



CITY OF NEW HAVEN
COMMUNITY SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
54 Meadow Street, 9TH Floor • New Haven, Connecticut 06519



Board of Health Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
May 12, 2021

Present: Dr. James Hadler, Chair; Dr. Frank Mongillo, Dr. Darnell Young, Dr. Alice Forrester and Heather Reynolds

Absent: Gregg Gonsalvez

Staff: Maritza Bond, Director of Health

Call to Order:

Commission Chair Hadler called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m.

Approval of Minutes:

Commissioner Hadler moved to approve the April 14, 2021 minutes; Dr. Forrester seconded; minutes were approved with no objections.

Public Comments or Statements:

No members of the public attended the meeting.

CDC Grant: Dr. Forrester

State Department has applied for CDC grant that came out about a month ago with a focus on social determinants of health and mental health. The state will let municipalities know when they can apply to be sub recipients. Dr. Forrester will send the award notice to Director Bond.

Updates:

Director Bond presented the following status updates:

COVID-19 Situational Awareness & Response Efforts

Unified Command Meeting Update

This update is current as of Monday (May 10, 2021) the board will receive an updated Unified Command report on Monday, May 17, 2021.

Current response efforts are mass vaccination, communication efforts, contact tracing, compliance, sustainability, outreach and technical support in the community.

The Health Department is still closely monitoring where we are in the United States versus where we are with variants. Internally the department is tracking the variants affecting Connecticut using the COVID tracker CT as a resource. New Haven is seeing about 25 cases per 100,000 with a positivity rate of almost 3%. Starting to see a downward trend of positive cases and hospitalizations related to COVID. Sewage report is also predicting a decline in cases. The department has created a dashboard to monitor the cases within the school system. This has been completely transitioned to the Board of Education. The district has about 17 positive cases, which is really good news. There are some pending positive cases to verify, those are being monitored.

There are no major reports for nursing homes and colleges in regards to positivity cases. Director Bond made a notation that 2 nursing homes in New Haven are planning to go on strike. While those facilities are licensed through the Department of Public Health, Director Bond has contacted both facilities to ensure that the department has access to contingency plans and that there will be no disruption to the care of the residents that reside there. Business compliance is still being tracked. We are seeing a decrease in cases being reported by restaurants.

The Health Department continues to work with partners on mass vaccination efforts. Almost 20,000 people have been vaccinated by the Health Department. Director Bond gave kudos to the team for a job well done. Current partners include Yale New Haven Health System, Cornell Scott Hill Health Center and Fair Haven Community Health Care. All are ensuring that they offer vaccinations within their service area and partnering with the Health Department on doing pop up vaccinations. Now that the 12-15 age group is eligible, we are seeing an increase in the younger population getting vaccinated. Mobile vaccination sites are now being combined to streamline and not duplicate efforts. A Google map has been developed to identify gaps and work collectively with partners. To date the Health Department has completed 45 pop-up vaccination sites and have 8 coming up in partnership with Griffin Hospital. City of New Haven is close to 42% vaccination of at least one dose of the COVID vaccine. In the next few weeks the Department will partner in hosting pop up sites in Downtown, food truck paradise on Long Wharf and near the two C-Town supermarkets in New Haven. Currently tracking second vaccine administration is difficult as the staff must look in two systems to see if the first vaccine was given. The Department is transitioning the Epic EMR the system currently used by partners. This will help facilitate tracking administration of the second dose of the COVID vaccine.

Director Bond presented a new vaccination coverage by neighborhood map. The map is broken down by neighborhoods and age group. This will enable the Department to identify areas of concern by neighborhood and know where to focus vaccination efforts. A discussion ensued about reasons people are refusing to get the vaccine. Based on a qualitative survey done by DataHaven the community has lack of trust in the healthcare system, this is consistent with data that has been previously published. Outreach efforts are working to rebuild the trust in healthcare and government.

Health Administration

The Office Manager position has been filled, Damaris Velez officially started this past Monday. Director Bond made a recommendation to request to appoint Brooke Logan as Deputy Director. A request to appoint a Program Director for Environmental Health will be submitted this week as will a request to fill Brooke's prior position of Program Director. Department is still working on strategic planning, Director Bond hopes to be able to provide a preliminary of what has been identified at the next meeting.

The Lead Case is officially being settled. A press conference is scheduled for tomorrow to announce this to the public. We now have clear standing operating procedures and will be monitored by legal aid for three years. A discussion ensued on the details of the settlement.

Department Programs

COVID-19 response is still the priority while trying to open the Health Department Clinic. Currently working on renewing the medical advisor's contract for the next fiscal year. There are no changes from last month in regards to the change in salary for school nurses, HR is still working through a workforce analysis. No nursing applications have been received in the last month. Homebound vaccination efforts have been a success. Almost 30 individuals have been vaccinated the department is booked until the end of the month. Department is scheduled to go live May 18 with Epic EMR.

There are currently no active Tuberculosis cases being followed, first time in 15 months. Other grant programs are running in the Department with no major updates to report.

Director Bond will be out on medical leave starting May 18, 2021. Board will be available to meet with Deputy Director while Director Bond is on leave.

Commissioner Hadler moved to adjourn; Commissioner Reynolds seconded; meeting adjourned unanimously at 6:35 p.m.

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, June 9, 2021 at 5:30 p.m., via Zoom.

Attest:

Damaris Velez

Damaris Velez
Office Manager

7/26/2021

Date

Approved:

James Hadler, Chair
Board of Health Commissioners

Date