

October 17, 2025

TO: Ald. Marina Dimitrijevic, Chair – Finance & Personnel Committee

FROM: Michael Totoraitis, Commissioner of Health

RE: 2026 Budget Hearing Follow-up Items

Ald. Dimitrijevic & members of the Finance & Personnel Committee:

The Health Department was pleased to present and discuss our 2026 Proposed budget before the Committee on October 8. This memo is a compiled response to several items and questions raised during the hearing.

To Ald. Burgelis' question about required lead disclosures by landlords for tenants in affected properties (residential properties built prior to 1978):

Lead disclosure in a pre-1978 property to tenants is required under federal law, part of the Residential Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Act of 1992. The law requires that before signing or renewing a lease or rental agreement, a landlord must disclose any known lead-based paint or hazards on the property.

Both the landlord and tenant must sign an EPA-approved disclosure form to prove that the landlord told the tenants about any known lead on the premises. Property owners must keep this disclosure form as part of their records for three years from the date that the tenancy begins. Violations are enforced by the EPA, and can be reported by phone to the EPA's Region 5 office at 1-312-353-2000, by email to leadregulations@hud.gov or online at <https://echo.epa.gov/report-environmental-violations>.

DNS provides education on this federal requirement through its Rent for Success and Landlord Training programs, and both MHD and the Wisconsin Department of Health Services provide landlord and tenant education through our lead hazard reduction programs.

To Pres. Pérez' question about the street level efforts in the forthcoming Opioid Settlement Fund Strategic Plan:

The Opioid Settlement Fund Strategic Plan presents a high-level 5-year plan for Milwaukee. It centers the trusted Continuum of Care framework to build a broad-based,

community empowering, and flexible response. Under this framework, Milwaukee will invest across all four domains comprising the Continuum of Care:

- (1) Health Promotion
- (2) Prevention
- (3) Treatment
- (4) Maintenance

Building upon each of the four domains are many specific strategies, tactics and programs, initiatives, and activities. The Plan emphasizes City efforts and includes significant investments in community capacity with trusted partners to reach key populations City departments may be less regularly connected with.

One example of a program that aligns with each of the four continuum domains is street-level direct community outreach and engagement. Through the Scales Neighborhood Nursing Program, MHD will undertake efforts including Health Promotion (Community Outreach and Education) as well as Prevention work indicated for those meeting specific risk factors. In addition to City-delivered efforts, the Strategic Plan includes significant investments in “street level” efforts.

Monitoring and evaluation is built into implementation of Scales Neighborhood Nursing Program and other programs. Over time, evaluations will track results, highlight successes, illuminate areas for improvement, and inform Milwaukeeans of the impact of the street outreach efforts in the short-, medium-, and long-term.

To Ald. Spiker’s request for more information on the proposals brought forward by MICAHA via CCFN 250482, as heard on October 2:

The Health Department met with MICAHA’s Health Equity Taskforce earlier this year. The meeting was requested after Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin closed their clinic in Metcalfe Park. The task force underscored resident struggles with transportation to access health care in wake of the clinic closure. The task force also requested the Health Department open or operate a clinic to replace the CHW clinic. MHD could not meet that request due to the financial and staff requirements of running a clinic at the same scale as CHW.

MHD did communicate that a variety of the department’s programs are focused on meeting clients at their home. For example, the home visiting and doula programs. Over the year in 2025, the Health Department continued to communicate and meet with the MICAHA task force. Through those conversations, the task force focused on doula services as something that the neighborhood would see as beneficial.

In the October 2 hearing of CCFN 250482, discussions focused on MICAHA’s desire to have postpartum doula services expanded in the city, in a more comprehensive way than currently offered by MHD, and at greater scale. MHD’s care model does not meet MICAHA’s

desire for 12 months of post partum care. The program is structured with a set number of visits, and would not support the level prenatal care, live delivery and comprehensive post partum services as sought by MICAH. MHD always advocates for medical care for expectant parents as well as newborns and children to be provided by a doctor in an established clinic.

As discussed at the budget hearing on October 8, MHD will be restructuring our doula services to increase capacity, which may allow for a certain level of post partum visits if clients have need and desire. MHD and the Commissioner are appreciative of the advocacy for doula services by MICAH and will continue to work together to ensure the needs of children and parents in Milwaukee are met.

If the Committee or members have any additional questions about MHD's budget or program plans for 2026, please don't hesitate to contact me at any time.

Thank you again for your time and attention to our 2026 budget.