

GMPHP NEWSLETTER

Our news and your stories



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Helping Vulnerable Populations

by Carol Nicholas

On March 5th, Mercer County distributed Janssen Covid-19 vaccine to each of the townships in the county. It was specifically designated for seniors and vulnerable populations. Following that, more quantities were delivered and designated solely for homebound patients and their caregivers. The towns worked diligently with Meals on Wheels, Senior Housing Authorities, home care facilities, and local churches, to find their vulnerable population. On April 13th, the FDA announced "a pause" in vaccinations, while they investigated the side effects 13 women between the age of 18-48 experienced 6-13 days following Janssen vaccination. The health departments are still interested in collecting the names and contact information of homebound residents so they can reach out to them once vaccine is available. To find your local health department go to:

<https://www.mercercounty.org/departments/human-services/division-of-public-health/local-health-offices>

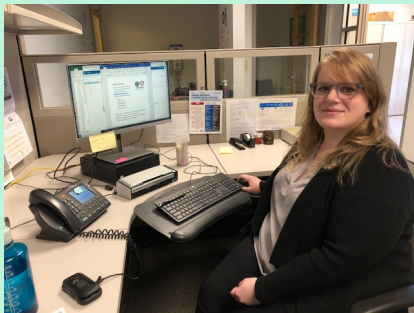
GMPHP WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBER

The GMPHP Board would like to sincerely thank **Ishiya Hayes** from **Thomas Edison State University**, for serving on our Board since December 2018. We wish her well as she starts a new position. We would like to welcome **Angela Chatman**, acting External Affairs Manager for Community and Government Affairs at Thomas Edison State University. She leads the community efforts relative to the local Community (City of Trenton and Greater Mercer County) and assists the Vice President of Community and Government Affairs as needed on matters involving the state legislature. She also supports the Division of Community and Government Affairs in creating and managing the strategy and vision for local initiatives, special projects, special events, and leads the university's outreach committee. Angela also maintains relationships with local stakeholders and key community groups.



WHAT IS A VPOC?

Through a two year grant from the NJ Department of Health, each town in Mercer County has hired a **Vulnerable Population Outreach Coordinator**. Knowing which populations are most vulnerable and what areas may have the greatest unmet health needs helps direct resources and customize outreach to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Vulnerable Population Outreach Coordinator works to mitigate and prevent COVID-19 through targeted outreach to vulnerable populations. They work to ensure at-risk residents in the community have access to support services such as housing, insurance coverage, and unemployment compensation to allow them to isolate or quarantine effectively. They assist residents in scheduling COVID-19 vaccine appointments, and assess other needs they might have. The VPOC works with local health department leadership to oversee implementation of the strategic plan to ensure timely testing, contact tracing, and containment of COVID-19. For more information, contact your local health department.



Emily DeHaan VPOC from Lawrence helping residents get a vaccination appointment

NJ Transit Launches VAXRIDE

NJ Transit launched the **VAXRIDE** initiative to support New Jerseyans in their efforts to get vaccinated against COVID-19. Riders can find a map which can be used to find vaccination sites that are served by NJ TRANSIT bus, train and light rail routes. NJ Transit will update the resource periodically.

To access the page and map <https://www.njtransit.com/vaxride>

VAXRIDE NJ

THE IMPACT OF A ZIP CODE

A many of you know, GMPHP is in the process of conducting the next Community Health Assessment 2021. GMPHP has hired 35th Street Consulting who will analyze data, listen to our stakeholders, and conduct focus groups to ascertain the needs. The following article was written by consultant Grace Gorenflo.



By Grace Gorenflo, MPH RN

The health of our community is like a building—it depends on a strong and stable foundation. We know that access to quality healthcare is part of that foundation. And yet, social determinants of health – things like quality education, safe and affordable housing, employment opportunities, and social associations – also structure positive health outcomes for everyone in important ways.

A growing body of evidence shows that one's ZIP code can be more important than one's genetic code in determining wellness, quality of life and even life expectancy. This is because much of what determines health outcomes lies outside of the healthcare system. Numerous studies have demonstrated the interconnected relationship between wealth and health. The education level of a mother is a strong predictor of her offspring's health. Nutrition plays a key role in staying healthy and avoiding or minimizing the effects of chronic disease; dietary choices are greatly impacted by affordability, accessibility, knowledge of healthy foods and how to prepare them, and having sufficient time to prepare healthy meals. Home environments free from pests, mold, lead-based paint, and other hazards provide a critical foundation for health and well-being, as do neighborhoods with pollutant-free environments, accessible green space, and civic engagement.

As partners committed to improving health, we must assemble a solid foundation that supports long-lasting wellness for all. This community health needs assessment will reflect areas where together we can work together with other sectors beyond health care to shore up the foundation for everyone. By striving to create a more equitable foundation, GMPHP can craft a collaborative path forward to measurably improve the health of residents of the Greater Mercer County community.

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NEWBORN HOME VISITS



The Trenton Health Team (THT) is partnering with **Central Jersey Family Health Consortium**, **Capital Health**, and Family Connects International to provide free at-home nurse visits to parents who live in the county and have their babies at Capital Health. The Burke Foundation and the New Jersey Department of Children and Families are providing support for this initiative. Two-thirds of infant deaths occur within 28 days of birth, according to THT's 2019 Community Health Needs report. In Mercer County, the infant mortality rate is 7.0 infant deaths per 1,000 live births. This exceeds both state and national rates (4.1 and 5.9 respectively). Families will be offered 1-3 home visits by a highly-trained registered nurse and linked to community resources that meet their needs. Around 2000 families a year will benefit from this program,

NJ TRANSIT EXPANDS 608 LINE TO HOMEFRONT



For CAB members who worked on the 2015 CHIP to improve transportation to Scotch Road, you will be pleased to see the new 608 bus route. The expansion of the 608 line will help connect all major transportation hubs in Mercer County, the airport, three train stations, and will have a new stop at the HomeFront Family Campus. Families at the HomeFront Campus will now have access to childcare, job training, and other services. Many thanks go out to Connie Mercer, Cheryl Kastrenakes, Matt Lawson, Marty DeNero, and many others who helped to make this possible.

CAB MEMBERS PARTNER

Jewish Family & Children's Service of Greater Mercer County (JFCS) partnered with **Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton** (RWJ Hamilton) to bring vaccines directly into neighborhoods with the most vulnerable populations and fewest resources to access available vaccine options.

The JFCS Mobile Food Pantry went out along with a RWJ Hamilton mobile vaccine team to Architects Housing in Trenton, a senior low-income housing apartment, for a pilot run of this new partnership where they provided the first dose of the Pfizer vaccine to 65 individuals. The joint team returned on April 9 to administer the second dose of the vaccine.

“Architects Housing has become a regular distribution site for our mobile pantry,” says Beth Englezos, JFCS Manager of Hunger Prevention. “We first connected with their site in June 2020 and have since made monthly, sometimes even bi-monthly stops, as needed by their residents.” JFCS and RWJ Hamilton are discussing other locations where they can replicate the vaccine and mobile pantry partnership at other locations.



Architects Housing Covid Clinic
Sponsored by RWJ Hamilton and JFCS



Taryn Krietzman - Pantry
Coordinator serves snacks

NEW LEGISLATION FOR OPIOID OVERDOSE PREVENTION



Murphy signed legislation sponsored by Sen. Anthony M. Bucco that would help save lives from opioid overdoses. The legislation signed, S-2323, will require doctors to prescribe an opioid antidote in conjunction with opioid prescriptions for pain management for high-risk patients. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends co-prescribing Narcan (naloxone) and opioids in its Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain.

"I am pleased that this legislation was signed today, April 20th. The opioid crisis continues to claim lives and tear families apart at a mind-numbing rate," said Bucco, R-Morris. "Drug overdose is the leading cause of accidental death in the nation, and the pandemic has only increased the problem in the Garden State."

At least seven states now require co-prescribing: Arizona, Florida, New Mexico, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, and Washington. In California and Ohio, laws require prescribers to offer naloxone co-prescriptions in certain circumstances.



PenFed Credit Union, the nation's second largest federal credit union, and **Rise**, a nonprofit providing services in the **Hightstown/East Windsor** area, announced a new partnership to support the local community through an experiential tool designed to help reduce COVID-19 related anxieties.

PenFed's \$100,000 investment will help to create a vital and vibrant connection to learning, community and care. Based on an assessment of current needs, and amplified by the impact of the ongoing pandemic, Rise and PenFed are joining resources to create "**U Rise Powered by PenFed**": an experiential tool by which the greater Rise community can reframe their COVID-19 related anxiety, loss of purpose and hopelessness into personal growth, strength and optimism.

U Rise Powered by PenFed will take the shape of an online portal, currently under development by Human Experience Systems, and will act as a gateway to a multitude of curated local content. From connecting with community, managing well-being and mindfulness, and acquiring new skills and knowledge, U Rise will serve to engage, lift and inspire the community.

Online content will be sourced by creating new content, re-purposing existing content, and by aggregating content via partnerships with local corporations, small businesses, organizations and experienced individuals. While many of the virtual programs will lead to in-person programming as appropriate, much of the online content will continue to be refreshed and remain relevant.

We often talk about the transition to motherhood, also called “matrescence”. It is common knowledge that recovery from giving birth, hormonal fluctuations, and sleeplessness affect most new mothers. But do we ask about how the new dad is doing? The transition to fatherhood can also be difficult. It sometimes seems that we forget the changes that affect new dads. Although fathers don’t have the physical recovery to deal with, they do experience fluctuations in testosterone and the effects of disturbed sleep and exhaustion.

Recognizing that becoming a dad is a life-changing experience, **Central Jersey Family Health Consortium’s (CJFHC) Perinatal Mood Disorders Initiative** that traditionally supports mothers began reaching out to new fathers early in the pandemic. Every Wednesday evening, fathers from around the Central Jersey region gather virtually to discuss the challenges that they are facing. The group is co-facilitated by Patricia Vena, MSW, LCSW, a perinatal therapist, and Jim Doherty, MSN, RN, a Registered Nurse in a Pediatric Emergency Department and a father who was the primary caregiver for his twin daughters for their first seven years. Most sessions begin with an educational topic such as maintaining a healthy relationship with your partner or fathers and postpartum depression. Sessions end with open discussion. Fathers share emotions regarding their new status and responsibilities and their desire to be supportive partners and loving parents. If you would like more information regarding the group, contact Pat Vena at PVena@CJFHC.org

CENTRAL JERSEY FAMILY HEALTH CONSORTIUM REACHES OUT TO NEW FATHERS



TEST YOUR CHILD FOR LEAD

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, **the number of New Jersey children tested for lead exposure declined 20 percent last year.** It is critical that families reschedule any previously canceled pediatric visits so young children can be tested for lead exposure. Children should be screened for lead at ages 1 and 2 years of age - or if not previously screened at these ages - at least once before their 6th birthday.

Sources of Lead Poisoning



Paint in Homes
Built Before 1978



Dirt



Lead Dust



Some Pottery



Take Home Lead
(Jobs or Hobbies)



Traditional Remedies, Make-up
and Powders



Some Candy



Some Jewelry



Some Toys

COVID-19 UPDATES

VACCINE ELIGIBILITY EXPANDED

As of April 19th, all residents 16 years and older, who live, work, or study in NJ are eligible for the Covid Vaccine. Beginning May 6, Princeton Health will manage the second of Mercer County's fixed-base vaccination sites, located at the lounge at Mercer County Park's rink. In addition, Princeton Health will provide staff to operate Mercer County's new mobile unit, which will schedule community-based vaccination clinics at locations throughout the county to vaccinate underserved and hard-to-reach populations, such as the elderly or those without transportation. The other vaccination clinic, in collaboration with Capital Health, is at CURE Arena in the City of Trenton. Residents must sign up on line at NJVSS <https://covidvaccine.nj.gov/>



VACCINE SITES

Cure Arena

Mercer County Community College

RWJ

Rite-Aid

Walmart

CVS

Shop-Rite

Infocus Urgent Care

Riverside Urgent Care

Henry J Austin

For complete list:

<https://covid19.nj.gov/pages/covid-19-vaccine-locations-for-eligible-recipients>

OUTDOOR GATHERINGS UPDATE

As of Friday, April 2nd, New Jersey's general outdoor gathering limit increased from 50 people to 200 people. Outdoor gatherings that are religious services or ceremonies, political events, weddings, funerals, or memorial services continue to not have any limit. In addition, venues with a seating capacity of 2,500 or more are permitted to host events at 20 percent capacity indoors and 30 percent capacity outdoors.



TRAVEL ADVISORY INFORMATION

NJ strongly discourages all non-essential interstate travel. At this time, individuals who have been vaccinated no longer need to quarantine or get tested before/after domestic travel or have recovered from COVID-19 in the past three months as long as:

- It has been more than two weeks since you received your second dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine;
- It has been more than two weeks since you received your first and only dose of the Janssen/Johnson and Johnson vaccine; or,
- You have clinically recovered from COVID-19 in the past three months

