

**Skokie Board of Health  
January 9th, 2020**

**Present**

Mr. Abbasi	Dr. Shim
Dr. Dave	Dr. Sood
Dr. Gaynes	Ms. Urbanus
Ms. Haido	Mr. Usman
Ms. Jones	Ms. Varma
Ms. Moy Wooten	Dr. Werner
Ms. Nickisch Duggan	Dr. Youkhana
Mr. Pandya	

**Excused**

Dr. Drachler  
Dr. Topouzian  
Dr. Vernon  
Dr. Williams

**Absent**

Dr. Prince

Dr. Catherine Counard, Director of Health  
Mr. David Clough, Staff

**Call to Order** - The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Ms. Jones, Vice Chair.

**Approval of Minutes** - The minutes from the December Board of Health meeting were approved.

**Personal Statement** – Dr. Dave gave a brief statement about herself, both personal and professional. She mentioned that she is grateful to have the opportunity to serve on the Board of Health, and to work with the Skokie Health Department on both the SAHELI and SAATH NIH-funded studies.

**United Family Health Alliance, Timothy Youkhana, PharmD, MBA**

(A link to the presentation was included in the e-mail to Board members with these minutes.)

Dr. Youkhana began by expressing his gratitude for the opportunity to serve on the Board of Health, and to work with the Skokie Health Department on a number of initiatives. He reviewed the past year for the United Family Health Alliance, a non-profit organization formerly known as the Assyrian Family Health Alliance. Dr. Youkhana is president of the Alliance, and manages the Assyrian Pharmacy, an independent pharmacy primarily serving the Assyrian Community.

The Alliance provides co-pay assistance, health care education, charitable contributions, and community outreach. In 2019, the alliance provided 50 patients with co-pay assistance, in some cases as high as \$350 a month. Educational programs were given on diabetes care, transplant therapy, immunizations, fall prevention, and opioid abuse. Future topics will include trauma informed care conducted with the Skokie Resilient Community Collaborative. Educational partnerships include the International Career Institute (ICI) for phlebotomy externships and JCFS for a Pharmacy Technician Certification program.

The Alliance also makes charitable contributions for sports teams in the Assyrian community, including basketball and co-ed volleyball. These activities promote health and teamwork. The Alliance has had a presence with the Skokie Chamber of Commerce, local Federally Qualified Healthcare Centers (FQHCs), “Boomers and Beyond”, and the Health Department flu shot clinics. In addition, they received honorable mention for the 2019 Skokie Business of the Year.

The pharmacy has a laboratory on site, which provides point of care testing and blood draws. All proceeds from lab fees sponsor the patients in the co-pay assistance program. Tests provided include hemoglobin A1C and lipid panels. In 2019, 193 patients were served; 150 had abnormal test results. Unfortunately, many patients did not follow up with referrals to local FQHCs due to language and psychosocial barriers. The Alliance has applied for a Skokie Community Development Block Grant, to pay for a health care interpreter and liaison, to better support these individuals in the health care system.

Goals for 2020 include more community health care education, collaboration with schools and colleges, promoting active lifestyles for youth and the elderly, providing continuing education programs for pharmacy technicians, focusing on mental health and wellbeing, and promote trauma informed care. Dr. Youkhana met with Dr. Howard Ruben, Director of Workforce Development and Strategic Partnerships, to work on creating more health programs including a pharmacy technician program at Oakton Community College.

Dr. Youkhana concluded his presentation by mentioning that the Alliance has educational programs encouraging donating organs and tissue for transplantation. Recent highlighted cases included a 13 year old boy in need of a bone marrow transplant, and a young man in need of a kidney.

A lively discussion followed:

Pat Urbanus asked how the Alliance is funded. Dr. Youkhana responded that it is from donations and billing for laboratory services. They are actively seeking grants to help fund the organization.

Dr. Dave asked if they have considered other fund raising efforts. Dr. Youkhana added that the Alliance nurse, Lizan, has organized health fairs in the past but they hadn't revisited that for a while.

Mr. Abbasi asked if there was any fee for ICI. Dr. Youkhana reported that ICI does charge their students for their programs but the Alliance does not charge ICI to be externship site.

Ms. Moy Wooten mentioned that the Erie Evanston/Skokie Health Center is hiring and she would like to attempt to hire an Assyrian candidate to facilitate more accessibility to that community. Dr. Youkhana said he could refer some people in the community who might be interested.

Dr. Shim mentioned that Cook County Health (CCH) is accepting patients, and could also be a referral source. About half of CCH patients are uninsured, with the remainder having some form of insurance (Medicaid and Medicare most commonly). The patient support line is 312-864-0200, to schedule an appointment. The only limitation is that patients must live in Cook County. Dr. Shim acknowledged that the distance from Skokie might be a barrier, but it is an option.

#### **Chair's Report** –

Ms. Jones wished everyone a happy and healthy new year, and thanked Board members for their work on behalf of the residents of Skokie.

**Director’s Monthly Report – a copy is attached**

Highlights included:

- **South Asian Healthy Lifestyle Initiative (SAHELI) Presentation at IPHAM**  
The SAHELI team presented at the Northwestern University Institute for Public Health and Medicine (IPHAM) Population Health Forum, to raise awareness about health disparities in South Asians.  
  
Dr. Dave commented that at the IPHAM forum many researchers were aware of the childhood adverse experiences and resilience work being done in Skokie.
- **New State of Illinois Public Health Laboratory Request for Information**  
The Village responded to a Request for Information to propose Skokie as a site for the new State Public Health Laboratory. Skokie has many attributes, including easy access to public transportation and O’Hare airport, affordable housing, good schools, a thriving downtown, and strong public health/human services programs that make the community an attractive option for the lab.
- **American Dental Association Library of Medicine Grant Application – Success!**  
Dr. Counard and Board member Heidi Nickisch-Duggan, who works for the Dental Association, announced that this grant has been funded, to provide oral health information to persons with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. More to come!

**Old Business**

No old business

**New Business**

Dr. Werner asked about a recent large increase in influenza B. Dr. Shim responded there has been an increase in patients with influenza at Cook County Health. Dr. Counard added that she receives a weekly influenza activity report from Cook County Department of Public Health, and there has been increased activity. The influenza season runs from October until May. It’s not too late to get vaccinated!

Dr. Youkhana stated that Tamiflu is going to be approved as an over-the-counter medication soon.

Dr. Youkhana mentioned the documentary “Game Changers”, and asked if providing information on plant based diets should be something the Board of Health is working on. Dr. Counard responded that Dr. Terry Mason, Director of the Cook County Department of Public Health, was in the documentary and she would ask if he could speak to the Board of Health about this topic.

The meeting was adjourned by Ms. Jones at 7:57 PM.

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**Next meeting:**

**Thursday, February 13<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM**  
**Skokie Village Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor conference rooms D & E**  
**5127 Oakton Street**  
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