

OPEN MEETING MINUTES

Waukesha County Health and Human Services Virtual Microsoft Teams Meeting Public Health Advisory Committee Thursday, January 14, 2021

- Present Committee Members:** Steven Andrews, Ross Clay, Andy Dresang (Chair), Jessica Kadow (Vice Chair), Betty Koepsel, Colleen Peebles, Mary Reich
- Absent Committee Members:** Kerri Ackerman, Sarah Butz
- HHS Board Liaisons:** Mary Baer
- Present HHS Staff Liaisons:** Bridget Gnad, Mary Jo Hamman, Theresa Imp, Ben Jones, Brittany Leising, Mary Smith
- Absent HHS Staff Liaisons:** Elizabeth Laatsch
- Guests:** Tristin Bruno, Janelle McClain

1. Call to Order

Chair Dresang called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. Introductions were exchanged among committee members and guests.

2. Review and Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Koepsel moved, second by Reich, to approve the Public Health Advisory Committee minutes from December 10, 2020. Motion passed without negative vote.

3. Business

There was no new committee business.

4. Committee Reports

A. Health and Human Services Board

Baer recognized Butz, Peebles, Smith, and Nicole Kelly for their collaboration with Flu Fundamentals – a marketing tool that will be used to promote the flu vaccine.

She also recognized the Waukesha County Public Health Division staff for receiving their Level 2 Health Division Recertification.

B. Environmental Health Division

There was no Environmental Health Division report.

C. Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)

The ADRC is in phase 1 of restructuring the division. A new additional supervisor, Ryan Bamberg from Milwaukee County Disability Resource Center, will be starting with the division on Monday.

The ADRC is also structuring their staff so the staff can offer specializations. Currently, the staff must know everything about every topic. The specialization will

allow the staff to focus on certain areas of need for the clients and become experts on those topics.

The electronic health record (EHR) implementation is continuing in the division, with the goal of going live in March 2021.

In March 2020, the various meal option programs were suspended or changed due to the pandemic. Recently, a survey was sent to those that have received meal services to determine the need to make additional changes, such as offering a drive-through service for participants to pick up a meal. The survey results are due back to the ADRC by the end of January.

5. Public Health Division Reports

A. Manager / Health Officer

- **COVID-19 Updates**

November was the busiest month of pandemic, followed by December. Public Health was seeing 550 cases per day by Thanksgiving and expected the numbers to be higher after the holidays; however, the division has been seeing an average of 250-300 cases per day. The lower levels could be due to multiple reasons such as mask wearing, social distancing, fewer people choosing to be tested, or more of the population being asymptomatic.

There is early indication that the division will receive additional funding for COVID-related costs; however, the funding is only half of what was received in 2020, and needs to cover everything such as contact tracing, vaccine distribution, and testing.

A new program called Patient Education Genius (PEG) will be implemented likely by the end of this month and will be focused on the 23-59-year-old population. The positive cases will be notified through text message or email, and they will be provided a link to access their test results with a way to share with others such as their employer, as well as a survey of all the information that Public Health needs to collect and access to educational resources. Users can also use the system for close contact notification of a positive test.

PEG is separate from the Wisconsin Exposure Notification app that allows users to turn on the app, and if someone enters a code they receive when they test positive for COVID, the app will notify everyone that was within 6-feet of the person for 15 minutes or more within the Bluetooth range. The app will only notify the person that they were exposed – not who tested positive. The app is not associated with Waukesha County's Public Health Division, so the County does not have access to the data from the app.

Public Health is routinely monitoring local healthcare capacities, and has seen the hospital capacities stabilizing, and in some cases decreasing, from November's high numbers.

- **Vaccine**

As a subset of Waukesha County's Emergency Operations Center (EOC), a multidisciplinary team has been assembled to work on the vaccine plan and rollout.

Waukesha County is currently in Phase 1a of the vaccine distribution – which focuses on healthcare workers and long-term care residents. The State took the lead on distribution of the vaccine in December; however, there are many healthcare workers that are not affiliated with a major hospital group that are covered under Phase 1a and did not receive the vaccine, so a survey has been created to connect the Waukesha County unaffiliated Phase 1a workers with a vaccinator.

While Public Health applied to be a vaccinator on November 25, the approval to proceed was not received until last week Tuesday. This week has been focused on staff training, obtaining and updating policies and procedures, and ensuring medical guidance is signed off on. Jones is hoping to order the vaccine by next Monday.

All Public Health nurses have been vaccinated.

Waukesha County fire departments submitted an application to become vaccinators and were approved. They are now being used as an example throughout the state and could be used as a hub for the deep-freeze storage of the Pfizer vaccine and as a possible mass clinic location.

The State reported that fire and police departments that were considered part of Phase 1b, can be vaccinated starting next week. The announcement will slow down the process to complete Phase 1a vaccinations. Jones is confident that the existing collaboration with local hospital affiliations and fire/EMS will be important to this process.

Recommended Phase 1b priority groups have been shared from the State for public comment. When the public comment period expires on Monday, the Department of Human Services (DHS) and Governor Evers will make the final decision of who will be considered in the Phase 1b priority group. Currently, the Phase 1b priority list consists of essential workers, infrastructure workers, and those over 75 years old. K-12 teachers have been added to the recommendations, as well as the age limit dropped to those 70 years or older.

Any inquiries regarding the Waukesha County COVID-19 vaccines should contact covidvaccine@waukeshacounty.gov.

While there could still be changes, Phase 1c vaccine distribution is currently set to include those over 65 years old, as well as anyone of any age with a health condition or otherwise immune-compromised.

Waukesha County is hoping to obtain software to assist with registration, screening, and obtaining consent for vaccine distribution. The State announced on Tuesday that they are working on a system with Microsoft, but details have not been released at this time.

Attendees acknowledged that there are some Phase 1a individuals that would like to wait until a later phase roll-out to receive the vaccine. In those cases, as soon as someone expresses an interest, vaccine administration will be arranged as fast as possible. Phase 1c will likely prompt a spike in vaccinations, so the goal is to vaccinate Phase 1a and 1b individuals as soon as they are ready.

Attendees agreed that positive and creative messaging will be critical to promote a positive image of the vaccine and help encourage individuals to get vaccinated.

Studies are currently being conducted to determine the vaccine's effectiveness against the newest COVID-19 virus strains.

- **Testing**

Gnadt stated that most of the funding and testing support was set to officially end on December 30, 2020; however, on December 30, the State extended the testing pilot program but under different circumstances. The State decreased the reimbursement amount for specimen collection from \$35 to \$15. This allowance will allow Waukesha County's partners to continue testing without having to rely solely on the contingency fund that was established through ordinance. Partners are encouraged to work toward an insurance-billed model.

The State will continue to provide free-of-charge lab services to partners through the end of March. Waukesha County will utilize that option for the uninsured, while Village Primary Care will keep the program sustainable for the insured. If someone is being referred to a community testing site, they are encouraged to bring their ID and insurance card to all testing sites. While no one will be turned away without insurance, there are days that the National Guard will not be available and Village Primary Care will be covering the testing site.

Uninsured participants and those with traditional health insurance should have no out-of-pocket costs, while those with non-traditional plans such as health cost sharing plans may experience some out-of-pocket costs.

The COVID-19 testing website (<https://wcwiki.waukeshacounty.gov/119104-testing/covid-19-testing-sites-available-in-waukesha-county>) is always being updated to provide all of the available information to the public.

6. Agency Reports

There were no agency reports.

7. Agency Announcements and Updates

The Sixteenth Street Clinic's heated structure has been constructed. The structure allows patients that cannot be seen in the clinic, to be seen for some of the following reasons:

- COVID testing
- Flu shots
- Upper respiratory issues

ProHealth Care has provided vaccines for the Sixteenth Street Clinic staff.

8. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

9. Adjournment

MOTION: Reich moved, second by Kadow, to adjourn at 9:09 a.m. Motion passed without negative vote.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Janelle McClain.

Minutes were approved on February 11, 2021.