

Harnett County Board of Health
Minutes of Regular Meeting
November 20, 2025

The Harnett County Board of Health met in regular session on Thursday, November 20, 2025 in the Health Department Board Room, Harnett County Governmental Complex, 307 W. Cornelius Harnett Blvd., Lillington, North Carolina.

Members present: Dr. Laura Smith, OD, Chairwoman, Dr. Lori Langdon, M.D., Vice Chairwoman, Dr. Brandon Washington, DDS, Dr. Catherine Evans, DDS, Ms. Stacie Hogan, RPH, Dr. Kim Fowler, PhD, Dr. Amanda Langdon, DVM, Commissioner Barbara McKoy Ms. Amy Brown and Ainsley Johnson, Health Director.

Others present: Mary Jane Sauls, Oliver Tolksdorf, Natasha Johnson, Gail Hobbs and guest Javian Lassiter.

Chairwoman Smith called meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Announcements – Ms. Johnson welcomed Mr. Javian Lassiter, a University of North Carolina at Pembroke nursing student who is here to observe the Board of Health meeting. Ms. Johnson announced Board of Health member Kandi Tudor resigned effective immediately. We now have a vacancy for the nursing position. Each member received a copy of the Harnett County Conflict of Interest policy at the September 25, 2025 meeting; tonight each member will review and sign the confirmation statement.

Consent Agenda – Minutes - Motion made by Dr. Lori Langdon, M.D., for the September 25, 2025 agenda and minutes to be approved and seconded by Commissioner Barbara McKoy, Motion Carried.

Consider additions and deletions to the published agenda – None made.

Public Comment – Period of up to 30 minutes for informal comments allowing 3 minutes for each presentation – Chairwoman Smith opened the floor for informal comments by the public, allowing 3 minutes for each presentation up to 30 minutes. Seeing no one, Chairwoman Smith closed the informal comments.

Board of Health Member Oath – Ms. Johnson presented each Board of Health member with an Oath; which was read aloud, signed and notarized by each board member for official records of the Health Department. The oath was administered by notary public and Health department staff member Jessie King Clifton.

Nomination Committee Report - Chairwoman Smith asked Dr. Amanda Langdon, DVM, to give the Nomination Report. Dr. Amanda Langdon submitted on behalf of the nominating committee Dr. Brandon Washington, DDS, will serve as Chairman and Dr.

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Lori Langdon, M.D., will serve as Vice-Chairwoman for the upcoming year. The nominating committee submitted no other nominations to the board. **Chairwoman Smith opened the floor for any other nominations. No other nominations were received. Dr. Kim Fowler, PhD, asked that nominations be closed and accept the slate of officers as presented, seconded by Stacie Hogan, RPH. Motion carried.**

Meeting Schedule for 2026 – Ms. Johnson provided a copy of the Board of Health meeting schedule for 2026, and reminded the board **the March meeting is the first Thursday** and all other meetings are scheduled for the third Thursday.

Debt Setoff – Gail Hobbs reported that since the last meeting, the Debt Setoff program has collected an additional \$187.20 and the collection year to date total is \$4,002.87.

Health Director's Report and Program Reports – Ainsley Johnson

- **WIC Food Expenditures Report** – Ms. Johnson presented a power point presentation for the 2024-2025 Economic Impact Food Expenditures Report for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program. WIC serves low to medium income families (up to 185% of federal poverty level) that include a pregnant or postpartum woman, an infant, or a child under the age of five years. WIC is an important resource for many Harnett County families. The report included programmatic data, regarding the caseload and included information on food expenditure and the economic impact for the WIC program in the county. WIC served approximately 42,535 participants in 2024-25. WIC food package benefit redemptions infused \$3,527,391 in revenue into the local economy. There were approximately 20 WIC approved retail vendors in Harnett County from July 2024 until June 2025.
- **Financial Reports** – The federal shutdown ended on November 12, 2025, and it was the longest government shutdown in US History of 43 days. We felt the uncertainty of removal of WIC funding during this time but the U.S Department of Agriculture (USDA) and North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) were able to ensure funding for the program during the entire shutdown period. We experienced no change in operation here. Initially, our Division on Aging was notified of potential impacts to block grant services including elderly nutrition, in-home aide and caregiver support services. Due to federal government actions; no impacts occurred. There is still not an agreement on a NC state budget. We are currently experiencing the effects of reduced Medicaid reimbursement rates, which stem from the Medicaid rebase shortfall. These rate reductions took effect on

November 1, 2025. The Health Department has projected a reduction of approximately \$79,000 in revenues over the remainder of the fiscal year. So far, we have seen reduction in reimbursements. Examples are below:

- CPT 99211 - Nurse visit – Previous reimbursement \$34.16 and current reimbursement \$31.43
- CPT 99213 - Office visit 20-29 minutes- Previous reimbursement \$78.66 and current reimbursement \$72.37
- CPT 90471- Administration of a vaccine – Previous reimbursement \$13.71 and current reimbursement \$12.61
- CPT 99385- Family Planning Exam- Previous reimbursement \$142.00 and current reimbursement \$130.64
- **Quality Improvement** – Ms. Johnson discussed we have started a quality improvement project with Cornett Improvement and Development, utilizing our Public Health Infrastructure agreement addendum funds. The aim of this project is to improve public health service delivery by enhancing operational efficiency, increasing revenue through optimized billing and funding opportunities, and implementing standardized protocols across all programs and services. These efforts will benefit staff by reducing administrative burdens and improving workflow capacity. Consumers will experience reliable, timely, and equitable services. Ultimately, these improvements support the department's mission to protect and promote the health and well-being of all individuals in Harnett County. This project has brought our team together and though only about 25% complete has already produced improvement in processes that will positively impact our clients and employees.

Clinical Report- Mary Jane Sauls

- **Clinical Report** – Mary Jane Sauls reviewed the Activities Summary on page 13 of the packet. Clinic numbers for the Health Department remain steady and are consistent with trends typically observed during this time of year. A decrease in child health well visits was noted, which is expected following the back-to-school period. The Health Department offers all vaccines recommended for the respiratory virus season, including those for COVID-19, influenza, RSV and pneumonia. Vaccinations are available daily by appointment or on a walk-in basis between 8:00–11:00 a.m. and 1:00–4:00 p.m. Recently, we conducted a two-week drive-up flu vaccination campaign, providing community members with the convenience of receiving their flu vaccine without leaving their vehicles.

On November 10, 2025, the Health Department received an alert from the state epidemiologist regarding an outbreak of infant botulism linked to ByHeart Whole Nutrition Infant Formula. As of November 8, 2025, there were 23 cases with two cases in NC. One suspected case has been identified in NC. The alert was sent to all county providers, WIC director and our in-house providers.

- **Environmental Health** – Oliver Tolksdorf reviewed the Harnett County Reporting Form for Operators of Mobile Food Units and Pushcarts. The form was created to establish a database for locally permitted food trucks, and to track units that are permitted outside of Harnett County that are doing business in the county.
- **Aging & Case Management** – Mary Jane Sauls reviewed Medicare Open Enrollment 2026 is underway. The period runs from October 15th through December 7th. The Harnett County Division on Aging is conducting daily Medicare counseling sessions, as well as Saturday and evening clinics, to accommodate working beneficiaries and their family members. Five Medicare counselors and an additional counselor in training are available to assist during this period. A regional specialist from the North Carolina Department of Insurance also provides counseling support several times each month. Appointments are nearly full through the end of November, with limited availability remaining in December. The Harnett County Senior Volunteer Program is actively recruiting volunteers to support local services, including the Harnett Food Pantry, Meals on Wheels, and the Cancer Center in Lillington. Volunteers continue efforts to gather donations for food pantries countywide, all of which have experienced shortages while serving an increasing number of residents as economic challenges persist. The Harnett County Family Support Program is recognizing National Family Caregiver Month. On November 19th, the program hosted a Caregiver Support and Appreciation Forum featuring presentations on dementia and resources for caregivers. The event included an Honor and Remembrance Service in which each caregiver received a white carnation in recognition of their role in caring for a loved one with dementia. Local agencies provided informational tables and small incentives for attendees. Caregivers concluded the forum with a candle-lighting ceremony held in honor or memory of their loved ones.
- **Health Education/WIC/Community Events** – Ms. Johnson reported the Health Education Division in collaboration with community partners conducted the Think Pink Breast Cancer Awareness Event on Saturday, October 25, 2025 at the Harnett County Resource Center and Library. The event included a presentation, survivor recognition, and an art activity provided by Harnett County Arts Council. On Saturday, November 22, 2025, we will be providing

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free HIV and Syphilis Testing at Another Barbershop in Dunn. They will be holding their annual Customer Appreciation Day. Another Barbershop is one of our Stop HIV in Our community Program (SHOP) partners. Eat Well, Live Well: Mediterranean Cooking Demo will be held on Thursday, January 8, 2026 from 5:30pm-6:30pm at Cooperative Extension. Educational cooking demonstration focused on healthy, flavorful Mediterranean meals. Participants will be able to sample various dishes. Youth Vaping Prevention: Parent & Caregiver Workshop Program will be held on Wednesday, January 21, 2026 from 12:00pm-1:30pm in the Commons Area. The program is for parents and caregivers that would like to learn more about the risk associated with e-cigarettes or vapes, how to recognize if a teen is vaping and resources to help teens quit tobacco. The Community Health Assessment Survey was open August-October 31st. during that time 407 surveys were completed. In addition, Campbell University hosted five listening sessions in the community and conducted a community capacity inventory. Dr. Tillman plans to present the survey data and emerging priorities at the January 2026 Board of Health meeting. WIC continues to exceed our base caseload, which is the number of participants local WIC agencies are assigned to serve each month. Our base caseload is 3,538 however we exceed that number each month as noted on the activity summary. The DUMA satellite has also been going well.

Closed Session – There was no need for closed session.

New Business –**Chairwoman Smith** opened the floor for New Business. Being none, Chairwoman Smith closed New Business.

Vice Chairwoman Smith adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,



Ainsley Johnson
Health Director



Dr. Laura Smith, OD, Chairwoman