

OPEN MEETING MINUTES

Waukesha County Health & Human Services Virtual Microsoft Teams Meeting Public Health Advisory Committee Thursday, November 12, 2020

Present Committee Members: Sarah Butz, Ross Clay, Andy Dresang, Jessica Kadow, Betty Koepsel, Colleen Peebles, Mary Reich

Absent Committee Members: Kerri Ackerman

HHS Board Liaisons: Mary Baer

HHS Staff Liaisons: Mary Jo Hamman, Theresa Imp, Elizabeth Laatsch, Mary Smith (left at 8:57am)

Guests: Gordon Blunck, Public Guest

Quorum = 5

1. Call to Order

Dresang called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

2. Review and Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Reich moved, second by Kadow, to approve the minutes from October 8, 2020. Motion passed without negative vote.

3. Business

Dresang requested that a 2021 budget update be added to the agenda for the PHAC December meeting.

4. Committee Reports

A. Health & Human Services Board

Baer reported the HHS Board will meet on Thursday, November 19, 2020. The Board and Committee have split meetings going forward, so this will be a Board only meeting. Baer also informed that a state grant was received, in collaboration with ERAs, ProHealth Care and Sixteenth Street Community Health Center, in the amount of \$100,000 to focus on the promotion and marketing of flu vaccination to the elderly, disabled and Hispanic population in Waukesha County.

B. Environmental Health Division

No Update

C. Aging & Disability Resource Center

Smith shared that the 2021 budget was approved as submitted on Tuesday, November 10, 2020.

5. Public Health Division Reports

A. Public Health Coordinator

- **COVID-19 Updates**

Laatsch reported that COVID continues to be the primary topic for Public Health. Public Health is staffed to comfortably handle 140-150 cases per day, however; cases are surging, reaching 400-500 per day causing the switch to crisis mode as we have now exceeded capacity. Crisis standards were implemented in September. Staff are unable to process labs as quickly as they are being reported, which has a significant impact on the accuracy of the Waukesha County COVID dashboard data. This is a high priority, utilizing many resources, including redeployed HHS staff. Contact Investigators are also being trained to assist with this and the inclusion of additional staff is being considered. Hospitalization data shows bed utilization is increasing within the County. Many hospital systems are at or near capacity.

- Aurora Summit reported they reached capacity on 11/11/20 of general and ICU beds.
- We have heard reports that ProHealth is preparing to open a closed wing to handle the influx.

Dresang shared that Froedtert has also reached capacity. Staffing is the primary challenge. There are a large number of staff members out sick makes it hard to meet the increasing demands of the community. Butz stated that even the healthy staff that are working are getting fatigued and the increasing demands are causing burn out.

Laatsch informed that significant changes to the contact tracing processes would be implemented next week. Schools and businesses will be asked to make notifications to close contacts associated with their organizations going forward. Education will be provided to staff of schools and organizations on the identification of contacts and quarantine and isolation standards. Waukesha County will continue to provide contact tracing for priority groups, including school age children through age 23 and ages 60+. Those cases falling outside of the identified priority groups will be contacted to notify them of their positive results and provided with education regarding the virus and how to notify their close contacts, their case will then be closed. Ongoing follow up will no longer be completed throughout the entire isolation period for these individuals.

Laatsch informed that Pfizer's vaccine has been proven 90% + effective and should be available soon. New challenges we will face once a vaccine is available will be staffing and balance of vaccine administration while continuing with contact tracing efforts.

Reich inquired whether COVID testing at the Expo Center would be extended. Laatsch stated she was unsure on the level of resources available to continue this into 2021. Baer expressed that inclusion of the flu vaccine at testing sites would benefit those people at a higher risk or who do not have access, making it a high priority. Laatsch offered to take this forward to the EOC. Dresang commented on Froedtert community partnerships currently providing the flu vaccine at outpatient sites through drive-thru flu vaccine clinics, noting there is funding available through publicity / educational grants for marketing of health literacy.

- **General Updates**

Imp reported that clinic services have reopened for immunizations, by appointment only, on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Appointments are going well and have not maxed out on any day so far. TB skin tests are also being offered by appointment on Tuesdays.

Baer inquired on whether the Shingles vaccination is available. Imp will follow up and share with all members when availability is confirmed.

B. Coordinator

No Update

C. Communicable Disease

No Update

D. Family & Community Health

No Update

E. WIC

Hamman stated that the WIC state monitoring was completed virtually. Monitoring went well and the WIC program received many commendations about their remote capabilities allowing them to accommodate clients during this time. WIC staff are seeing 5-10 appointments in office weekly and there has been a noted increase in new pregnancies.

F. Preparedness

No Update

6. Agency Announcements and Updates

Reich stated that Lake Area Free Clinic is ramping up virtual and phone visits for clients. Volunteers have been cautious about being in the office with the recent surge in cases.

Kadow shared that ProHealth Care Hispanic Resource Center has maintained as little face-to-face contact with clients as possible. There are currently two nurses working remotely to meet with clients for appointments. In office, appointments are scheduled only when necessary. Telehealth has also been useful in monitoring clients for follow up. Kadow inquired whether others were familiar with or had additional information on the DHS COVID symptom survey, being sent via email to contacts. Laatsch informed that the state was now assisting with contact follow up and this survey is an electronic tool used within WEDSS (Wisconsin Electronic Disease Surveillance System) allowing quarantined contacts to self-monitor and report symptoms during their quarantine period. Contacts are encouraged to complete this survey. If symptoms do present, the local health agency will be notified and they can then continue with the follow up.

Peebles shared that Sixteenth Street received approval for a semi-permanent structure during the winter months, which will have heat and lighting, allowing additional space for vaccinations and COVID testing. Positive cases have drastically increased by 25-30%. One additional day of COVID testing has been added each week and there has been extensive focus on promoting flu vaccination.

Clay mentioned the continuation of none work hour activities for many, without caution, has caused a dramatic increase in community spread and has forced many to be out of work.

