

Wellesley Board of Health
Remote Meeting via Zoom
Meeting Minutes
January 13, 2021
11:30 AM

Present:

Board:

Shepard Cohen, MPA, Chair
Marcia Testa Simonson, MPH, PhD, Vice Chair
Linda Oliver Grape, PA-C, MPH, Secretary
Carol Hannenberg, MD, Associate Member

Staff:

Wanda Alvarez, Community Social Worker
Jessica Cliff, Environmental Health Specialist
Leonard Izzo, Director
Cheryl Lefman, Community Health Coordinator
Ann Marie McCauley, Public Health Nurse Supervisor
Joyce Saret, Senior Community Social Worker
Vivian Zeng, Senior Environmental Health Specialist

In attendance:

Shira Doron, MD, Resident

The meeting was called to order at 11:37 AM.

The Board of Health approved the following set of minutes:

1-11-2021.

Citizen Speak:

No one was in attendance who wished to participate in Citizen Speak.

1. Administration
2. Community Health
 - a) COVID-19 Update

Ann Marie McCauley provided a case update. She continues to receive on average, 8 new cases per day, mainly from those college age and younger, through household/family spread.

b) COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics

Ann Marie McCauley reported that COVID-19 vaccination clinics for first responders which began Monday, January 11, and are being held daily (at the Fire Department) through the end of the week, are going well. A EMT is on hand at clinics to monitor and assist with any reactions or other issues. The first allocation of 100 doses of Moderna vaccine will be dispensed at these clinics. Mr. Izzo reported that 50 additional doses have been ordered from the regional allocation for administration to first responders and police at local colleges and private schools.

Mr. Izzo provided a summary of vaccine clinic planning efforts. He confirmed with the MA Department of Public Health that Wellesley Health Department would like to stand-up community clinics all the way through Phase 3 (general population). Logistics and infrastructure are being considered, including using PrepMod for making appointments, screening and vaccine information and more. Dr. Shira Doron said strong wording about no-shows should be included in messaging about appointments. Ann Marie McCauley and Leonard Izzo said they will be prepared for no-shows.

Mr. Izzo suggested that a clinic location may include the hallway outside the Health Department office. The Commonwealth will offer a [map with clinic locations](#). Cheryl Lefman noted that clinic information on the map may denote the intended population for vaccination (i.e., Wellesley residents 75+ only).

At the last Board of Health meeting, Mr. Izzo said that if this vaccination plan is implemented, then local contact tracing (via Health Department nurses) could not continue, and may have to be forwarded to the State's Contact Tracing Collaborative or other.

Linda Oliver Grape reiterated that the next group to receive COVID-19 vaccinations are those in congregate settings such as Charles River ARC. The Health Department staff will follow-up as guidance is received. Shepard Cohen noted that a family member residing in independent living will receive her vaccination next week.

There was discussion regarding how those in Phase 2, group one, 75+ or those with at least two comorbid conditions, may "prove" they have those conditions. Jessica Cliff said at least initially, it may be based on the honor

code. Marcia Testa Simonson said healthcare providers are going through Mass. Medical at Gillette Stadium, where a mass vaccination site is about to be operational. She noted that when eligible, small doctors' offices may attend clinics at Gillette. Other vaccination groups that will be available to vaccinate include pharmacists, primary care practices, hospital affiliated groups, local health departments and more.

Linda Oliver Grape said large medical groups with electronic medical records systems may run reports on patients active within the last 18 months, to ascertain comorbid conditions. The exception will be for providers without medical records, or an individual without a primary care physician.

c) Social Work

Shepard Cohen followed up on his request that Joyce Saret and Wanda Alvarez keep track of (social work related) cases, concerns, trends, etc. and prepare a report (sometime in the future) for the Mental Health Task Force and Board of Health. Mr. Cohen would like a case management system used for case tracking, etc.

Joyce Saret reported she is reviewing various (social work) case management systems. Mr. Cohen requested she inquire whether those systems may incorporate additional data or modules from other public health areas such as environmental health and nursing. Ms. Saret will incorporate that question, as well as HIPAA compliance into her search.

Linda Oliver Grape offered names of systems she is familiar with for case management/electronic health records, including: Epic, Salesforce Health Cloud, Capterra, and MHK (formerly MedHOK).

Joyce Saret reported she uses a system now that focuses on counseling. She cited that other towns, as well as Human Relations Service use a system that centers around billing, and will explore systems for municipalities.

Wanda Alvarez said she worked with State systems, such as those used in the courts, DCF (Family Net), etc. She would like to discuss this topic with the town's Information Technology Department.

Linda Oliver Grape wondered if it might be possible to collaborate with Newton-Wellesley Hospital (NWH) and sub-contract with them to use their Epic system. Shepard Cohen will contact Dr. Jodi Larsen at NWH to discuss this.

d) Communication

Dr. Doron responded to an article in yesterday's Boston Globe that Shepard Cohen brought to the group's attention: [When will people be able to get the COVID-19 vaccine, and how will they know?](#) Dr. Doron indicated that the public is not getting the information they need. She said many are coming to Tufts Medical Center for their shots and are terrified. They are seeing some in the ED with high heart rates, high blood pressure and hyperventilation due to anxiety (about the vaccine). She said observation time for some receiving the second dose may be 30 minutes. Non-hospital-based sites would have to call 9-1-1 for those with emergencies. These considerations would have to be factored into messaging. Dr. Doron suggested providing the public with education about vaccination and the immune response.

Marcia Testa Simonson agreed and stated the importance of risk communication. She will distribute information on the role of public health, as well as useful vaccine information.

e) Wellesley Public Schools - Metrics

Marcia Testa Simonson reported on yesterday's Health and Safety Committee meeting. She said they discussed the importance of epidemiological metrics and five other measures to assess what is going on in a school. Dr. Testa Simonson posed how to determine if there has been in-person transmission, noting the considerations including: where that person was, when they acquired the disease, etc. These need to be assessed in a clinical and scientific way.

Dr. Doron was pleased with the removal of county data. Dr. Doron noted that what is happening inside the building is the most important factor, as well as focusing on what really matters in terms of safety.

Dr. Doron and Dr. Testa Simonson said when guidelines regarding cutoffs and thresholds have been determined, they will present them to the Committee.

f) Environmental Health

Vivian Zeng reiterated that she has received numerous complaints (from various sources) about non-compliance of protocols related to the current mandate in certain businesses. Inspections and review of the guidance were conducted.

This meeting was adjourned at 12:48 p.m.

The next meeting of the Board of Health is scheduled on January 20, 2021, 11:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Lefman

Community Health Coordinator
