

To the Honorable Select Board:

The Board of Health herewith submits their Annual Report for the period July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020.

REPORT OF THE HEALTH DIRECTOR/PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE

The mission of the Milton Health Department is to achieve the highest level of wellness for all Milton residents by adopting reasonable health regulations, providing preventative health programming, and preparing and planning for public health emergencies and pandemics. Under the guidance of the elected Board of Health, the Board's professional staff assesses the public health needs of the Milton community. The staff addresses those needs by enforcing state and local public health and environmental health regulations and by providing public health nursing services, health promotion activities, emergency preparedness and response planning, community health education and by reducing environmental health hazards. The Board of Health consists of three members elected by the citizens of Milton, and a volunteer Medical Advisor, Dr. Anthony Compagnone. The Milton Health Department staff is comprised of a full time Director/ Public Health Nurse Caroline Kinsella, a full-time Health Agent Laura Dellechiaie, a part-time 16 hr. Public Health Nurse Susan Poirier, and a part-time 21.5 hr. Senior Administrative Clerk Jean Peterson. This year we were delighted to congratulate Roxanne F. Musto on her re-election to the Board of Health for a three-year term.

BIOTERRORISM, PANDEMIC FLU, AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Increasing concern for emergency preparedness requires that the Milton Health Department increase its emergency response capabilities. The Health Department staff continued to be an integral part of the Local Emergency Planning Committee. The LEPC meets during the year to develop response plans for emergencies and reviews the Town's Emergency and Infectious Disease Plans.

The Health Department staff also continued its participation in the statewide region 4AB for local response to bioterrorism preparedness. We received a grant for \$ 2,888.00 which was used for training and equipment to enhance local public health emergency preparedness. Our region consists of 26 communities surrounding Boston, with a total population of just under one million. The goal of the regional system is to ensure adequate resources are available to prepare and protect residents from terrorist attacks, pandemic flu and natural disasters and to develop and implement plans, procedures and protocols to ensure effective and efficient coordination of public health and public safety resources. The Milton Emergency Operations Plan Manual has been updated so that the Health Department team will have a resource readily available to them in case of an emergency. Regional representatives meet monthly to plan and develop a model for effective and efficient delivery of all public health services, not just emergency or bioterrorism response. The Health Department also works closely with Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital-Milton.

The Milton Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), along with the Towns of Canton, Dedham, Needham, Norwood, Walpole, Wellesley, and Westwood, participated in emergency preparedness trainings and drills (collectively referred to as Norfolk County-8).

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

This year the Health Department was extremely busy with case surveillance and contact tracing during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. This calamity highlighted the lack of infrastructure in local public health offices to manage the magnitude and challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic. The first case in Milton was identified on March 1, 2020 and by June 1, 2020 Milton had 294 confirmed and 40 probable cases. Out of the 294 confirmed cases 144 were female and 150 male. In the first three months of the pandemic, COVID-19 was diagnosed in Milton residents aged 5-101yrs old. A racial disparity was highlighted that Black/African American Milton residents were diagnosed with COVID-19, four times as often as white residents. Within the first three months 18 residents died with a diagnosis of COVID-19, 8 female and 10 males. The Coalition for Local Public Health requested additional resources and funding from Governor Charlie Baker at the start of the pandemic and the Massachusetts Health Officers Association was the fiscal conduit. Our Public Health Nurse was then able to increase her hours from 16 hours to full time and we were able to hire two retired Public Health Nurses to assist with the case influx. In addition, seven school nurses volunteered to assist the Health Department with case management. We did numerous MATV presentations on cable television instructing residents about decreasing transmission of the virus and how to protect themselves thru face coverings, social distancing, and frequent handwashing. As schools, restaurants, gyms,

businesses, and other institutions initially closed to the public we fielded numerous questions and consulted on various best safety practices. The Guidelines from the State were changing rapidly as more information was obtained about the Coronavirus. The evolving guidelines were presented to the Health Department via 2 webinars and 2 State Conference calls weekly from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. The Health Department informed residents of these ever-changing guidelines, and best practices which added to our workflow and caused much uncertainty and anxiety for the residents of Milton. We continue to field many phone calls and emails from concerned residents asking to clarify regulations and re-opening orders from Governor Charlie Baker. The Health Director worked collaboratively with the Schools and the Select Board of Milton which entailed updates and presentations specific to COVID-19 and how it affected our community. Protect, Promote, Prevent is the mantra of Public Health, to promote healthy communities, encourage healthy behaviors, and decrease the spread of disease by preventing its spread. In the Annual report of the Milton Board of Health in 1918 there were 318 Influenza cases reported: A quote by J.S. Lincoln and Abijah W. Draper stated “This department is expected to enforce existing laws governing the cleanliness and healthfulness of the community, and to ascertain the best known methods of preventing disease.” We have come full circle again as Milton has faced this pandemic with courage, determination, and community collaboration to come together to fight this disease.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Environmental health activities are determined by legal mandate, complaints, licensure, permit requirements, inquiries and regulatory enforcement of local and state regulations. Activities include the licensing and inspections of food establishments, housing code inspections and enforcement actions, public and semi-public swimming pools, beaches, solid waste handling practices, animal, insect and rodent control, and the abatement of general nuisances. Additional concerns include asbestos removal, lead in the environment, hazardous waste and indoor air quality. The Health Director and Health Agent attended public health organization, state and national trainings this year on numerous environmental health topics.

The Health Department is now working with the Town Treasurer James McAuliffe and the Attorney General’s Office on a program called the “Abandoned Housing Initiative.” Blighted and neglected properties, abandoned by their owners in residential areas, create safety and health hazards. This program works to identify abandoned residential properties in Milton, appoint a receiver, and bring the property into compliance with the State Sanitary Code.

The Health Department would like to thank our Septic and Title 5 consultant Paul A. Brogna, P.E. of Seacoast Engineering for his invaluable assistance, knowledge, and proficiency. Paul works tirelessly to review submitted wastewater treatment plans and ensures their compliance with the State Environmental Code Title 5 regulations. He is patient, knowledgeable and a pleasure to work with.

WEBSITE

The Health Department’s web page contains useful health information as well as meeting schedules and Minutes, annual reports, regulations, application forms and lists, fee schedules, important web links and emergency preparedness information for residents and the Medical Reserve Corps. Please visit us at www.townofmilton.org, click on ‘Departments’, then ‘Health Department’. We have also created a Facebook page (Milton Board of Health) and Twitter account (@miltonboh) to keep residents up to date on local public health and as a means of communication during emergencies and the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the pandemic the Health Department updated our website daily to include COVID-19 case counts and valuable information for the Milton community.

NORFOLK COUNTY MOSQUITO CONTROL DISTRICT

The threat of West Nile Virus (WNV) and Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) continued this year. The Norfolk County Mosquito Control Project (NCMCP) continued to focus on source reduction, water management, larvicide, salt marsh management, mosquito trapping and testing, and ground-based nuisance spraying for mosquitoes based on residents’ requests and mosquito activity monitoring.

MASSACHUSETTS ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION (MEHA)

This organization is devoted to improving local public health practice and increasing educational and funding opportunities for local boards of health.

TOBACCO CONTROL

The Health Department continued its enforcement of the Tobacco Control Regulations aimed at preventing the sale of tobacco to persons under 21 and the sale of flavored tobacco products. Beginning June 1, 2020, the sale of flavored combustible cigarettes and other tobacco products, including menthol cigarettes and flavored chewing tobacco, was restricted to licensed smoking bars where they may be sold only for on-site consumption. Also in effect on June 1st is the addition of a 75 percent excise tax on the wholesale price of nicotine vaping products, in addition to the state's 6.25 percent sales tax.

PUBLIC HEALTH OUTREACH

Our efforts in this area included distribution of educational materials, press releases and cable television releases on pertinent public health issues, including emergency preparedness and COVID-19. We also assisted in numerous requests for information on radon, lead paint, asbestos, Title 5, septic systems, safe food handling practices, mosquito control, West Nile Virus, Eastern Equine Encephalitis and Rabies. A monthly health article is written and submitted to the local newspaper, the Milton Times.

MERCURY RECOVERY PROGRAM

The Health Department offers a mercury collection program to prevent mercury from entering the waste stream. Items accepted at the Health Department include thermostats, thermometers, button cell batteries, and elemental mercury. Also, a free digital thermometer was provided for every household that brought in mercury thermometers.

MEEDICATION AND SHARPS DISPOSAL PROGRAM

The police station provides a 24/7 oral medication disposal option for residents. The Health Department also provides a Sharps Disposal Program in our office. For a small fee, you can purchase Sharps containers to dispose of them properly.

SUMMARY PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICES **(*Numbers may be lower due to the COVID-19 Pandemic)**

Food Establishments (routine inspections, re-inspections & consultations)	191*
Housing Code Enforcement	41*
Restaurant/Food Complaints.....	7*
Public Health/Environment/Nuisance Complaints	29
Rodent/Animal Complaints.....	32
Misc. Inspections (tanning).....	1
Recreational Camps for Children (plan reviews, consultations, and inspections)	18
Septic System Installation Inspections.....	23
Septic System Percolation Tests/Soil Evaluations.....	16
Septic System Plan Reviews and Consultations.....	12
Trench Permits	8
Swimming Pools (public and semi-public)	5*
Beach/Pond.....	2
Demolition Policy Reviews	2
Tobacco Inspections	9
Stable Inspections.....	9

SUMMARY OF THE BOARD OF HEALTH PERMITS ISSUED

Burial Permits	627
Disposal/Septic System Construction Permits	8
Disposal/Septic System Installers.....	16
Food Establishments.....	82
Farmers Market Food Permits.....	3*
Food – Catered Events.....	10*
Food - Temporary Events	18*
Ice Cream Trucks	4
Food – Kitchen Plan Reviews	4
Residential Kitchens.....	4
Funeral Directors.....	10
Indoor Skating Rinks.....	1
Recreational Camps for Children	18
Rubbish Contractors	10
Septage Haulers.....	9
Stables - Commercial	1
Swimming Pools - Public and Semi-Public	4*
Beaches and Ponds	0
Tanning Facilities.....	1
Tobacco Retailers.....	9

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE

The 2019-2020 seasonal influenza season was moderate. We had 118 confirmed cases of flu in the Town of Milton. We scheduled eight seasonal flu clinics, which included all the senior housing sites, Pierce School, Fontbonne Academy, Senior Center (for all town residents) and an Employee Health Clinic. Other responsibilities include communicable disease surveillance, Direct Observation Therapy for active Tuberculosis patients, emergency planning and preparedness, town employee blood pressure screening, community health outreach, summer camp inspections to screen for proper immunizations, and public health nurse resource for the schools and community. The Health Director/Public Health Nurse attended monthly Board of Health, NC-8, LEPC (Local Emergency Planning Committee), and MAPHN (Massachusetts Association of Public Health Nurse) meetings and submitted monthly reports.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

A total of 758 confirmed, contact, suspect or probable communicable diseases, which includes COVID-19 cases that were reported during the year. A complete listing of the confirmed, probable and suspect cases according to case definitions from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health are on file.

There was one Active case of Tuberculosis this year. Direct Observation Therapy included a Milton resident taking daily TB medications, which required the Director to supervise the administration of the medication in the evening hours for seven months. The Tuberculosis status of 18 latent TB residents were monitored by their primary care doctors.

COMMUNITY HEALTH

A total of 940 doses of seasonal flu vaccine were administered at numerous clinics and schools. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health only provides flu vaccines for children, Mass Health patients, and uninsured residents. This year, the Health Department had to increase the number of privately purchased vaccines that we would need to supply for our flu clinics. All the flu vaccines administered had to be documented in the MIIS state tracking system, and processed for reimbursement thru Commonwealth Medicine, which was very time consuming.

Two residents receive monthly Vitamin B-12 vaccines at their residence.

Nineteen recreational summer camps were inspected, and health records for children and counselors were reviewed for current immunization status. Camp policies and procedures were reviewed as well as medications administered at the camps.

The Public Health Nurse in partnership with the Milton Public Library performed blood pressure checks on the first Tuesday of the month at the library.

EDUCATION/PLANNING

During the year, the Health Department obtained continuing education credits for seminars attended at the annual conferences of MAPHN (virtual), MEHA, and MHOA (Massachusetts Health Officer's Association). In addition, the Local Public Health Institute provided online CEU's.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

The Health Department Director/Public Health Nurse serves as the Chair of the Milton Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition and is a Member of the following organizations: Region 4AB Local Emergency Planning Committee, Region NC-8 Local Emergency Planning Committee, Massachusetts Health Officers Association, CHNA 20, Massachusetts Association of Public Health Nurses, Health and Wellness Committee at Milton High School, BID- Milton Community Benefits Committee, and Solid Waste Advisory Committee. In addition she is a Board member on the Council on Aging and serves as Treasurer.

Caroline Kinsella is a past president of MAPHN and served two years. In addition, she has previously served on the MAPHN Board in the role of Treasurer.

This year Caroline received the MAPHN Presidential Award for her outstanding contributions, dedication, and work in the field of Public Health Nursing. Public Health Nursing practice primarily focuses on promoting the well-being of populations, with the goal of promoting community health and preventing disease and disability.

PARTNERSHIP FOR A HEALTHY MILTON INC.

Partnership for a Healthy Milton was officially recognized as a tax-exempt organization on February 15, 2018. The purpose of the Partnership for a Healthy Milton, INC was to establish a non-profit organization which promotes and protects the health and wellbeing of Milton residents and Town of Milton workforce. Through collaborations with community leaders, residents, and partnering organizations, Partnership for a Healthy Milton will support a variety of public health and behavioral health activities in the town of Milton Massachusetts. These programs and initiatives will work to promote healthy people in a healthy community environment, including the social determinants of health and health equity. Partnership for a Healthy Milton will emphasize the prevention of illness, premature death, and disability. Partnership for a Healthy Milton, INC, was created with the intent of qualifying as a non-profit organization which is entitled to receive charitable gifts, donations, grants and property from all sources, and to fundraise for programs and practices that endeavor to support a healthier Milton population.

The Board members include President Dr. Marian Hannan, Clerk Pricilla Neves, Treasurer Casey Corcoran, Directors: Dr. Linda Hudson, Denise Carbone, Deborah Greene Muse, Jonathan Pincus M.D., and Caroline Kinsella. This past year we had a number of community presentations and speakers come to our meetings to discuss what services that they were providing to Milton residents. We are currently working on action steps and working groups about areas we would like to concentrate on.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The Milton Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition (MSAPC) is one of the most exciting initiatives within the Milton

Public Health Department. There are 15 members representing different sectors in our community, who are residents charged with making policy and programmatic decisions. The Milton Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition (MSAPC) has achieved a great deal over the past year to prevent and address substance abuse, thanks to the strong partnerships and volunteers that the Coalition has fostered across town. With over 850 community supporters, the Milton Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition is setting a new standard for community assessment, involvement, and change. In recognition of their progress, the Federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Agency (SAMHSA) awarded the Milton Health Department a \$125,000/year Drug Free Communities grant to support the Coalition's hiring of two part time Project Coordinators and subject matter experts, Margaret Carels and Stormy Leung as well as to subsidize the cost of new initiatives in the Community. Another \$125,000/year in financial and in-kind support was raised to match the grant, for a total of \$250,000 of new public health resources for Milton. These additional dollars included funding from a legislative earmark secured by Senator Walter Timilty, and generous donations from Mike's 5K to Crush Substance Abuse as well as from BID Milton. Support from Milton churches, civic organizations, and private citizen donations were also received. These dollars supported an innovative prevention program in the schools and in the Community entitled "Drug Story Theatre", and support for the PARENT program in the Milton Public Schools. The focus of the Coalition has been to reduce underage drinking, marijuana use, and vaping—three substances used all too frequently by our youth. A "Rethink the Drinks" campaign was launched, along with a website, (www.rethinkthedrinks.com) to help parents understand the perils associated with youth binge drinking and to provide them with tips about how to talk with their children. Monthly articles have been published in the Milton Times entitled, "Mind Matters" to help reduce the stigma and misapprehensions about behavioral health and substance use disorders. Finally, the Coalition partnered with various town departments to assist our residents access free help and resources when facing addiction or mental illness. "Milton Cares" is a confidential program, organized through the Milton Police Department, whereby residents who have overdosed are visited by a team of substance use counselors. The William James Interface Referral Service provides access to a free Helpline for Milton residents who desire access to mental health services. Interface served about 90 Milton families this past year. The Helpline number is 888-244-6843 and is available Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm.

MSAPC's Steering Committee is committed to the long-term sustainability of the Coalition. After a robust search, they hired Coalition Director, resident and public health expert Laurie Stillman. She works with Deborah Milbauer, also a Milton resident and public health consultant. The Steering Committee is comprised of Dr. Susan Koch-Weser, Stefano Keel, Vicki McCarthy, Noel Vigue and Chair Caroline Kinsella.

To learn more about the findings in our community assessment, the proposed strategies in our strategic plan, or to find educational resources for preventing and coping with substance abuse, please visit our website, maintained by volunteer and Milton resident Steve Nelson, at www.milton-coalition.org. We hope you will join us!

REPORT OF THE MILTON SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION COALITION

Founded by the Milton Health Department, this year the Milton Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition celebrated its five-year anniversary and was a proud recipient this year of the Chairman's Award from the national community substance misuse prevention organization, CADCA. We were also awarded citations by District Attorney Michael Morrissey and the Milton Rotary Club. These entities recognized our extraordinary community partnerships, programs and compassionate strategies which successfully drove down youth drug and alcohol use by over 10% in a four-year period. Our Coalition does not promote prohibition; our goal is to prevent the public health epidemic of addiction by addressing the disease where it begins: in the teenage years.

In Milton, 43% of the approximately 450 parents who completed an online survey reported that someone in their immediate family struggled with alcohol or drugs. This statistic is alarming because substance misuse places a huge burden on the entire family's wellbeing and stability. Milton's youth tell us that stress, depression, a lack of out of school time activities, easy access to drugs and alcohol, and a strong culture of drinking all contribute to their decisions to use substances.

MSAPC has brought to Milton new mental health resources and services for our residents, strong educational opportunities for youth and parents, best practice recommendations to community leaders, and youth leadership

programs for our teens. We enjoy tremendous support for our efforts, with our police, schools, health care institutions, faith leaders, media, town departments, civic organizations and community residents-both young and old, who give of their time and support to help make us successful. We especially want to thank the Mike's 5K to Crush Substance Abuse, Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital-Milton, and Senator Timilty for ensuring that we receive the funds we need to keep our critical work continuing. And we are especially appreciative of the Board of Health, Health Department and Caroline Kinsella for all of their support and guidance.

REPORT OF THE INSPECTOR OF ANIMALS

Local Board of Health Regulations, Chapter 1, governs the *Keeping of Animals* for both commercial and private uses. To ensure compliance with the local regulations and pursuant to the Massachusetts Department of Food & Agriculture, Division of Animal Health, the Milton Health Department inspected the one commercial stable in Milton and the nine privately licensed stables. The inspections assessed cleanliness and sanitation, bedding supplies for the animals, food storage practices, and most importantly, monitored the manure storage and handling. The inspections are critical to avoid the creation of nuisance conditions and breeding grounds for rodents and other pests. Inspections of chicken coops occur after complaints, but routine annual inspections of chicken coops are not required. The Animal Inspectors retain a record of those residents that raise chickens. Residents are encouraged to notify the Animal Inspector if they keep domestic fowl. Please call the Health Department at 1- 617-898-4886.

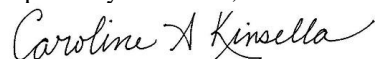
All biting and scratching incidents reported to the Health Department were investigated to make sure that the animals involved were current on their rabies inoculations. The investigations included both animal-to-human contact, as well as animal-to-animal contact. Various types of quarantines were issued (isolation, strict confinement or close observation) depending on the circumstances of the contact and the immunization status of the animals involved. Follow-up was conducted at the end of the quarantine periods to authorize the release of the animal. During this fiscal year the following numbers of quarantines were issued:

10 days.....	35
45 days.....	15
4 months.....	1

Due to the incidence of rabies in our Community and throughout the State, animals suffering from wounds of unknown origin receive the strictest quarantine. The period of time varies from 45 days to 4 months, depending on the vaccine status of the animal. Domestic animals who bite humans or other animals receive a 10-day strict confinement order. Regular contact is required to assess the health status of all animals under quarantine and to make sure that they are quarantined as defined by the State Department of Food & Agriculture Division of Animal Health.

The Health Department would like to thank Milton Animal Control Officer Nancy Bersani, who is also one of the designated Animal Inspectors. She provides our Department assistance with the responsibilities of the Animal Inspector and contributes her invaluable knowledge, expertise, and dedication.

Respectfully submitted,



Caroline A. Kinsella, B.S.N. R.N. R.S.
Health Director/Public Health Nurse

We would like to thank senior volunteer Ms. Kathleen Gillis, who has volunteered for a fourth year in the Health Department. Ms. Gillis is a great addition to the Health Department and works on numerous projects throughout the year. We would also like to thank intern Luke Urbina a University of Vermont student who assisted with digitalizing half of our Septic files.

The Milton Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition made great strides again this year with the support and

dedication of our Coalition Director Laurie Stillman and Public Health Consultant and Milton resident, Deborah Milbauer. The Coalition has also made great progress with two Project Coordinators whose salaries are covered by the Drug Free Community grant. Margaret Carels and Stormy Leung have done phenomenal work and have been a great addition to the Coalition. Thank you to volunteer Lillian Cronin LICSW for creating monthly “Mind Matters” article submissions to the Milton Times on numerous mental health and substance abuse issues on behalf of the MSAPC. The Milton Times has covered so many of the Coalitions achievements pro bono over the last five years and has been a champion of Public Health.

In closing, the Health Department and Board of Health would like to express its gratitude to each of the other Town departments and agencies, without whose help our work would be more difficult.

Respectfully submitted,

The Board of Health

Laura T. Richards, Esq., Chair
Mary F Stenson, BSN, Secretary
Roxanne Musto, RN-C, MS, ANP, Member