had our 2nd annual Public Health Integrated Preparedness Planning Workshop (IPPW) for Budget Period (BP) 2 of the Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) and Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP) Cooperative Agreements. The IPPW was held on October 2nd and brought together planning partners from the Department of Public Health, local public health, the Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI) planning regions, Regional ESF-8 workgroups, the Connecticut Healthcare Coalition, the Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) and others to assist with the development of the multi-year Integrated Preparedness Plan (IPP).

CT Healthcare Coalition (HCC)

Public Health Representative & Voting Member; Elected to the Executive Committee

I attended the bi-monthly meeting on October 15th.

I attended a meeting with CT EMS leaders on October 9th to review the background of the upcoming statewide Medical Response and Surge Exercise (MRSE) on February 24, 2026. The MRSE is designed to examine and evaluate the ability of HCCs and other stakeholders to support medical surge. We intend to enhance the participation of both EMS and public health in the exercise.

NACCHO Preparedness Policy Advisory Group (PPAG)

Connecticut Representative

The October 15th PPAG meeting was canceled.



Surveillance & Outbreak Response

The following update is provided by Paulina:

Focus has shifted to COVID-19 test kit distribution as respiratory virus season goes on and the holidays approach. Paulina created a special form for bulk requests of COVID-19 test kits for Valley businesses and organizations (<https://forms.office.com/r/FEWu34qnts>). If you would like a test kit for personal use, please fill out this form: [COVID-19 Test Kit Request Form – Fill out form.](#)

Table 1. COVID-19 Adults Case Statistics (18+)

	September	October
Total Cases & Contacts Managed*	155	65
Consultations with Residents	1	2

Table 2. COVID-19 Youth and Teen (0-17) Case Statistics

	September	October
Total Cases & Contacts Managed*	36	7
Consultations with Residents	0	0

**Please note that "Total Cases & Contacts Managed" also includes reports of self-tests originating from various sources such as self-reports, schools, childcare centers, congregate living facilities, etc. and as such do not always come with contact information and/or do not always warrant further follow-up by NVHD staff.*



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COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES
Carissa Caserta, MPH
October 2025

Miscellaneous

National Health Education Week took place October 20-24th. This week is about making health a reality for everyone. The Society for Public Health Professionals (SOPHE) recognizes that every community's health and well-being depend on a variety of physical, social, environmental, and economic factors. A special shout out to our Health Educator, Lisa Trupp, CCHW for all she does! We are also proud of our collective emphasis and intentional prioritization of including health education across all our programs and services.



Valley Council for Health & Human Services

Lisa and I attended the VCHHS Retreat on October 21st. The agenda included a celebration of achievements and executive leadership over the past year. David Morgan, TEAM, Inc. completed his one-year term as an advisory member of the Executive Committee and Shaye Roscoe, Boys & Girls Club completed her one-year term as a member at large of the Executive Committee. Congratulations to Michael Wynne, BHcare, who was voted on the Executive Committee, of which I continue to serve on as well. We also reviewed the work completed thus far on the Valley Hub and Collective Impact initiatives and completed group exercises to help set our intentions for the upcoming year. 16 new members and 4 new sectors have joined VCCHS, bringing our email distribution list to 240 individuals representing Valley service providers and organizations.

Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)

Me, Jess, and Lisa are members of the CHIP Steering Committee along with Myra O. (Griffin Health Services) and Beth C. (Yale-Griffin Prevention Research Center). We will continue to meet as we finalize the document and implementation plan during October. The four priority areas of the 2025-2028 Naugatuck Valley Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) are, in no particular order: 1) Access to Care (Co-Chaired by Myra and Griffin employee TBD); 2) Reduce the Burden of Chronic Disease (Co-Chaired by Carissa and Marissa Savoy, Griffin Hospital Faculty Practice Manager); 3) Enhance Mental and Behavioral Health (Co-Chaired by Lisa and Austin); and 4) Increase Awareness and Access to Healthy Food and Nutrition (Co-Chaired by Jess and Beth). Additional NVHD staff will participate as subcommittee members, and we encourage the Board to consider joining if interested as well (thanks to those who have joined!).



Community Health Programs

LiveWell chronic disease programs were put on hold in September and October but will be picked back up in November. We always skip this time of year because it is our busiest time with flu clinics and community events. Community health staff were at flu clinics almost daily in October!





The Preventive Health Strategies at Work in Connecticut Communities Block Grant, which runs on a October 1 – September 30 timeline, wrapped up its second year this month. Reports have been submitted, and our programmatic goals have been met and even exceeded in some categories. This grant will hopefully continue to support our community health programming for another three years.

Immunization Grants & Clinical Services

On September 24th, Kristie, Elizabeth, and Vanessa attended the Annual Immunizations and Respiratory Viral Disease Update conference on September 24th at The Woodwinds in Branford, CT. This one-day, in-person conference hosted by the Connecticut Immunization Coalition and American Lung Association provided key findings and trends from the previous season, immunization recommendations, strategies for addressing vaccine hesitancy and more.

Clinical Services

Kristie provided 8 child vaccines in October. We hosted 19 flu clinics in October and have given a total of 818 flu vaccines thus far. There are two more scheduled clinics, and we are open for appointments at NVHD for flu shots. Thank you to my team for working so well together and pitching in when needed! And to our one public health nurse, Kristie, who provides all these vaccines with minimal nursing help!



Our clinic commercial running on NBC CT, Peacock, and Telemundo has switched from a back-to-school immunization theme to seasonal influenza vaccines. The commercial is running in English and Spanish through the end of December 2025. There will be a break in January then a 1-month commercial advertising general NVHD services and contact information on the three channels during the month of February and Winter Olympics.



Immunization Action Plan (IAP) Grant Program

Elizabeth conducted 2 in-person Immunization Quality Improvement for Providers (IQIP) visits and 5 in-person full site visits for pediatric practices in October.

Infection Prevention & Control (IPC) & Healthcare-Associated Infections & Antimicrobial Resistance (HAI-AR)

NACCHO, in collaboration with CDC's Project Firstline, released new resources to strengthen Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) training developed and designed to empower local health department (LHD) staff to deliver effective infection prevention and control (IPC) education to healthcare facility partners in their communities. Jess is currently working on completing the two self-paced courses which are IPC Fundamentals of Infection Control and Principles of Adult Learning.

Outreach Events

CT Foodshare Beacon Falls Derby	Vanessa attended the Beacon Falls and Derby bi-weekly food distribution events, where they provided the community with NVHD's flu clinic schedule and important health education for keeping safe during the respiratory virus season. There has been a noticeable increase among Foodshare attendees.
Griffin Car Seat Safety Check Tabling	Vanessa continues to attend the Car Seat Safety Check events hosted by Griffin. She brings resources and provides them to families.
Salvation Army	Every other Friday, Vanessa attended the Salvation Army to do outreach and bring resources.
Griffin Population Health Fair Beacon Falls	<p>Lisa and Austin attended the first annual fair at St. Michael's Church on October 25th.</p> 



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
Melanie Dokla, BS, RS
October 2025

Food Service Establishments

Preparations are being made to send out applications for the renewal of all licensed food service establishments; NVHD currently has 675 licensed establishments. Coordination with the town/city Tax Collectors and Water Pollution Control Authorities to identify establishments that owe overdue personal property taxes or have grease interceptor violations will be made again this year. These establishments will need to get released from the town/city before their license can be renewed. Applications will be mailed by mid-November. Recorded phone broadcasts, social media, and website reminders will occur throughout December.

Glenda Buenaventura, per diem food inspector, continues to assist in conducting food service inspection after hours and on the weekend up to 20 hours a week.

Mike Delossantos, Sanitarian, attended a Registered Sanitarian (RS) preparation course in Essex, CT from October 6th – 10th. Mike is aiming to take the RS exam this December.

Body Care

The renewal of all existing body care permits has been completed. There was a total of 12 (14 last year) establishments that were required to pay a late fee totaling \$840 (\$1,000 last year). Annual inspections of the salons have been completed (total of 237) with 1 failed inspection and 1 closure order. (224 inspections and 3 failures last year).

All routine inspections have been completed, and staff continue to conduct plan views for body care establishments that are new or changing ownership.

The inspectors conduct annual inspections of the salons as the applications are received and processed. Staff continue to conduct plan views and inspections for body care establishments that are new or changing ownership.

Subsurface Sewage Disposal Systems (SSDS)

Staff continue to conduct SSDS inspections, B-100 visits, soil testing, B-100 plan reviews, new SSDS plans reviews, and issue permits to construct/discharge.

On October 29th, Amy started Subsurface Sewage Disposal System (SSDS) Phase II training. This training is held virtually and in-person over a 5-week period.

Housing Complaints

As the temperature becomes cooler the department is receiving more housing complaints regarding no heat, no hot water and/or heat that does not reach the required 65°F (Connecticut General State Statutes Section 19a-109).



Environmental staff continue to investigate housing code violations and nuisance complaints.

On October 28th, Amanda and Amy attended a Rodent Control webinar which covered the behavior, health risks and challenges regarding rodents.

Lead Education & Action Program (LEAP)

We continue to see an increase in elevated blood lead (EBLL) cases, which require a comprehensive lead inspection. If the residence is a multi-family dwelling, the other units are required to be tested if there is a child under the age of six.

Lead abatement plans submitted by lead abatement contractors are reviewed and property owners are issued written orders from this office. Once the project has received approval and work is completed, a final inspection is conducted to ensure work was done as specified in the plan.

Lisa is actively monitoring 54 lead cases in the Valley, with Ansonia and Naugatuck having the most. Vanessa has also stepped in to help with home inspections and has been training with Amy. Now, Vanessa has seen most of the process from initial epi investigation, issuing a violation order, and creating an abatement plan.

On October 16th, Amanda attended an EPA Webinar reviewing lead-based paint regulations and proper coordination with local building officials.

October 20th – 24th was National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week. The Department of Public Health held daily training courses on some topics which included lead case management, building partnerships with other agencies, lead abatement. NVHD leadership, environmental, and community health staff attended the webinars.

Lead Stats

Open environmental lead cases (properties)	20
New environmental	3
Active case management (children)	54
New case management	-

Miscellaneous

Congratulations to John Mucha who married his long-time girlfriend on October 11th, we wish them all the best in the future.

After-Hours Emergency Responses

	Date/Time	Location	Description of Event
1.	10/16/25	Shady Knoll, Seymour	Gas leak

