



Cambridge  
Public Health  
Department

January 12, 2018

Louis DePasquale  
City Manager  
Cambridge City Hall  
795 Massachusetts Avenue  
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear City Manager DePasquale,

I am pleased to submit the **Cambridge Public Health Department's annual report to the City of Cambridge.**

The health department's major accomplishment in 2017 was completing a final milestone in becoming a nationally accredited health department. In October, the department submitted over 300 documents to the Public Health Accreditation Board that demonstrate how it is meeting nationally recognized standards for governmental health departments. The documentation includes internal policies, practices, and systems related to assessing the health of the community; investigating and responding to health threats; informing the community about public health issues; enforcing public health laws; and ensuring a high-performing workforce. A final decision is expected in 2018.

Other notable accomplishments in 2017:

- **CHIP Year 2:** The enclosed report describes Cambridge's progress in meeting the Year 2 objectives of the *2015 City of Cambridge Community Health Improvement Plan's* four identified priority areas: healthy eating and active living; mental health and substance abuse; violence; and healthy, safe, and affordable housing.
- **Substance Abuse Prevention:** Staff individually interviewed all Cambridge Rindge and Latin School ninth graders to assess their risk for substance abuse, as part of a new state-mandated screening. OPEN (Overdose Prevention and Education Network), a four-city coalition led by the department, began offering overdose recognition and response trainings to Cambridge businesses with public bathrooms, in partnership with the Cambridge Needle Exchange and Overdose Prevention Program.
- **Healthy Eating and Active Living:** The department received a three-year, \$345,000 grant renewal from the state's Mass in Motion program that will support urban agriculture policy development, Safe Routes to School, and other projects.
- **Urban Agriculture:** The city's commissioner of public health promulgated the "Cambridge Public Health Department Regulation for the Keeping of Honey Bees" on December 5, 2017. The regulation sets standards for safe and sanitary beekeeping operations.
- **Biosafety Forum:** The department organized the 2017 Cambridge Biosafety Forum, a two-day training for residents and others interested in serving as community reps on biotech safety committees. Cambridge is the first city in the world to establish direct citizen oversight of biological research, and continues to set the standard for strict public oversight of this sector.

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- **Climate Change:** As a member of the city's Climate Change Preparedness and Resilience Plan steering committee, the department helped produce the draft preparedness plan for Alewife, one of the city's most susceptible neighborhoods to flooding and heat-related impacts.

The department continued providing valuable services to the community, which included:

- Providing flu shots to over 700 people at public flu clinics, homeless shelters, and other venues.
- Following up on over 150 communicable disease reports.
- Handling nearly 2,000 tuberculosis patient visits at CHA Cambridge Hospital.
- Handling over 50,000 student visits for illness, injury, and other care at the Cambridge Public Schools.
- Issuing over 1,000 licenses and permits.

The Cambridge Public Health Department maintained a national presence through the National Association of County and City Health Officials and the Public Health Accreditation Board, in which we are honored to have Claude-Alix Jacob, MPH, Chief Public Health Officer, serve on the board of directors of both organizations.

Thank you for your continued support of the Cambridge Public Health Department.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patrick R. Wardell". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Patrick R. Wardell  
Commissioner of Public Health, City of Cambridge

cc: Claude-Alix Jacob, MPH  
Chief Public Health Officer



