



“Pursuing Integration of Public Health Services
in
Genesee and Orleans Counties, NY”

Counties across New York State (and elsewhere) continue to face unprecedented fiscal pressures without significant mandate relief. These burdens are often pushing counties to cut services and become more creative in how they deliver required essential services in a cost efficient manner. In response to this reality, the Genesee and Orleans County Health Departments have embarked upon an exciting joint cross jurisdictional sharing (CJS) venture seeking integration of select functions and services. It is hoped that this endeavor will also help shed light into innovative ways other public health agencies might leverage resources, services and staff to respond to new world fiscal pressures while also better serving their respective communities. Aided in part by assistance from Lake Plains Community Care Network and a cross jurisdictional grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the two counties’ journey has begun in earnest.

Actually first considered in thought and planning over six years ago, the two counties have over the past year and a half begun senior staff integration. Today the agencies now share three management positions, those being Public Health Director, Deputy Director/Director of Environmental Health and Director of Patient Services. According to Paul Pettit, the shared Public Health Director, “it has taken a lot of coffee and conversations with two county legislatures, two boards of health and the state health department to get things moving”. But moving, they certainly now are.

Besides sharing of senior management, other accomplishments to date include:

- Joint community health assessment activities
- Joint community health improvement plan development
- Joint purchasing of services in select areas
- The development of common fee schedules and sanitary codes
- Sharing of medical and environmental engineering consultation
- Coordination of Public Health Education and Community Messaging

As time passes, additional integration will be pursued as well specifically targeting ways to standardize and streamline operations and operational support while further seeking opportunities to conserve resources, improve quality, increase community engagement and to begin to prepare for potential national accreditation.

For Additional Information, contact:

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