

Chautauqua County Board of Health
MINUTES

Meeting Date/Time: Thursday, May 21, 2020 @ 6:00 p.m.

Location: Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Scribe: Sherri Rater

ATTENDANCE:

BOH Members	P/A	BOH Members	P/A	Others Present	Title
Dr. Erlandson	P	Elisabeth Rankin	P	Christine Schuyler	Secretary, Public Health Director, HHS
Dr. Khan	P	Natasha Souter	P	Mark Stow	Director of Environmental Health, HHS
Dr. Kidder	P	Dr. Tallett	P	Sherri Rater	Scribe
Dr. Ney	P	Mark Tarbrake	P	Lynn Schaffer	First Assistant Social Services Attorney
Andrew O'Brien	P			Dr. Berke	County Physician

Call to order	The meeting was called to order by President Tom Erlandson at 6:04 p.m.
Privilege of the Floor	None
Approval of January 16, 2020 Minutes	Ney made a motion to approve the January 16, 2020 meeting minutes, 2 nd by Tallett. All in favor; motion carried.
Old Business: Tobacco Policy Update	<p>Schuyler: The state did take some action to try to decrease our smoking rates and keep our kids from beginning to smoke. The following new legislations have been passed regarding tobacco and vape products:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restricts the use of discounts that reduce the price consumers pay for tobacco products - Public Health Law § 1399-bb was amended, effective July 1, 2020 there will be no discount on tobacco or vaping products. By prohibiting retailers from accepting or honoring discounts for tobacco products or vapor products, this provision combats a common tactic used by tobacco companies to attract new users and maintain their existing customer base. The anti-discounting policy will help narrow disparities in tobacco use in New York State: Groups that use tobacco at disproportionately high rates are typically those most likely to reduce their tobacco use or quit as a result of higher prices. • Ends the sale of tobacco & vape products by pharmacies - Effective May 18, 2020 (<i>Implemented Public Health Law § 1399-mm(2)</i>) • Ends the sale of flavored vapor products that lack an FDA marketing order – Effective May 18, 2020 (<i>Creates Public Health Law § 1399-mm(1)</i>). • Increases oversight of vapor products throughout the distribution chain(<i>Creates Public Health Law § 1399-mm(3)</i>) effective May 18, 2020. • Stops home delivery of vapor products effective July 1(<i>Amends Public Health Law § 1399-ll</i>) • Prohibits the exterior display of tobacco products and tobacco product advertising near schools in exterior windows or storefronts within 1500 feet of a school. (<i>Creates Public Health Law § 1399-dd(1) and amends General Business Law § 396-aaa</i>) effective July 1, 2020. • Increases retailer penalties for tobacco control sales violations. Underage sale of these products

<p>COVID-19 cont'd</p>	<p>Schuyler: Suggests that if the Board would like to support another recommendation, they should write a letter and send it to the Governor's Office.</p> <p>After much discussion it was decided that Schuyler will draft a letter to Governor Cuomo's Office pointing out the CDC guidelines, the fiscal and financial impact to the nursing home and adult care facilities, and the low prevalence of the virus in these Chautauqua County facilities. The draft letter will be sent to the Board for review before mailing to the Governor's Office.</p> <p>O'Brien: Concerned that facility residents only option for testing is determined by the facility medical staff's discretion.</p> <p>Schuyler: I haven't received any complaints from family members of residents.</p> <p>WellNow Urgent Care facilities in Chautauqua County have been doing a tremendous amount of both infection and antibody testing. They are not providing our office or their patients with the results in a timely manner. It is taking 7-12 days to get a result back. Today we got a positive result back that was collected on May 3rd. The state law is that they need to notify immediately when they have a positive of any communicable disease that is reportable. WellNow is using a lab out of Boston and it is taking way too long. WellNow is instructing patients to go onto the patient portal to receive their results and they are not following up with patients who do test positive. That means there is no primary care physician notification or anything else coming from that provider which is a liability issue for that organization. There are 29 WellNow centers throughout the state. This is not an isolated issue within our County, it is a statewide issue. We have given WellNow some paperwork to give their patients who are being tested for COVID-19 asking them to call us so that we can give them the instructions on how to isolate.</p> <p>Kidder: Dealing with the ramifications of the testing coming out of WellNow has been difficult from the primary care standpoint. Patients who are getting an antibody test which frankly doesn't make any sense to have given the amount of prevalence that we have with this virus in our County. It is a complex discussion to have with patients to make them understand that there is a 50% chance of that positive being a false positive and it really doesn't give us any helpful information. It is a 15 minute conversation based on a test that shouldn't have been ordered. So the kind of misinformation that is out there is causing a challenge for us as well.</p> <p>Khan: Pharmacists being allowed to order and conduct testing is going to be another challenge.</p> <p>Souter: There are a lot of people saying that they were sick a few months ago and think that they had COVID-19. How do we educate the public that the antibody test is not the answer?</p> <p>Kidder: We get a lot of these same questions. One thing that we are doing is the medical leadership group that meets is working to put out a public statement trying to describe each of the tests available in lay terms and which ones make sense and which do not for the situation at hand to hopefully provide some education to the general public so they will know which test to ask for, given their history.</p> <p>Schuyler: Testing has been one major road block in this pandemic. The state did send us some testing kits recently and we plan to utilize them next week for a community clinic in the Clymer and Sherman area and we may be in the nursing home testing next week as well.</p> <p>There has been a lot of questions from the public like why are we not giving out the zip code of the positive cases and other possible identifying information. I think the board can appreciate that we cannot do that. We cannot give out any information that in any way would be identifiable. We cannot discriminate by other things like race and religious preference. I can say that we do have some community spread going on.</p> <p>Contact tracing is a core public health function that we have been doing for decades. There is a state training that is required for anyone who is going to be a contact tracer and does not already do that as part of their job. We</p>
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COVID-19 cont'd

have 80 people in county government and 120 people in the Jamestown city government took the online contact tracing training. We are fortunate that we are Health and Human Services and have called on other divisions to assist. The State rolled out a new electronic system for communicable disease investigation of COVID-19 called CommCare. No other communicable diseases will be in this system. While the system seems to have potential, it is next to impossible to adopt a totally new system in the middle of a pandemic. Other counties who are testing it out are experiencing significant issues and glitches in the system and some are refusing to use it. We are going to continue our current process while starting to learn the new system. I will not overburden the staff with duplicate documentation and the added stress of implementing a new system at this time. Contact tracers must take the online training and then be oriented to our system so the process isn't as simple as some make it seem. NYSDOH has told us that several community care specialists have been hired and are on board; a meeting is scheduled tomorrow to talk about us working with them locally to assist. Counties have been pushing back on the state's use of outsiders for our communicable disease investigative process. We are doing things well, we know what we are doing and we will continue to do it. If we receive a surge in cases and contacts beyond our capabilities, then we can get assistance from the state.

Kidder: How are we training staff in other divisions?

Schuyler: We are training between 3-6 staff a week and have started with our Fraud Unit and Child Support Unit as they are already investigators. This has been going very well. We also have case managers and caseworkers who will fill in the community care specialist role. Public Health nurses are training the additional staff. We don't want to get so many people trained that we are not using them so they don't forget what they have to do.

Ney: If someone doesn't have a PCP, CCHN has a process in place to connect them with a physician during this time.

Schuyler: We utilize that and the Chautauqua Center to link people up with a provider.

O'Brien: North county positive numbers are high. Why does Jamestown area have less than what you would expect?

Schuyler: North county is high and we feel this is due to the close tie to Erie County NY as people are coming and going between those areas. We need to accept that our numbers are going to go up some as we reopen. Experts say we could have a year or two before this is really manageable. The more we can keep our distance, cover our faces and wash our hands, be smart and use common sense, the better we will be.

Kidder: As things reopen who has the jurisdiction to enforce restrictions?

Schuyler: This subject is talked about daily at our COVID-19 daily team meeting with myself, the County Executive, Sheriff, and County Physicians. The state has not made it clear who is supposed to enforce but it seems to rest with law enforcement and code enforcement. Per Governor Cuomo, religious gatherings and Memorial Day celebrations can happen with 10 or less people and social distancing measures. Campgrounds are open; no congregate areas are open (playgrounds, concession stands), signage is in place and additional precautions for restrooms and shower facilities.

Stow: Golf courses are open for single use golf carts, social distancing, minimize contact. Marinas are able to open as well. We have had some issues and people are pushing the envelope with some restaurants and public areas where people are not social distancing.

Schuyler: Schools have been calling about graduations, we are getting new questions every day and have really been trying to answer them all the best we can. We try to react quickly when a new executive order is issued; however, it is difficult to do so because the state overseeing agency, such as Department of Health, has not developed guidance before the order is issued. Things are changing very quickly. We work hard to assist health care facilities, schools, and businesses only to have things change once again. It is very frustrating. It is important to abide by community mitigation restrictions as a phased reopening occurs. If Western New York does not meet the state's metrics, the Governor will put more restrictions back in place.

<p>New Business Overdose Data</p>	<p>Schuyler: The public health crisis of substance misuse and resulting overdoses continues. Isolation is a relapse trigger for those who are in recovery for both mental health and substance abuse and so we are seeing that reflected in our data. Last year, there were 234 suspected overdoses reported in the County. So far this year, there have been 126 with 8 of those fatal. In March 2020, 46 suspected overdoses with 2 fatal; April saw 19 with 4 fatal; and from May1- present, 11 nonfatal overdoses. These are overdoses reported by first responders through the ODMAP system. We know that there are other overdoses in the community that are not reported. Per local law enforcement, street drugs are being laced with fentanyl. The rapid response system in place here works with the ODMAP system to connect a peer from the Mental Health Association with every single one of the overdose cases, trying to get them engaged or reengaged in programs.</p> <p>O'Brien: Are there any problems accessing methadone with the lock down and people needing to travel to Buffalo or Erie to receive methadone?</p> <p>Schuyler: Some of the residents in the county have been able to get the longer supply of medication so they don't have to go out every day to get their medication.</p> <p>Berke: We are transporting people all the way to Buffalo to get treatment when there have been applications to open clinics in Jamestown and Dunkirk meanwhile we are paying to send people to Buffalo everyday which takes all day, no way for someone to work. It is costing \$400 a day, per person for transportation to Buffalo which could be \$70 if they were transported locally. We have about 80 people in the county who are going to Buffalo.</p> <p>Kidder: Some of my patients have noted that they are going 3 times a week to Buffalo now instead of everyday. If they can't get the medical transport, they are having a family member, sometimes elderly, take them. There is no social distancing practice going on at the methadone clinic. So not only is the patient being exposed, possibly another family member is too.</p> <p>O'Brien: The general operation of a methadone clinic is the direct opposite of social distancing. Patients prefer to arrive at the same time because they are trying to get to work or somewhere else, it is harder to spread them out. We did discuss the local methadone clinics at a previous meeting and really haven't made any progress.</p> <p>Schuyler: Is the Board interested in reaching out to the County Mental Health Director, Pat Brinkman, to see if the County LGU has been advocating for a clinic here? The State approved applications for two clinics in the County; Hispanic United/Acacia in Dunkirk and UPMC Chautauqua in Jamestown. With applications in and the State saying that these services are needed, I do not know why we have not received word of any further progress.</p> <p>Schuyler/Ney: This pandemic is resetting our world and if there was ever a time to look at the way that methadone patients are treated and the rules and regulations to how they are treated, now is the time.</p>
<p>Overdose Data cont'd</p>	<p>After much discussion it was decided that Schuyler will contact Pat Brinkman and then if needed, will draft a letter for the Board's approval advocating the support of two methadone clinics in Chautauqua County. Upon approval, the letter will be sent to the County Mental Health Director, the NYS Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse, OASAS and NYSDOH, with copies to Borrello and Goodell.</p>
<p>Other Business</p>	<p>Schuyler: Environmental Health water lab is fully operating for public water supply sampling and testing. All other public health programs are continuing but have been downsized or are being done remotely. Community health staff is all hands on deck for COVID-19 response efforts. Some Social Services program requirements have changed and been temporarily waived.</p> <p>Discussion was had as to meeting more frequently during the pandemic. Kidder made a motion to schedule a meeting June 18, 2020 at 6:00pm, 2nd by Ney. All in favor; motion carried.</p>
<p>Adjournment</p>	<p>Motion to adjourn by Dr. Tallett. Meeting adjourned at 7:50pm.</p>
<p>Future Meeting Dates</p>	<p>June 18, 2020; July 16, 2020; September 17, 2020; November 19, 2020.</p>