



MAY 2026

Happy National Nurses Week! Thank you for all that you do.



We're grateful so many of you joined us for our first Grand Rounds and we look forward to continuing to share lessons learned and foster learning across departments and regions. If you have an interesting case that could offer a unique learning opportunity, please let us know.

Public Health Nursing Spotlight

Jill Sweet MSN BSN RN Regional Public Health Nurse Leader



The Southern Berkshire Public Health Collaborative has a robust mobile vaccine clinic schedule in the fall offering Flu and COVID vaccines to its residents ages 6 months plus. The fall of 2025 we offered 27 mobile vaccines clinics. This requires much coordination in the spring to set us up for success in the fall. This past fall we were able to vaccinate about 100 people in their homes, including family members and caregivers. We feel it is important to offer vaccines to everyone that we encounter; we want to remove barriers for those caregivers and family members. We also offered pneumonia vaccines for those requesting it to our in-home requests.

The Collaborative became a pediatric vaccine provider through the Vaccine for Children's (VFC) Program through the state's vaccine program in 2024. We recognized that it can be difficult for families to get an appointment at their child's pediatrician's office and wanted to be another way for parents to get their child vaccinated with school required vaccines.

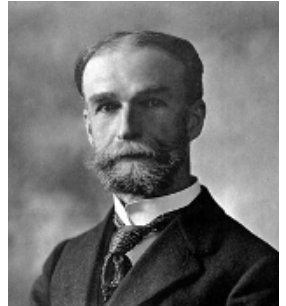
We have worked with school nurses in the Berkshire Hills Regional School District to identify those students that are behind on their required vaccines and are able to offer vaccines during the school day with parental consent. This is offered to children in middle and high school. We continue to work with the 3 other school districts in South County to identify those students who need school required vaccines.

The need for increased access to vaccines was recognized in their region and they worked to close the gap. Jill and her team are true champions of Public Health!

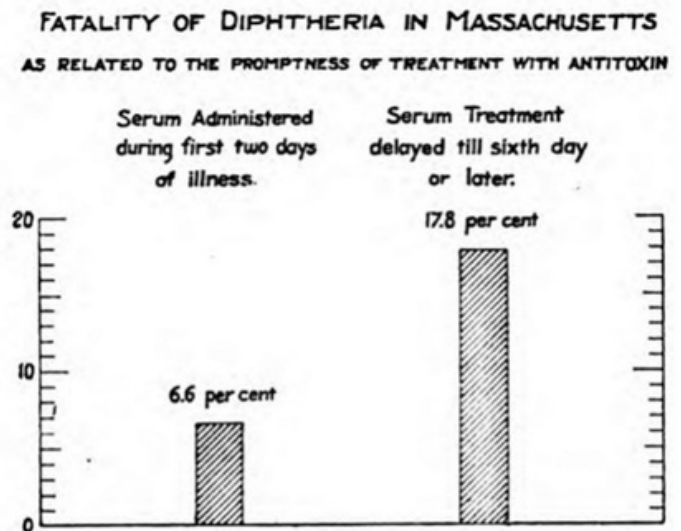
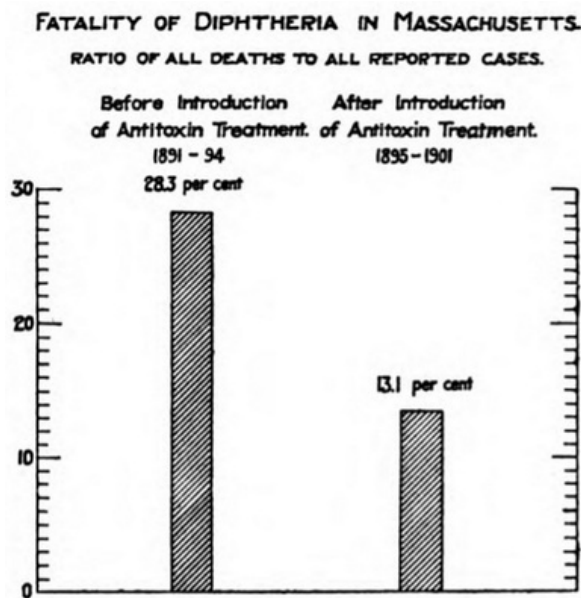
A look back in time ...

History and Impact of Massachusetts Diphtheria Toxin Program. Submitted by Dr. Al DeMaria

In 1894, people with diphtheria were successfully treated with antiserum derived from immunized horses, based on work done by von Behring and Kitasato in 1890. It was an international sensation, countries, states, large cities and commercial entities rushed to manufacture diphtheria anti-toxin. The Massachusetts Board of Health created a laboratory primarily for this purpose, initially housed in the State House in 1894. With the joint appointment of pioneer microbiologist Theobald Smith as director of the laboratory and as Professor of Comparative Pathology at Harvard University, it was moved to Harvard's Bussey Institute in Jamaica Plain (the availability of space and a stable for horses must have been a big part of the move).



Theobald Smith



Thereafter, the Massachusetts Biologic Laboratories provided horse-derived diphtheria anti-toxin to Massachusetts residents with diphtheria with an overall reduction in mortality of over 50% and, if given within 2 days of illness, over 75%. A major cause of childhood mortality now had an effective, life-saving treatment. The Massachusetts Biologic Laboratories went on to produce a variety of anti-toxins, vaccines and other biologic products provided at no cost to Massachusetts residents; diphtheria became essentially completely preventable with vaccine (and the state public health laboratories eventually congregated in Jamaica Plain).

We're getting ready to launch!



Introducing The Massachusetts Public Health Nurse Training - Tier I.

The course will be live on MA TRAIN before the end of the June! Stay tuned for more information



UMassAmherst Local Public Health Nurse Consultant Program

Save the dates! Upcoming Webinars and Meetings

FIFA Office Hours for Public Health Nurses

In response to numerous inquiries regarding FIFA, the UMass LPHNC team is excited to offer office hours from 3 PM - 4 PM on May 12, May 26, June 9, and June 23 to increase support for our workforce. Join us in an open discussion and conversation focusing on targeted health education approaches to implement in your communities. Zoom information: <https://umass-amherst.zoom.us/j/93031449268>



Joining the UMass FIFA Office Hours are the DPH OLRH Chief Clinical Advisor to Local Public Health, Caitlin Pettengill, and the DPH Chief Clinical Advisor & Director of Health Care Strategy & Planning, Kate Fillo.

For more information: [Protecting Public Health During the World Cup | Mass.gov](#)

Communities of Practice & Networking Meetings

Monthly Maternal Child Health Workgroup

The workgroup meeting is open to all local Public Health partners!

Next meeting: **Tuesday June 2nd 9:00 - 11:00 am**

- Chassea Robinson, Northeast Region PHN Consultant
- Anne Mistivar, Western Region PHN Consultant

New Nurse Network Quarterly Meeting

This virtual meeting is open to all new public health nurses in Massachusetts

Next meeting: **Tuesday May 19th 10:00 - 11:00 am**

- Alyssa Kaiser, Southeast Region PHN Consultant

Regional SSA PHN Connection Group

A virtual gathering space for Regional SSA nurses to network and share resources.

Next meeting: **Monday, May 11th 1:00 - 2:00 pm**

- Tamara Bedard, Central Region PHN Consultant

Resources

Massachusetts Public Health Nurse Resource Library (Padlet)

The PHN Resource Library is a dynamic compilation of resources to support Public Health Nurses and their colleagues. Content is organized by topic and updated on a regular basis. Please reach out with feedback or content suggestions.

To explore the Library double click [HERE](#)

PHN Training Opportunities

The **MAPHN** Annual Meeting and Conference will be May 13th & 14th, 2026 at the Marriott Springfield Downtown. The 2026 theme is Building Resilience in Public Health Nursing.

For more information and registration links go to: [MAPHN](#)

SAVE the Date: **MHOA 2026 Annual Conference: Sharing Insight. Celebrating Impact.**
October 28 - 30, 2026 / MassMutual Center - Springfield, MA

The **Immunization Updates** are a series of live, one hour webinars intended for any health care provider who works with vaccines. Webinars are at noon on Wednesdays in May & June. For more information and to register, go to [Immunization Updates 2026](#)

Racial and health equity training with Growing a New Heart (GANH)

Broadening the Lens: An introductory 3- hour learning event that explores how to examine public health questions through the lens of racial and social justice, and how to approach existing inequities in practical ways. [REGISTER HERE](#) for the next event on Wednesday, May 13, 11am-2pm

Dialogues Across Difference: A 12 hour certificate training to enhance your skills in facilitating conversations across profound differences of experience, social location, and understanding. Learn the skills necessary to facilitate dialogue through an approach that will strengthen your existing abilities. [REGISTER HERE](#) for the next session: Mon, May 18, Tue, May 19, & Fri, May 22, 10am-2pm each day.

[For more information about the LPHNC Program visit our webpage](#)

Not sure who to contact? Email us at: lphnc-program@umass.edu

If you are not on our email list and would like to be added please fill out this [FORM](#)