

Public Health Commission's YEAR END REPORT 2003

ROLE OF THE BOARD

The Public Health Commission advises the Board of Supervisors on preventive health programs and other responsibilities of the HSA relating to public health and clinical services. The Commission is also charged to educate the public about health issues and to advocate for the health needs of the public.

MEETING DATES, TIMES, AND LOCATIONS

The Public Health Commission meets every other month on the 4th Thursday of the month from 12:00 1:30 p.m. Meetings take place at the 1060 Emeline Avenue Building Complex.

BOARD STRUCTURE FOR 2002

1 st District Representative	Jean Poulos, Chairperson
2 nd District Representative	Vacant
3 rd District Representative	Matt Farrell
4 th District Representative	Kaylor Shemberger
5 th District Representative	Bernie Goldner

BOARD STAFF

Betsy McCarty, RN, MS
Chief of Public Health, Health Services Agency

Administrative Aide Denise Duarte

ATTENDANCE

Please see attached roster

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

January - December 2003

During the year 2003 the County Public Health Commission members continued to focus on important public health concerns. Although there was some turnover of members in 2003, the ongoing members had good attendance. The Commission welcomed new member, Kaylor Shemberger, from the 4th district. The Commission focused on the following areas of concern in 2003:

- County preparedness for bioterrorism and other public health emergencies.
- Emergency Room Crisis
- Control of communicable diseases
- State and County Budget problems

In 2000, the Commissioners were asked by a member of the local Hazardous Materials Advisory Board to monitor the occurrence and response to local sewage spills. The Commission agreed to undertake this task and continues to review reports of sewage spills as a regular agenda item. The commission also continues to receive briefings and information about this matter by representatives of the County Environmental Health Unit.

The Commission continued to receive reports about the local efforts to prepare for public health emergencies as a regular agenda item throughout 2003. Presentation was made to the Commission regularly concerning the Agency's plan to prepare for and respond to biological, chemical and radiological hazards. The Commission strongly supported the local planning efforts and reviewed a plan for local isolation and quarantine in the event of a life-threatening communicable disease outbreak.

The Commission closely followed the process for developing a local Smallpox Response. Reports were given to the Commission regularly about the Agency's Smallpox Vaccination Clinics and education programs. The Commission closely monitored the Agency's efforts to control communicable disease, including a local outbreak of Pertussis. Presentations were given to the Commission about the SARS outbreak and local planning, as well as an ongoing campaign to control the large number of Chlamydia transmissions. During the latter part of 2003, the Commission monitored the County's plans for community Flu vaccinations.

The Commission heard a presentation about the County's efforts to manage a budget reduction in the local medical care for the indigent program (Medi-Cruz). The members appreciated the creative and compassionate approach by County staff to help poor client with co-payments for clinic services.

The Commission discussed the overuse of the emergency departments at local hospitals by the uninsured population. There was concern expressed about the nursing shortage and the relationship to emergency room crowding.

The Commission also heard a presentation about the Agency's Homeless Person's Health Project and its expansion plans. The Commission continued strong support for access to reproductive services, including a campaign to promote condom vending machines.

Support also continued for the County's Tobacco Education Program. The Commission wrote letters of appreciation to the Seaside Company for designating the entire Boardwalk as "smoke-free" and to the Sentinel for their support of this move.

The Commission continues to add a strong voice in support of community water fluoridation. The members re-affirmed the earlier Commission position statement in support of water fluoridation and continued support for water fluoridation in the City of Watsonville.

The Commission received comprehensive reports at regular intervals about the State budget problems in 2003. They expressed concern for the budget reductions required by the State's fiscal crisis and supported adequate funding for basic public health.

Goals and Objectives January - December 2003

1. Support local efforts to respond to control and prevent communicable disease.
2. Monitor the County's All-Hazards Planning and Response efforts.
3. Continue to respond to the Board of Supervisors requests and emerging issues.
4. Continue to monitor and respond to a variety of Public Health issues such as Maternal, Child Adolescent Health (MCAH), Environmental Health (air and water quality issues, sewage spills and restaurant issues), HIV, tobacco education, and public health prevention programs.
5. Monitor health care access delivery issues in Santa Cruz County.

Many of the goals and objectives will continue into the year 2004. The Commission will examine goals and objectives in 2004 and modify as approved.

ATTENDANCE RECORD- 2003

	Jean Poulos	Bernie Goldner	Kaylor Shemberger (New 7/03)	Matt Farrell	Michael Weatherford
January	A	P		P	P
February					
March	P	P		A	A
April					
May	P	P		A	P
June					
July	P	P		P	P
August					
September	P	P	A	P	A
October					
November	P	P	P	A	A
December					

P- present

A- absent