



Lead Advisory Committee and Healthy Homes Outreach Task Force

Quarterly Meeting Summary

February 13, 2024

Summary

On Tuesday, February 13, fifty lead and healthy homes professionals met in person and via Zoom for the quarterly NC Lead and Healthy Homes Outreach Task Force meeting. Prior to the meeting, members were asked to submit their program updates on lead and healthy homes activities in an online survey, responses included below. In the absence of Megan Lane, Public Science and Internship Coordinator in the UNC IE Center for Public Engagement with Science, Neasha Graves coordinated this task force meeting. The meetings are supported by funding from the NC DHHS Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (NC CLPPP) and the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS).

Local, State, and Federal Updates (submitted prior to meeting)

Alex Rimmer – Orange County Health Department

- Since the last meeting we have had 4 home visits, 8 inquiries where we were able to link services, and 2 instances of outreach and education to partnering agencies.
- Looking toward how we can take Healthy Homes and continue to grow the program to meet the needs of our community.

Charlotte Keziah – Union County Health Department

- Did a Lead Lunch & Learn for DSS/PH staff to familiarize them w/EH Lead investigation processes & trends in risk factors. Have a partnership with UCPS/Atrium Health Science Academy Liaison: Participate in their child & family events (Ex. Science Nights, Body Works). Presented Healthy Homes info along with food safety & hygiene info.
- Partner with Safe Kids UC. Include their info in our CEH newsletters for child care providers & participate in their community-wide Safe Kids events presenting Healthy Homes info to the public. -Work with UC Communications to deliver Healthy Homes related information to public via web/social media campaigns (ex. Lead, Radon, recalls, vectors) -Created Lead infographics & short presentation that plays on loop on monitors in Health Dept. waiting spaces/lobbies.
- Starting planning process to do increased Lead/Healthy Homes outreach partnering with child care facilities & public libraries to get info directly to parents.

Gina Uresti – Greensboro Housing Coalition

- We have continued to work on revising, updating, and revamping our Healthy Homes Program. We are working on outreach and how to better manage our data.

Jacqueline Gottlieb - Hinton Rural Life Center

- In 2023, we worked on 61 homes and completed 282 projects to make homes safer and healthier in Southern Appalachia with the help of 1,164 volunteers recording 20,180 hours of labor. We completed 37 new safe and healthy homes assessments and are working on plans to improve these homes.
- On our Star Rating System, we were able to raise 40.5% of the homes to a higher star rating equating to a safer and healthier environment. We have published two reports. One is the pathway from home repairs of fifty plus years to our safe and healthy homes education and repair program of today. The other is an impact report for 2023. They are available on our website www.HintonCenter.org.
- We have three initiatives in 2024. One is our high school construction internship where we are working with youth interested in construction to learn more about construction through the lens of safety and health in the built environment. Our second initiative is our Educational Tool Barn, funded by the Duke Endowment.



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- The ribbon cutting will be April 15, 2024. The Barn is built. Currently, we are putting in the racks, tools, technology, and other educational information now. It will be used by our volunteers, members of our community, students, and more!
- One final initiative that has been in the works for several years is our Rural Poverty Simulation. It is in the process of being beta tested for other groups to utilize to better understand the complexities of rural poverty. Ultimately, it will be available through our website.

Kendall Wimberly – Toxic Free NC

- Toxic Free NC has been helping to host some community meetings and discussions around the Durham lead and contamination in parks issue. We would appreciate any updates / resources that folks may have to share.

Megan Lee – Craven County Health Department

- Working to finish professional paper for MPH degree at ECU. Professional paper is titled "A Systematic Evaluation of Childhood Lead Poisoning in North Carolina using the PRECEDE Conceptual Model."
- The paper seeks to evaluate the current state of childhood lead poisoning and blood lead testing in NC through the lens of the PRECEDE conceptual model to inform decisions for choosing and implementing interventions or policy changes regarding these issues. Aiming to complete paper by April 2024.
- We are planning to set up a booth at our county's largest annual festival, The Mum Fest, which will take place again in October 2024.
- We are in the beginning stages of planning and would love input from the task force members and to collaborate with NC Healthy Homes if possible. If all goes well we have funding to do this again in October 2025.

Neasha Graves – UNC Institute for the Environment

- On November 28, UNC IE conducted a parent workshop on lead (virtual) for approximately 10 parents and staff in the Durham/Orange Head Start program.
- In December, at the annual CDC Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program Managers Meeting (Atlanta, GA), UNC IE presented on partnership with NC DHHS staff to coordinate NC LEAD trainings (lead by NC DHHS staff) to enhance lead testing and follow-up. Also in that meeting, UNC IE staff coordinated and moderated a panel discussion with experts in other states, to highlight successes and challenges in addressing lead in hard-to-reach communities since the height of COVID-19.
- UNC IE has submitted the application for CEUs (2 contact hours) for attendance in all of the 2024 NC Lead & Healthy Homes Task Force meetings for environmental health specialists.
- UNC IE has submitted the application for CEUs (2 contact hours) for attendance in lead trainings it will conduct for child care professionals. The CEUs were approved by NC Division of Child Development & Early Education.
- UNC IE will be conducting the following trainings and presentations. We will continue to advertise them in the Task Force listserv, too.
- Lead & Healthy Homes Training for Public Health Professionals, February 28, 10am – 2:30pm, Chapel Hill
- Lead Training for Child Care Professionals, March 11, at 6:00 – 8:00pm, virtual, CEU approved
- Lead presentations for parents (mostly of Head Start and/or low income families), the last Tuesday (9am) and Thursday (12pm) of each month through the end of May.



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R.B. Gardner – City of Wilmington

- Small Business Center, Cape Fear Community College and the City of Wilmington Healthy Homes Program partnered to organize and conduct a Small Business Recruiting and Information Fair on 8 December 2023 at the North Campus McKeithan Auditorium to provide information on and assistance with critical registration processes required to do business with the City of Wilmington.
- The subsequent economic opportunities available for vendors that become registered. Emphasis was placed on Section 3 Business Recruiting and sam.gov registration. Interpreters (Spanish) were on hand to assist with any LEP challenges. Over 75 contractors, businesses, and other interested persons attended this event.

Tashaunda Hill – Pitt County

- Along with our Pitt County Nursing Staff, we participated in a lecture for ECU Med students including a case study for children with confirmed blood lead poisoning.
- We recently presented to our Local Interagency Coordinating Council's (LICC) information on our Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program and education on lead poisoning hazards. We are looking to participate in community events including: Wellness At Wildwood: Building Resilience & Promoting Wellness Throughout The Community (April)

Discussion

Charlotte Keziah (Union County Health Department): Does anyone have ideas/successful strategies for communicating with pediatricians regarding the need for conducting blood screenings for risk factors other than old housing & for making them aware of sources such as spices/food?

- Neasha Graves (UNC) mentioned the NC Healthy Homes website which has a plethora of educational materials available. In the past she has sent out packets to pediatricians in high-risk areas to encourage more testing. North Carolina Pediatrician Society can write articles in newsletters to promote lead testing and presentations.
- Ed Norman (NC DHHS CEH) starting a new campaign geared toward environmental follow-up. This will allow pediatricians to make referrals when they have kids with high exposures and the family can request a test at their local health department. He has hired a nurse consultant who will start on March 1st and she will be a great resource.
- Kourtney Jones (Duke Children's Primary Care) In the summer they offer presentations on lead and lead follow-up.
- Charlotte's question – How do you get the front office to be more receptive when receiving information? David's answer- In the past, his program tried joint outreach with the radon protection branch to include take-home packets about childhood lead exposures and radon awareness. These packets were disseminated when mothers were leaving healthcare facilities.

Jackie Gottlieb (Hinton Rural Life Center): Obtaining health information outside of self-reporting has been our roadblock for several reasons including our location, including number of ER visits, hospital admissions, costs, etc. Showing how home repairs impact safety and health is critical to obtain funding to continue to make the improvements.

- Ed's question- What kind of data are you looking for? Jackie's answer I'm looking for data on asthma, falls, and lead. Suggest getting in contact with Melinda Shuler for data related to asthma.
- Karin Evanoff- is happy to connect her to the public health data tracking staff and the CAPC program



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- Neasha Graves- Will share resources on asthma and other respiratory issues. Also mentioned that Rebuilding Together of the Triangle is a great resource.

RB Gardner (Wilmington HUD Healthy Homes Program): Recommend all participants are aware on new HUD OLHCHH Program Guidance Instructions that were sent out 25 January 2024.

- The grants that are administered by HUD and provided come from the office of lead hazard control, healthy homes.
- It is important to maintain situational awareness of your neighbors.
- Talking about the 8 principles of Healthy Homes has allowed people to become more interested in the topic.
- City of Wilmington rewarded 1.5 million dollars that will last for three years and will be able to help low-income families.
- Encouraged attendees to apply for HUD Grants.

Megan Lee (Craven Co Health Department): Upcoming festival later this year (largest in Craven County area). Seeking advice/ideas on setting up the exhibit.

- David Brown- using items to allow people to see real-life examples (for example: a window accumulating lead dust)
- Neasha Graves- EPA packets are available and is a great resource for parents.
- Rob Pearsall –is happy to deliver pottery and toys that she can use.

Discussion: Strategies for strengthening collaborations and resources around healthy homes

Neasha Graves (UNC IE) began a conversation around needs of Task Force member agencies, with some hope to begin a plan toward addressing those needs. She asked the following questions: **In your agency, what are major issues you're addressing around health and housing now or in the coming year? How do you share resources and build inter-agency and county-to-county relationships?**

Alex Rimmer (Orange County Health Department): We know that our Community Health Assessment has a large focus on housing and we are looking toward how we can take Healthy Homes and continue to grow the program to meet the needs of our community. Interested in seeing how we can help each other.

David Brown- mentioned that we can reiterate some topics from past meetings (hoarding, etc.) and maybe get some new presenters.

Discussion on resources to aid in education:

- **Jackie Gottlieb** – 1-on-1 on resources available for newcomers. Looking at how climate change is addressed in rural communities and how do you make sure the initiatives are effective. Developed educational tool barn.
- Needs educational displays for upcoming event for example: air filters and dollhouses
- RB Gardner- HUD offers great resources for healthy home initiatives.
- Doris Hogan- using glow germ to talk about lead dust; a lotion to encourage handwashing
- Melanie Napier- [New Hampshire](#) has a new book for children and families.



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Alex Rimmer- going out into the field to show the work that they do helps form relationships rather than just having a conversation for example: replacing smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms. **Neasha Graves**- There is a county-by-county list available, maybe updating it to include specific needed resources (like free CO detectors) can help improve the web presence.

Relative Links/ Upcoming events

- [NC Healthy Homes - NC Healthy Homes](#)
- [North Carolina Public Health Leadership Conference March 14- 15](#)
- March 7 Webinar at 9:00am on the NC DHHS Lead and Asbestos ARPA-funded Program and Updates

Guest Presentation

Lead impacts on adults and best practices with employers

Karin Evanoff, Occupational Health Nurse, NC DHHS Adult Blood Lead Program

Attendees

Jennifer Anderson	Lead Nurse and Child Care Health Consultant	Transylvania County	jennifer.anderson@transylvaniacounty.org
Brenda Bass	Regional Environmental Health Specialist	Children's Environmental Health, NC DHHS	brenda.bass@dhhs.nc.gov
Nellie Benitez	Lead Program Specialist	Chatham County Environmental Health Department	Nellie.Benitez@chathamcountync.gov
Kimly Blount	Field Supervisor	Children's Environmental Health, NC DHHS	kimly.blount@dhhs.nc.gov
David Brown	Regional Environmental Health Specialist	Children's Environmental Health, NC DHHS	david.brown@dhhs.nc.gov
Kaitlyn Burrow	Lead Program Specialist	Davidson County	
Tammy Cain	Healthy Homes Program Assistant	City of Wilmington	tammy.cain@wilmingtonnc.gov
Keandra Cofield	Operations Manager	North Carolina Division of Public Health	keandra.cofield@dhhs.nc.gov
Luke Van Eyk	Program Specialist	Children's Lead Prevention Program Guilford County	lvaneyk@guilfordcountync.gov
Karin Evanoff	Occupational Health Nurse	NC Division of Public Health, Occupational and	karin.evanoff@dhhs.nc.gov



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		Environmental Epidemiology Branch	
RB Gardener	Healthy Homes Program Manager	City of Wilmington	robert.gardner@wilmingtonnc.gov
Donna Gilbird	Environmental Health Regional Specialist	Children's Environmental Health, NC DHHS	donna.gilbird@dhhs.nc.gov
Neasha Graves	Community Outreach and Education Manager	UNC Institute for the Environment, CEHS	neasha_graves@unc.edu
Jacqueline Gottlieb		Hinton Rural Life Center	jackie@hintoncenter.org
Barrette Gregory	Regional Environmental Health Specialist	Children's Environmental Health, NC DHHS	barrette.gregory@dhhs.nc.gov
Jeston Gurkins	Nurse Manager	ECU Pediatric	gurkinsj22@ecu.edu
Jennifer Hatley	Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program Supervisor	Cabarrus Health Alliance	jennifer.hatley@cabarrushealth.org
Tashaunda Hill	Environmental Health Specialist	Pitt County Environmental Health	tashaunda.hill@pittcountync.gov
Doris Hogan	Senior Environmental Health Specialist	Forsyth County Department of Public Health	hoganda@forsyth.cc
Mitierra Johnson	Environmental Health Research Assistant	UNC Center for Public Engagement with Science	jmitierr@unc.edu
Kourtney Jones	Pediatric Nurse Clinician	Duke Children's Primary Care	kourtney.jones@duke.edu
Kate Koehler	Chemical Terrorism and Threat Coordinator	NC State Lab of Public Health	kate.koehler@dhhs.nc.gov
Charlotte Keziah	Supervisor	Union County Children's Environmental Health Program	charlotte.keziah@unioncountync.gov
Kendalyn Kufner	Healthy Homes Rehab Tech	City of Wilmington Healthy Homes Program	kendalyn.kufner@wilmingtonnc.gov
Gail Lamb	Regional Child Health Nurse Consultant	NC DHHS	gail.lamb@dhhs.nc.gov



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Megan Lee	Registered Environmental Health Specialist	Craven County Health Department	mlee@cravencountync.gov
Charles Letizia	Epidemiologist	Children's Environmental Health, NC DHHS	charles.letizia@dhhs.nc.gov
Tara Lucas	State Child Health Nurse Consultant/ Nurse Supervisor	NC Division of Child and Family Well- Being	tara.lucas@dhhs.nc.gov
Angela Maskill	Healthy Homes Program Manager	Reinvestment Partners	amaskill@reinvestmentpartners.org
Alexis McDaniels	Administrative Specialist	City of Charlotte	alexis.mcdaniels@charlottenc.gov
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Shelby McLean	Program Manger	Guilford County	smclean0@guilfordcountync.gov
Ariel Mial	Environmental Health Intern	UNC Institute for the Environment, CPES	amial@unc.edu
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Rob Pearsall	Regional Environmental Health Specialist	Children's Environmental Health, NC DHHS	robert.pearsall@dhhs.nc.gov
Alex Rimmer	Environmental Health Supervisor	Orange County Health Department	arimmer@orangecountync.gov



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Nykesse Roberts	Regional Environmental Health Specialist	Children's Environmental Health, NC DHHS	nykesse.roberts@dhhs.nc.gov
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Jeff Smedley	Epidemiologist	Children's Environmental Health, NC DHHS	jeff.smedley@dhhs.nc.gov
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Gina Uresti	Healthy Homes Program Manager	Greensboro Housing Coalition	gina@gsohc.org
Kendall Wimberly	Policy Advocate	Toxic Free NC	
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