

Climate and Health Equity Coalition

January 15, 2025 | 10:30am - 12:00pm

Meeting Minutes

Members present: Melia Allan, Hannah Beath, Marie-Christine Bournaki, Devin Brown, Ruth Canovi, Deanna D'Amore, Robert Dubrow, Margaret Harvey, Diane Mas, Amy Mirizzi, Mark Mitchell, Katharine Morris, Jen Muggeo, Jenna Nicol, Michael Pascucilla, Edith Pestana, Kate Richard, Sumit Sharma, Harintha Subramanian, Jonna Thomas, Jennifer Wang, Karen Wolujewicz, Corona Zhang.

Welcome and Icebreaker

- Hannah Beath called the meeting to order at 10:33am
- Hannah led an ice breaker, asking members about their resolutions or intentions for 2025.

Announcements

- Hannah updated the group on the movement for round 1 of Local Health Department (LHD) pilot grants – Bridgeport and Ledge Light
- Two more LHDs were selected for round 2 of the grants – Waterbury and Stamford
- DPH hired a Health Program Associate starting in February in the Office of Climate and Health

Evaluation Plan Update

- Jennifer Wang gave an update on the evaluation questions surrounding curriculum and training, and local heat and air quality planning.
- Jennifer also shared next steps in the evaluation process with the group.

Curriculum Update

- Hannah updated the group on the progress on each of the five modules in the curriculum designed for LHDs.
- The curriculum is on track for a launch in June. Hannah outlined a next steps timeline including the development of resilience strategy frameworks, planning of focus groups, and developing a launch and communication plan.
- Katharine Morris suggested adding images/videos and thinking about language accessibility. She also mentioned creating a version of the document that residents could take home with them. Lastly, she asked about using establishing pathways to communicate between local health and state agencies for emergency preparedness.
- Michael Pascucilla spoke about the low training of local health professionals in trained on climate change.
- Jen Muggeo expressed that it is important to be prepared in terms of state agencies, such as knowing which agency is taking the lead in times of emergency.
- Mark Mitchell remarked on the different types of resilience, and emphasized the importance of specifying which type of resilience we are talking about.

- Mark Mitchell flagged that the last pollen counter in CT has failed, meaning the state currently has no active pollen counters as it relates to air quality. He would appreciate any support as he works to get state funding for a pollen counter.
- Edith Pestana suggested looking at cities as a whole, because some of the initiatives may be spearheaded by local planning and zoning departments, not the local health department. Diane Mas added onto this comment, emphasizing the need to have a health focus in intentional planning.

Symposium Agenda Proposal: Feedback

- Jennifer Wang gave an update on the Connecticut Symposium on Climate Change and Health.
- The symposium is confirmed for Tuesday, March 25, 2025, from 8:30am to 2:30am, at Southern CT State University, Adanti Student Center
- The objective is to build awareness, engagement, and community in CT around the health impacts of climate change, and solutions to protect health.
- Jennifer shared the current symposium agenda and asked the group for feedback. Several members gave feedback on groups and individuals to connect with to find speakers.

Wrap up and Next Steps

- The next coalition meeting is currently scheduled for April 16. Hannah will touch base with Robert Dubrow and Jennifer Wang about shifting the meeting up into March to better coincide with the symposium.
- The meeting adjourned at 11:38am.