



City of Stamford Department of Health

Safeguarding the Public's Health

FY 2021-2022 Budget Presentation

The COVID-19 pandemic has identified huge gaps in public health, worldwide, nationally, and at the state and local levels. Throughout the pandemic, the Stamford Department of Health remained fully open to continue providing routine critical services such as tuberculosis management, investigation of elevated pediatric blood lead levels to prevent pediatric lead intoxication, response to non-COVID-related infectious diseases and clusters, restaurant inspections to prevent foodborne outbreaks, response to failed septic systems and housing complaints, and ensuring that the City's mosquito control program was maintained during the mosquito season. These activities were in addition to the COVID-19 response.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM FY 20/21

1. Administered **COVID-19 vaccinations** to:
 - a. City's First Responders.
 - b. Healthcare workers.
 - c. Persons 75 years and older.
 - d. Bedbound residents.
 - e. Partnered with Stamford Health to provide vaccinations. Once school nurses returned to schools, to ensure that the vaccine supply to the City did not diminish, the Department of Health shared its vaccine allotment with Stamford Health and City nurses worked at the hospital during off hours to provide COVID-19 vaccinations. The department has also provided (on loan) a vaccine refrigerator to support the opening of the Vaccination Supersite at Elmcroft.
2. Conducted **Contact Tracing** and hired additional Contact Tracers as seasonals to expand contact tracing hours to 8:30 am to 8:00 pm seven days weekly to enhance follow up.
3. Obtained a grant from CT Health Foundation to hire Community Health Workers to assist with COVID-19 service to the community. This has greatly enhanced our ability to serve residents of Stamford impacted by COVID-19.
4. Conducted **COVID-19 after hours enforcement inspections** to ensure that businesses were complying with the COVID mitigation efforts. To date, Stamford has reported the most enforcement activities to the State.
5. Developing a plan to increase COVID-19 mitigation and vaccine uptake in **communities of color**.

EFFICIENCIES AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS FY 20/21

1. **View Point Cloud software** was launched in October 2020, for the Inspections Division-this is a web-based software that on the front end allows requests for permits and licenses and also allow residents to pay bills. The program facilitates the creation of electronic permits, licenses, orders and electronic signatures. It allows seamless interface with other departments and by having a customized workflows, reduces opportunities for omissions. Finally, fees must be paid before services are rendered.
2. **Patagonia Health Electronic Health Record** was launched November 26, 2020 for Community Nursing. This program allows standardization of medical charting, has increased our ability to do mandated reporting to the state in a timely manner. The software also has the potential for insurance

billing.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN FY21/22 BUDGET

Nursing -- Four currently open 42 week nursing positions to be converted to 52 week positions. The pandemic highlight the need to have nurses who are available 52 weeks of the year. When nurses were needed to provide testing during the summer months, to assist with case contact and contact tracing, to respond to residents' phone calls, and to do temperature checks in the Government Center, 42 week nurses *volunteered* to help and had to be compensated at overtime rates to do this. During the non-pandemic period, nurses assigned to work in the schools (42 weeks) have many unmet needs that could be addressed during the summer. These are: (1) *Care Planning* for children new to the district, out of district placements, and new kindergarteners; (2) *Home visits* for Special Education (SPED) Students prior to school entry; (3) allowing parents to pick up their child's *medications* once school is closed; and (4) providing *health education to parents* with high risk children and partnering with agencies such as the Stamford Public Education Foundation (SPEF) program. By having these four nurse working 52 weeks, they will be assigned to public schools with greater needs and if needed can support the community nursing activities when needed as all PHNI jobs duties are the same.

CURTAILED SERVICES IN FY 21/22 BUDGET

Dental Hygiene-The Dental Case Manager retired in December, 2020 and that position has been converted to a 52 week Community Nursing PHNI position. As such, given that the remaining hygienists work 42 weeks only, the dental program will be suspended once school is closed and referrals will be made to the community. The need for additional community nurses is great and a nurse is able to provide a broader scope of work and is also able to conduct oral examinations and make referrals. In addition the PHNI is position also results in some salary savings.

HEADCOUNT CHANGES FY 21/22 BUDGET

Public School Nursing 0380-3820 – Change from 30 to 29 positions with the conversion of one (1) 42 week PHNI position to one 52 weeks PHNI Community.

Private & Parochial School Nursing 0380-3821 – Change from 10 to six (6) positions with the conversion of the Dental Case manager's position (1) to a PHNI Community and the conversion of the three (3) 42 week PHNI positions to 52 weeks PHNI Community.

Community Nursing 0380-3822 – Change from five (5) to 10 positions with the addition of the converted Dental Case manager's position (1), the conversion of the four (4) 42 week PHNI positions to 52 weeks PHNI.

KEY DEPARTMENT CHALLENGES

1. Staffing – The department is in need of additional qualified staff to provide support to its daily activities. While we have not requested a program expansion at this time, we are reviewing the areas of need carefully and deciding on the most efficient way to implement these program changes and expansions.
2. Bargaining unit agreements continue to be a challenge to routine operations, program expansion and improvement, and limit modernization of job descriptions,