

**MINUTES OF THE
BOARD OF PUBLIC HEALTH MEETING
October 8, 2019**

Members Present:

James Curran, M.D., M.P.H., Chair
Misael Rodriguez, M.D., Secretary
Tamica Valliere-White, M.D., F.A.C.S
Cynthia A. Mercer, M.D.
Kathryn Cheek, M.D., F.A.A.P.
Major General Thomas M. Carden, Jr.
Phillip L. Williams, Ph.D.
Sangmin Ryan Shin, M.D., M.A., F.A.A.O.S.

Members Absent:

John Hauptert, F.A.C.H.E., Vice Chair

The Board of Public Health held its monthly board meeting October 8, 2019, at 2 Peachtree Street Northwest, Atlanta, Georgia, 30303. The meeting was held in the 5th Floor Board Room of the Georgia Department of Community Health. An agenda and a list of attendees are attached hereto and made official parts of these minutes.

I. Call to Order and Roll Call:

The meeting was called to order at 12:58 p.m. by Dr. Curran, following a roll call by Dr. Rodriguez. The following member was absent, Mr. Hauptert.

II. Approval/Adoption of Minutes:

Dr. Curran presented the minutes of the September 10, 2019, meeting for discussion and approval. There was no discussion. The minutes passed unanimously.

III. Commissioner's Report:

Commissioner's Report by Commissioner Kathleen E. Toomey, M.D., M.P.H.

Commissioner Toomey opened by thanking Dr. Taylor for his upcoming presentation saying it is important to recognize that the districts provide leadership at the county level. Dr. Toomey shared she had met with Governor Kemp to update him on the vaping situation in Georgia and will continue to update him and BOPH as new information about the lung injuries becomes available. Dr. Toomey presented the strategic plan for the Department of Public Health (DPH). She noted the plan is still a work in progress and this is not the final draft. She noted the priority areas for DPH were determined through program reviews, data and surveillance and that they were in line with the Governor's priorities for the state.

HIV is a DPH priority based on the growing number of new cases in the state. HIV is also a priority for the Governor, and Georgia is part of the president's End the Epidemic initiative.

Georgia has among the highest infant mortality rates in the country, and the highest maternal mortality in the country. These statistics illustrate the need for partnerships, particularly in areas of Georgia where access to care is a problem.

The fact that the U.S. nearly lost its measles elimination status should serve as a wake-up call that we need to reinforce and educate Georgians about the importance of immunization across the lifespan. That includes childhood immunization, flu immunization and immunizations for women's care and perinatal health.

In closing, Dr. Toomey stated that telehealth could and should be utilized to increase access to PrEP, HIV services and potentially prenatal care.

IV. New Business:

A. Epidemiology Updates- Cherie L. Drenzek, D.V.M., M.S.

A total of 700 hepatitis A cases have been identified. 67 % of the cases are male, and 77% of the cases are Caucasian. There have been seven deaths associated with the outbreak. Most cases have been reported in Rome, Augusta and Atlanta. DPH recently collaborated with Grindr to communicate the importance of getting vaccinated and where they can go for vaccinations. The overall response strategy is to target high-risk populations and to vaccinate.

B. Local Public Health Perspective on Hepatitis A Outbreak- Zachary Taylor, M.D., M.S.

The Dalton Health District has begun hepatitis A outreach in jails, with homeless persons and the substance abuse population. Zachary Taylor, M.D., district health director, stated that most cases occur in drug users or their contacts, incarcerated and homeless individuals. Environmental health staff have visited food service establishments and have offered vaccinations to the food handlers. Posters on hand-washing and reporting procedures have also been placed in the establishments.

C. Babies Can't Wait- Lisa Pennington, M.S., M.A., L.P.C.

Babies Can't Wait guarantees all eligible children ages birth to 36 months, regardless of their disability, to have access to services that will enhance their development. Once a child is determined eligible, the program works with the family and development team to create a treatment plan which is reviewed every six months. The goal of the program is to minimize special education services by the time the child enters school, and to help the child develop to their full potential. There are two ways children can be determined eligible: if the child has a diagnosed medical condition, and if the child has a developmental delay in at least one area of development or two moderate delays.

V. Board Comments


Dr. Rodriguez asked since Florida has a high percentage of patients with hepatitis A, why hasn't this occurred on the southern part of the state? Dr. Drenzek responded that the Florida outbreak is primarily concentrated across the middle of the state. So, the northern border of Florida is not as high a risk, but we have to keep a close eye on it.

Dr. Curran wanted to know what is it about drug use that spreads hepatitis A? There is no particular drug, but it's the general environment and hygiene of the user, Dr. Taylor stated.


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 2:10 p.m.

THESE MINUTES ARE HEREBY APPROVED AND ADOPTED THIS THE 12th DAY OF NOVEMBER 2019.



James Curran, M.D.
Chair



Misael Rodriguez, M.D.
Secretary

Official Attachments:

1. List of Attendees
2. Agenda

October 8, 2019

Board of Public Health Meeting Attendees

Board Members

James Curran, M.D., M.P.H., Chair
Cynthia A. Mercer, M.D.
Phillip L. Williams, Ph.D.
Major General Thomas M. Carden, Jr.
Ryan Shin, M.D.
Kathryn K. Cheek, M.D., F.A.A.P.
Tamica White, M.D.
Misael Rodriguez, M.D.- Secretary

Guest Attendees

Rebecca Hillman, GAA
Helen Float, Nelson Mullins
Noreen Dahill, GA AAP
Cathalene Teahan, GAC
Zephrea Kilgore, GCW
Hillary Thrower, Emory

Department of Public Health Attendees

Zachary Taylor	Chris Rustin
Fanny Vazquez	Linda Tran
Meshell McCloud	Sheila Lovett
Lisa Pennington	Sean Mack
Yvette Daniels	Valerie Newton-Lamb
Judith Kerr	Rosalyn Bacon
Shelena King	Angelica McGrier
Jeannie Galloway	
Mira Colten	
Paula Brown	
Adam Barefoot	
Anthony McGaughey	
Kristin Miller	
Forrest Tennant	