

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF HEALTH

Thursday, November 13, 2025

The Philadelphia Board of Health held a public meeting on Thursday, November 13, 2025. The meeting was held virtually using the Zoom platform to facilitate access by the public via computer or other device and toll-free phone number.

Board Members Present

Dr. Palak Raval-Nelson, Dr. Marla Gold, Dr. Tyra Bryant-Stephens, Dr. Jennifer Ibrahim, Dr. Usama Bilal.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Health Commissioner and Board President Palak Raval-Nelson, PhD, MPH called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FROM MEETING ON 9.4.2025

Dr. Raval-Nelson asked if the Board had reviewed the minutes from the public meeting on September 4, 2025. Dr. Raval-Nelson requested a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was approved unanimously.

REGULATION RELATING TO SEVERE MATERNAL MORBIDITY SURVEILLANCE

Sarah Weinbrom, Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Epidemiologist from the Division of Reproductive, Adolescent, and Child Health (ReACH) presented on the proposed Regulation Relating to Severe Maternal Morbidity Surveillance. Ms. Weinbrom explained the definition of severe maternal morbidity (SMM) and presented information from ReACH's SMM Report published last year. In 2023, the Board of Health passed the Regulation Relating to Severe Maternal Morbidity Surveillance to allow hospitals to report SMM cases to the Division. Six quarters of data have been collected. SMM rates have been increasing over time in Philadelphia. SMM data is helpful but lacks context about what caused the SMM outcome and whether it was preventable. This regulation will allow ReACH to share de-identified case summaries with a group of experts who will make recommendations for prevention. The Philadelphia Maternal Mortality Review Committee is being used as a model for the surveillance review team proposed in this regulation.

Questions were asked by Dr. Gold, Dr. Bryant-Stephens, Dr. Ibrahim, and Dr. Bilal and were answered by Ms. Weinbrom. Dr. Raval-Nelson summarized the purpose of the proposed regulation and said the Department is looking for upstream solutions to severe maternal morbidity. She stated that the Department would follow up with the Board regarding the recommendations from the review committee. Dr. Raval-Nelson noted that Black maternal

mortality and morbidity is a priority of the Health Department and committed to seeking innovative solutions.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public were present for public comment.

The Regulation Relating to Severe Maternal Morbidity Surveillance passed unanimously with no abstentions.

REGULATION RELATING TO THE PHILLY FAMILIES CAN CENTRALIZED INTAKE DATA SYSTEM

Ellen Davis, MSW, Philly Families CAN Manager from ReACH, presented on the Regulation Relating to the Philly Families CAN Centralized Intake Data System. Ms. Davis gave an overview of the Philly Families CAN program intake process and workflow. Ms. Davis explained the expansion of the program to include referral to Department of Human Services’ Family Empowerment Centers. In 2024, there were 2,074 referrals to the program and the program is on track to receive more than 3,000 referrals in 2025.

The Philly Families CAN program is currently considered a “Business Associate” of the HIPAA-covered entities in the PF-CAN provider network. This requires that every network partner sign a Participation Agreement (MOU), End User Confidentiality Agreement and Business Associate Agreement (only for HIPAA-covered entities). The proposed Regulation Relating to the Philly Families CAN Centralized Intake Data System would formalize the program’s status as a Public Health Authority, which would reduce administrative barriers, particularly the need to sign Business Associate Agreements, and facilitate further expansion of the program. This change would not impact referring providers or families receiving services. The program’s data management and privacy practices would remain the same.

Questions were asked by Dr. Gold and Dr. Bryant-Stephens and were answered by Ms. Davis.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public were present for public comment.

The Regulation Relating to Severe Maternal Morbidity Surveillance passed unanimously with no abstentions.

COMMISSIONER UPDATE ON THE ONE PHILLY SNAP PROGRAM

Dr. Raval-Nelson thanked the Board Members for their support. She explained that the Mayor recently assigned the Health Department the lead role in an emergency response to provide City funding to food distribution organizations in Philadelphia to address the SNAP funding crisis. Dr. Raval-Nelson noted that Kinnari Chandriani, Director of the Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention and Dawn Kiesewetter, Director of the Division of Environmental Health

Services, were present on the call and helped to lead a team of City staff to stand up and administer a grant funding application process. Over 2,200 applications were received and, to date, over 130 organizations have received funding, with grants of between \$5,000 and \$50,000 for groceries and prepared meals.

ADJOURNMENT

Dr. Raval-Nelson adjourned the meeting.