

BOARD OF PUBLIC HEALTH MEETING
Meeting Minutes for March 14, 2023

Members Present:

James Curran, M.D., M.P.H., Chair
Cynthia A. Mercer, M.D.
Mychal Walker Sr., C.L.T.C., F.R.C.
Tai Valliere-White, M.D., F.A.C. S
Kathryn Cheek, M.D., F.A.A.P.
Sangmin Ryan Shin, M.D., M.A., F.A.A.O.S.

Members Absent:

John Hauptert, F.A.C.H.E., Vice Chair
Mitch Rodriguez, M.D., Secretary
Major General Thomas M. Carden, Jr.

The Board of Public Health held its monthly meeting on March 14, 2023. The meeting was virtual and led by Dr. James Curran. The list of attendees is attached hereto and made an official part of these minutes.

I. & II. Call to Order and Roll Call:

The meeting was called to order at 1:02 p.m. by Dr. Curran, following a roll call, in conformity the members absent were Mr. John Hauptert, Dr. Mitch Rodriguez and Major General Carden.

III. Approval/Adoption of Minutes:

Dr. Curran presented the board meeting minutes of the February 14, 2023 for discussion and approval. There was no discussion. The minutes passed unanimously.

IV. New Business:

- A. Overview and introduction of DPH new staff - Commissioner Kathleen E. Toomey, M.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner Toomey made a brief introduction of our new General Counsel, Jeff Rickman.
- B. Legislative update- Megan Andrews, J.D.
Ms. Andrews presented an update on the legislative session and the bills that have a direct impact on our agency.

House Bill 196 - Georgia Access to Medical Cannabis Commission (GAMCC)

- Provides that the GAMCC is subject to the Administrative Procedure Act and laws governing open meetings and open records.
- Adds ulcerative colitis and myasthenia gravis as conditions for which low THC oil may be used. This will be required DPH to update our rules and regulations to include these new conditions as eligible for issuance of a Low THC oil card.
- *Status: Awaiting a vote in Senate Committee*

House Bill 416 - Pharmacy Tech Vaccine Administration

- Authorizes qualified pharmacy technicians to administer certain vaccines to adults under the authority of a supervising pharmacist.
 - Limited to COVID-19 vaccines and any other vaccine on the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) adult immunization schedule
- *Status: Awaiting a vote in Senate Committee*

House Bill 440 - School Glucagon Prescriptions

- Permits public and private schools to stock a supply of undesignated ready-to-use glucagon.
- Allows medical professionals to prescribe glucagon to schools for this purpose.
- Requires the Department of Education to consult with DPH to produce rules and regulations regarding implementation.
- *Status: Awaiting a vote on Senate Floor*

House Resolution 185 - House Healthy Food Retail Study Committee

- Committee will Investigate the lack of access to fresh, healthy food in certain rural and urban areas in Georgia.
- *Status: Awaiting a vote in House Committee*

Senate Bill 3 - Reducing Barriers to State Employment Act of 2023

- Requires state agencies to re-assess what qualifications are needed for employment and reduce those requirements, where able, to make these roles more accessible. Where practicable, agencies should reduce the number of positions that require a 4-year degree.
- *Status: Awaiting a vote on House Floor*

Senate Bill 45 -Seizure Action Plans in Elementary and Secondary Schools

- Provides a process in which a parent or guardian of a student being treated for epilepsy, or a seizure disorder can seek support and services for the student's seizures while at their public elementary or secondary school.
- The Department of Education must develop a model seizure action plan form and guidelines for training school nurses and employees, which may include local health department staff assigned to the school.
- *Status: Awaiting a vote in House Committee*

Senate Bill 46 - Prenatal Testing Requirements

- Requires that pregnant women receive HIV and syphilis tests at the first prenatal visit, 28-32 weeks gestation, and upon delivery.
- *Status: Awaiting a vote on House Floor*

Senate Bill 47 - Vaping Smokefree Air Act

- Updates the Smokefree Air Act to prohibit vaping in any location where traditional tobacco smoking is currently prohibited.
- *Status: Awaiting a vote in House Committee*

Senate Bill 55 - Prohibition on Business Regulations for Owners <18

- Prohibits the regulation of businesses of persons under 18 years old.
- Applies to businesses solely operated by someone <18 years of age that are located on a private property and generate gross receipts of \$5,000 or less in a calendar year, and sells no consumable good, prepackaged foods, lemonade, or other non-potentially hazardous nonalcoholic beverages.
- *Status: Awaiting a vote in House Committee*

Senate Bill 64 - Issuance of Original Birth Certificate Following Adoption

- Provides for the issuance of a copy of the original birth certificate to certain adult persons who were adopted. Currently this is only available through a court-order process.
- This will require some updates within our vital records office to facilitate fulfillment of these requests.
- *Status: Awaiting a vote in House Committee*

Senate Bill 107 - Izzy's Law

- Directs DPH to develop and make available for download from its website a model aquatic safety plan based on national standards for private swim instructors – no later than January 1, 2024
- Permits DPH to partner with external organizations recognized as an authority in aquatic safety to assist in the development, annual review, and any necessary revision of the model aquatic safety plan.
- *Status: Awaiting a vote in House Committee*

Senate Bill 177 - Georgia Food Insecurity Eradication Act

- Establishes the Georgia Food Security Advisory Council within the Department of Agriculture—DPH would have a seat on this council.
- The council will recommend regulatory solutions to the WIC Program and recommend policies that increase collaboration between the state and private entities seeking to end food insecurity.
- *Status: Awaiting a vote in House Committee*

Senate Bill 197 - Health Care Practitioners Truth and Transparency Act

- Prohibits deceptive or misleading terms by health care practitioners in advertisements and representations.
- In clinical settings advanced practice registered nurses and physician assistants with doctorate degrees must specify their education and inform patients that he/she is not a physician.
- *Status: Awaiting a vote in House Committee*

Questions: Dr. Mercer asked which one of those bills is more likely to pass. Megan Andrews reported that it is possible that the Vaping Smokefree Air Act and the Prenatal Syphilis Testing Requirements would pass, but it is exceedingly difficult to predict what could happen during the session.

Dr. Curran commented that it is terrific that the pharmaceutical vaccine issue has been added, that was crucial during Covid and similar with HIV and syphilis testing. Also, he had three questions: What is the definition of low THC cannabis oil? Second, assuming that glucagon is used for severe hypoglycemia with insulin, how do you decide who needs it? And third, how do you feel about this workforce education reduction?

Xavier Crocket answered that low THC oil is currently twenty fluid ounces or less at 5% THC. Regarding the glucagon prescription, Megan Andrews explained that this legislation would follow a student's individual diabetes action plan (from a primary care physician) that parents submit to the school. Currently the school action plan has the language embedded "to administer medication if necessary." Regarding the last question about workforce

education, it is a bill across all state agencies that would be reviewed by the state personnel board and the department of administrative services.

Dr. Curran expressed his concern about the possibility of decreasing requirements for public health jobs. While this could provide opportunities for some individuals, the general public's perception of government agencies is not that they are filled with overqualified people.

- C. Georgia Dementia/Alzheimer's Disease Program - Xavier Crockett, M.S./ Elizabeth Head, M.P.H.

Dementia and Alzheimer's Disease in Georgia (2018)

- 1.4M people over 65 years old in Georgia are currently living with dementia.
- 385K with self-reported cognitive impairment and 80% have not yet been evaluated.
- There is a 6-year average delay in memory-loss diagnosis.

(BOLD GRANT) Public health approach to expand access in rural GA.

- Dementia risk reduction
- Early detection
- Dementia caregiving
- Educating professionals

Implementing CDC Road Map Actions - Incorporating Brain Health into other outreach
Rural Outreach – Partnership with UGA

Stakeholder mapping

- Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes (OLLIs)
- Archway Partnership
- Mobilizing Partnerships

Telehealth/tablet partnership

Public Health & Georgia Memory Net (GMN)

Telehealth/ tablet partnership

The local health department acts as a physical location.

Two sites: Emmanuel County Health Department and Dooly County Health

Faith-based program efforts - Alter

African American Faith-based outreach

Dementia-Friendly status

Risk reduction and brain health messaging

Developing Professionals in Training

Public Health and related professions – curricula

Needs Assessment

Questions:

Dr. Shin asked if there is going to be a program for a more robust screening. Mr. Crockett explained that there is a telehealth program in the two pilot counties where patients can be referred to the Health Department. These types of screening are not mandatory.

Dr. Curran congratulated the program for this initiative, and asked how the program would

quantify under evaluated population in the future; and considering that health care for the elderly is variable and often inadequate, what are the following steps after screening, for people who need medical care and help and are uninsured or are not eligible for Medicaid.

Ms. Head responded that Georgia has a “no wrong door” approach, where DPH wants medical professionals to be knowledgeable about the aging resources available in their area; and there are multiple points of entry for referral and care. The workflow for the aging network has specific links between primary care physicians, the federally qualified health centers, and the community.

Dr. Toomey asked how old a person should be to receive services. Ms. Head responded that our aging services are for adults 40-45 if they have a disability, and all the way up the aging process. The program has service navigators specifically trained to contact the resources. Mr. Crockett added that after the screening, we have a referral process, where the treatment plan and assessment goes back to the PCP. If the patient does not have a PCP, we are working with GA Memory for referrals.

D. Environmental Health updates. - Galan Baxter, R.E.H.S.

Environmental Health Updates - Environmental Health Workforce

State office - 30 employees	Foodservice establishments - 34K
District EH directors -18	Tourist accommodations - 3K
Regional lead/chemical hazards staff - 7	Public swimming pools - 9K
District lead coordinators - 12	Body art facilities – current number unknown
County environmental health specialists - 504	Septic permits issued since March 2022 - 32K.
Vacant EHS positions - 55	

Environmental Health Organizational Structure - Shared Responsibilities

State Office Program responsibilities

- Rule development and implementation
- Rule interpretation
- Technical assistance
- Training
- Program advocate with leadership & policy makers/legislators

EH District Director responsibilities.

- Assist in rule development and implementation.
- Supervise county lead environmental health specialists.
- Provide technical assistance to the county EHS, industry, and the public.
- Advise the county boards of health and district health director.
- Report EH activities to the State

County Environmental Health Specialist responsibilities

- Permitting, inspecting, assessing, educating, and enforcing rules and regulations
- Feedback

Environmental Health Mandates

- County Board of Health: O.C.G.A. 31-3

- o Inspections
 - o Enforcement
 - o Rules and Regulations
- Food Service Establishments: O.C.G.A. 26-2-373
- Public Swimming Pools: O.C.G.A. 31-45
- Tourist Accommodations: O.C.G.A. 31-28
- On-Site Sewage Management: O.C.G.A. 31-2A-11, 31-3-5(b)
- Portable Sanitation: O.C.G.A. 31-2A-4(3)
- Non-Public Water Supply: O.C.G.A. 12-5-134
- Rabies Control: O.C.G.A. 31-19
- Body Art: O.C.G.A. 31-40
- Tanning Facilities: O.C.G.A. 31-38
- Emergency Preparedness: O.C.G.A. 31-2A-4(9); 31-12-1.1
 - o EH Emergency Prep
 - o Mass Fatality Coordination
- Control of Mass Gathering: O.C.G.A. 31-27
- Surveillance and Response: O.C.G.A. 31-2A-(1) (2)
 - o Mosquito Surveillance
 - o Public Health Pest Surveillance
 - o Response
- Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program: O.C.G.A. 31-41-10
- Healthy Homes Program
 - o Indoor Air: O.C.G.A. 31-12A "Smokefree Air Act"
 - o Asthma
- Chemical Hazards Program: O.C.G.A. 31-12
 - o Health Impact Assessment
 - o Brownsfield Grant

Body Art Program - The program prevents illness and injury associated with unsanitary conditions in parlors by regulation and inspection.

Body Art Program Timeline

- **1994-2012** few counties had local Board of Health rules for tattoo studios.
- **2012-2018** counties began adopting local BOH rules for tattoo and body art.
- **2019** legislation passed to transition body art into a state program and promulgate Rules and Regulations
- **2020** COVID-19 delay.
- **2021** Legislative session increased funds for body art licensure
- **2022** hired state office staff to assist with the implementation of the program and Rules and Regulations
- **2023** rules are finalized and ready to begin implementation over the next 12-18 months.
- State rules & regulations provide opportunity for standardized language for all Boards of Health
 - o Facilities permitted & inspected by local BOH
 - o Artists licensed by State Office
 - o Inclusive to: Microblading, Piercing, Tattooing

Dr. Curran and Mr. Walker commended the excellent job of Environmental Health Services. Mr. Walker asked what microblading is. In an abbreviated explanation, microblading is tattooing eyebrows. A previous law did not allow tattoos within one inch of the eye and required medical supervision.

- E. Vaccination for adults 50+ Nancy Nydam/Alex Millman, M.D.
Nancy Nydam presented a copy of the handout of updated vaccines for adults 50+ which includes COVID vaccine, and it is available on the DPH website. We are currently working on another handout about vaccines for pregnant women that will protect the mother and baby.

Vaccination for adults 50+

<https://dph.georgia.gov/immunizations/adult-immunizations>

- Shingles vaccine
- Pneumococcal vaccine
- Flu vaccine
- Tdap vaccine
- Td or Tdap buster every 10 years
- Covid-19 vaccine and buster
- Hepatitis A vaccine
- Hepatitis B vaccine

Dr. Cheek thanked the program for creating this handout, which is especially useful.

- F. Closing Remarks - Commissioner Kathleen E. Toomey, M.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner Toomey thanked Dr. Cheek for the suggestion to create a handout for children's vaccination to be shared with the OBYN society and pediatricians. Also, she is happy to announce that our reporting numbers for COVID, influenza, RSV and monkeypox are good, and hopefully remain that way. Just a last reminder that we are in flu season, and it is never too late to get a flu vaccine.

- V. Board Comment
There are no more comments from the Board at this time.

- VI. Adjournment:
There being no further business to be brought before the board, Dr. Curran motioned for adjournment of the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Dr. Curran adjourned the meeting at 2:29 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for May 9, 2023.

THESE MINUTES ARE HEREBY APPROVED AND ADOPTED THIS THE 14th OF MARCH 2023.



James Curran, M.D., M.P.H., Chair



Mitch Rodriguez, M.D.

Official Attachments:

1. List of Attendees
2. Agenda

March 14, 2023
Board of Public Health Meeting Attendees

Board Members

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Attendees

Public virtual meeting.