

To the Honorable Select Board:

The Health Department/Board of Health herewith submits their Annual Report for the period July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024.

### **REPORT OF THE HEALTH DIRECTOR**

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, social services, health promotion activities, emergency preparedness and response planning, community health education and reducing environmental health hazards. The Board of Health consists of three members elected by the residents of Milton.

The Milton Health Department staff is comprised of a full time Director/ Public Health Nurse Caroline Kinsella, a full-time Assistant Health Director Emily Conners, a full time Health Agent Karolyn Ho, a full time Community Health Social Worker Anne Grossman, a part-time 16 hr. Public Health Nurse Susan Poirier, and a part-time 21.5 hr. Senior Administrative Clerk Jean Peterson. Additional staff are supported by various grants. The Drug Free Community Grant supports The Milton Coalition part time 32 hr. staffing, which includes Program Director Margaret Carels. The Mass in Motion Grant funding

enabled the Health Department to hire Milton resident Lisa Courtney as a Community Wellness Coordinator up to 16 hours per week.

### **BIOTERRIISM AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

Increasing concern for emergency preparedness requires that the Milton Health Department increase its emergency response capabilities. The Health Department staff continues 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.

### **HAZARDOUS MATERIAL COLLECTION**

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.

The Health Department provides a Sharps "Needle" Disposal Program in our office. For a small fee, you can purchase Sharps containers to dispose of them properly.

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### **SUMMARY: PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTIONS**

Animal Stable Inspections.....	8
Animal Chicken Inspections.....	15
Food Establishments (routine inspections) .....	156
Food Complaints.....	5

Housing Complaints.....	5
Pools (public and semi-public) .....	7
Pond-Turner's.....	3
Public Health/Environment/Nuisance Complaints.....	26
Rodent/Animal Complaints.....	21
Recreational Camps for Children (plan reviews, consultations, and inspections) .....	21
Septic System Installation Inspections.....	18
Septic System Percolation Tests/Soil Evaluations.....	12
Septic System Plan Reviews and Consultations.....	13
Septic Sewage Disposal System Abandonment.....	4
Trench Permits.....	3

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### **SUMMARY OF THE BOARD OF HEALTH PERMITS ISSUED**

Burial Permits.....	609
Food Establishments.....	75
Food – Catering Registration.....	1
Food -Farmer's Market .....	14
Food - Temporary Events.....	14
Food – Establishment Plan Reviews.....	3
Food- Mobile Food Trucks.....	24
Funeral Directors.....	0
Indoor Skating Rinks.....	0
Ponds – Cunningham .....	1
Recreational Camps for Children.....	21
Rubbish Contractors.....	5
Septage Haulers.....	7
Septic System Installers.....	12
Septic Plan Reviews.....	13
Septic System Sewage Disposal Construction.....	9
Stables – Commercial.....	1
Swimming Pools - Public and Semi-Public.....	7

Tanning Facilities.....	0
Tobacco Retailers.....	9

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### **REPORT OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE**

The Health Department scheduled five seasonal flu clinics and administered 630 doses of seasonal flu vaccine at Pine Tree Brook, Pierce Middle School, Council on Aging (for all Milton residents) and an Employee Health Clinic. In addition, 29 homebound residents were administered the seasonal flu vaccine in their home.

Other responsibilities of the Public Health Nurse include communicable disease surveillance, Direct Observation Therapy for residents with active Tuberculosis disease, emergency planning and preparedness, town employee/resident blood pressure screenings, community health outreach, Vitamin B-12 administration, summer camp inspections, and processing of burial permits.

A total of 332 COVID-19 laboratory confirmed cases and 150 cases of seasonal flu were reported by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. 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 were less than 5 active cases of tuberculosis this year. The status of 91 latent Tuberculosis residents were monitored by their primary care doctors.

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### **REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY HEALTH SOCIAL WORKER**

The Community Health Social Worker position was approved in May of 2023. The Community Health Social

Worker has continued to provide case management and short-term counseling to Milton residents of all ages who need support. Social services have included application assistance, short term therapy, family support, collaboration with other town and community partners, community referrals, and public health education to town residents of all ages.

The social worker secured funding for an emergency food program for Milton residents. Emergency food was ordered in the Spring of 2024 and bags have started to be assembled for future use. The program will continue to grow with additional funding secured. The Community Health Social Worker continues weekly collaboration with the Milton Public Library, which offers office hours once a week. The Community Health Social Worker participated in all CHA operations.

The Community Health Social Worker attended the Municipal Opioid Abatement Conference in March 2024, Annual Suicide Prevention Conference in April 2024, as well as the Aging with Dignity Conference in Worcester. The Community Health Social Worker continues to attend relevant trainings that will assist residents and the Milton Health Department.

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### **COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT**

The Milton Health Department was graciously awarded a \$30,000 earmark secured by Massachusetts Senator Walter Timilty, utilizing American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. Additionally, another \$15,000 was secured by the Norfolk County (8) Public Health Coalition to continue the CHA and provide a roadmap and best

practices guide for the seven other communities. Information was collected through stakeholder interviews, focus groups, surveys, and by collecting statistical data from existing reports that will help us understand and address Milton's greatest health needs, and identify who may be at greatest risk. After epidemiologists analyzed the findings, this data will be used to inform the development of a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), or a strategic action plan, which will focus on addressing preventable illnesses and injuries, as well as the mental and behavioral health needs of residents. This process is a best practice for local health departments to engage in.

The Milton Health Department will have the Community Health Assessment completed by the Fall of 2024. Next steps will be the creation of a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) in the spring of 2025.

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### **PARTNERSHIP FOR A HEALTHY MILTON INC.**

The Partnership for a Healthy Milton (PHM) is a 501c3 non-profit organization, established in 2018, to advance the public's health by strengthening resources, practices and policies which embrace prevention strategies and health equity principles through broad community collaborations. Over the past year, they have been serving as advisors to the Milton Health Department on developing its first Community Health Assessment

The Board members include Co-Directors Priscilla (Pat) Neves and Dr. Linda Hudson, Secretary Laurie Stillman, Treasurer Deborah Milbauer, and members Dr. Marian Hannan, Stefano Keel, Deborah Greene Muse,

Jonathan Pincus M.D., Dr. Patricia Janulewicz-Lloyd and Health Director Caroline Kinsella served in an ex-officio capacity.

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## **REPORT OF THE MILTON COALITION**

The Milton Coalition is a program of the Milton Public Health Department. Members of the Coalition represent different sectors in our community, including residents and town leaders charged with making policy and programmatic decisions within their own departments and organizations. The Milton Coalition has achieved a great deal over the past year to prevent and address youth substance use as well as promote positive mental health, thanks to the strong partnerships and volunteers that the Coalition has fostered across Town.

As part of our second, Drug Free Communities Program five-year grant, the Milton Coalition received \$125,000 from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Another \$125,000 in financial and in-kind support was raised to match the grant, for a total of \$250,000 of public health resources for Milton. This includes a legislative earmark secured by Senator Walter Timilty, donations from the Mike's 5K to Crush Substance Abuse, a grant from the BID-Hospital Milton, as well as multiple donations from private citizens, civic organizations, and faith communities. These dollars contribute to various primary prevention initiatives.

To learn more about substance use prevention, behavioral health resources, please visit our website, maintained by exceptional volunteer and Milton resident, Steve Nelson, at [www.milton-coalition.org](http://www.milton-coalition.org).

The Drug Free Communities Program has two main goals of their community coalitions: 1) building the capacity of the Town to address youth substance use and mental health and 2) reducing youth substance use in Milton. To address these goals, the Coalition employs evidence-based prevention strategies and builds relationships within the community and with regional partners such as the Norfolk District Attorney's Office and the Building Up Youth Regional Collaborative out of Bay State Community Services in Quincy.

We continue to work with our youth coalition, Milton Youth Advocates for Change, which not only gives youth a voice in Milton, but also builds our communities capacity for prevention work and mental health promotion. They attended a conference in Dallas in July as well as the District Attorney's Peer Leadership Conference in November.

Working with the Milton Public Schools, the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (high school) and the Youth Health Survey (middle school) were implemented in April, providing us with invaluable data that informs our future strategies. Some of the other notable highlights of the year were: release of the "Cunningham Park Day and Night" video; school open houses; Mike's 5K to Crush Substance Abuse road race; two Prescription Drug Take Back Days done in conjunction with the Milton Police Department that, along with kiosk collection, brought in a total of 795.2 lbs.; five Coalition meetings open to the community; Light the Way vigil remembering lives lost to overdose and substance use disorder; attending the Bureau of Substance Addiction Services and the Alcohol Policy conferences; staff training on Positive Community Norms; attending Kick Butts Day with students at the State House; attending

a youth briefing on alcohol policy at the State House.

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**REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY HEALTH  
AND WELLNESS PROGRAM  
COORDINATOR/MASS IN MOTION GRANT**

Milton's participation in the Mass in Motion (MiM) program continued, and the collaboration with Randolph and Weymouth has officially been named the Blue Hills Mass in Motion group. The program's primary goals are to promote healthy eating and active living, with the Blue Hills group focusing on food access and language access initiatives.

Lisa Courtney, the MiM Wellness Coordinator, recently completed a Food Access Leadership course offered by the South Shore Food Bank, Weymouth Food Pantry, and Interfaith Social Services. This training has significantly expanded her ability to support both the Milton Community Food Pantry (MCFP) and the Concord Baptist Food Pantry. Lisa continues to strengthen her working relationships with directors at both pantries.

One notable outcome of her efforts was the launch of the Summer Food Bags program, following a productive first conversation with Pat Brawley, the director at MCFP. This initiative aimed to provide extra food for families with children who might experience increased food insecurity during the summer months when free school meals are unavailable. While the program served only a small number of families, it helped connect some to the pantry, where they have become clients and are able to receive food twice a month. The collaboration also involved the Milton Public Schools Family Liaison, who distributed information about

the program to each enrolled household in the district by email.

To further understand the community's needs, MiM conducted a Food Landscape Survey in partnership with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC). The survey, available in multiple languages, collected valuable data from pantry clients and the general public. The results will be analyzed and shared with the community in the future. It was distributed both online via social media and through community partners to ensure broad participation. Lisa also collected paper surveys at both pantries to ensure the voices of these residents were included. Additionally, a Milton Food Access Guide has been published on the Health Department's website, providing residents with local resources about food access and for low-cost groceries and related services.

Milton also participated in MAPC's Language Access Roundtable discussions and workshops, contributing to the development of a comprehensive Language Access Guide. One key takeaway from these sessions is the importance of using plain language—avoiding jargon and acronyms—which also helps when creating materials that will be translated into other languages. This approach is simple but effective in making information more accessible to all residents.

## **REPORT OF THE INSPECTOR OF ANIMALS**

Local Board of Health Regulations, Chapter 1, governs the (*The Keeping of Animals in the Town of Milton*) 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 annually inspects 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, and routine annual inspections of chicken coops are 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, but a permit is not required. Please call the Health Department at 1- 617-898-4886. Residents are also encouraged to call the Inspectional Services Department to ensure proper setback requirements of coops and pens per zoning regulations.

During this fiscal year the following numbers of animal quarantines were issued:

10 days.....	17
45 days.....	7
4 months.....	0
<u>Total quarantines.....</u>	<u>24</u>

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.

## **APPRECIATION**

The Health Department would like to thank 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 subsurface sewage disposal plans and ensures their compliance with the State Environmental Code Title 5 regulations. He is always patient, knowledgeable and a pleasure to work with.

Thank you very much to Steve Nelson who has volunteered his time and talents managing the Milton Coalition website and for documenting a photographic journey of our growing Coalition over the last six years.

The Milton Times has continued to report on many of the Milton Coalition achievements pro bono and has been a champion of Public Health.

In closing, the Health Department and Board of Health would like to express their gratitude to each of the other Town departments and agencies, for their professional assistance and support.

Respectfully submitted,



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

### **Elected Milton Board of Health**

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

