



Immediate Release
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For Immediate Release: Community Health Options' Annual Member Meeting Featured Maine CDC Director Dr. Nirav Shah

Late last week, Community Health Options (Health Options) gathered for its Annual Member Meeting via webinar. Normally an in-person gathering, this year's online meeting was made notable with Health Options having Maine Center for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) Director, Dr. Nirav Shah, as honored keynote speaker.

Health Options' CEO and President Kevin Lewis provided a review of newly elected board members, 2020 achievements and financial results, and welcomed Dr. Shah, who shared his perspective on leading Maine's statewide response to the COVID-19 pandemic, from early public health actions to small town outbreaks and the current resurgence.

Dr. Shah also gave some advice for planning safe holidays. He noted:

- It's best to postpone big holiday gatherings this year, or gather for socially-distanced outdoor activities, if you are able.
- If you have college children or family members traveling from other parts of the country, a recommended timeline for testing is 72 hours before travel, followed by 14 days of quarantine.
- Don't overthink face masks: the best face mask has multiple layers, is washable, fits snugly and is designed to cover the nose and mouth.
- With effective vaccines on the near horizon, we can look forward to more holiday gatherings in 2021 but must bear in mind that national vaccine distribution will be a massive effort and will take many months to reach the general population.

"It's a critical time for us all to pull together in support of our community, particularly being mindful of those most vulnerable among us. From frontline workers to state and national healthcare policy makers, we are all in this together," said Lewis. "Dr. Shah emphasized that all of our actions have an impact on public safety and health. As a community-oriented non-profit healthcare insurance provider, we place a high value in working together, and never could this be more important than it is right now."