

**MINUTES**  
**HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HHSAC)**  
**Thursday, March 11, 2021**  
**Virtual Teams Meeting / Itasca Resource Center / Room 122**

<b>Members Present:</b>	<b>Renee Bymark</b>	<b>Dave Holmbeck</b>
	<b>Cheryl Lemler</b>	<b>Chris Jenkins</b>
	<b>Dorothy Abrahamson</b>	<b>Dan Seward</b>
	<b>Craig Menozzi</b>	<b>Daniel Miesle</b>
	<b>Ben Denucci</b>	<b>Lloyd Adams</b>
	<b>Lester Kachinske</b>	

<b>Members Absent:</b>	<b>Anne Kruger</b>	<b>Melissa Weidendorf - E</b>
	<b>Crystal Terveer</b>	<b>Brandi Worrath</b>
	<b>Sarah Anderson - E</b>	<b>Angela Baratto</b>

<b>Others Present:</b>	<b>Eric Villeneuve</b>	<b>Kelly Chandler</b>
	<b>Brenda Oberg</b>	

**Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Lester Kachinske at 12:15 pm.

**Approval of January 14, 2021 Minutes:**

A motion was made by Cheryl Lemler and seconded by Dave Holmbeck to approve the January 14, 2021 minutes. Motion carried.

**Additions/Corrections to Agenda:**

There were no additions or corrections to the Agenda.

**Eric Villeneuve, Director:**

**Public Health Update:** Kelly Chandler, Public Health Division Manager, updated the group on Coronavirus/COVID-19. The first case in Minnesota was on March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020, and in Itasca County on March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020. This past week in Itasca County, there has been 28 positive cases and 59 in the last two weeks. The 14-day case rate per 10,000 residents is down to 14, as cases continue to decline so does the case rate. This is the lowest number we've seen since last August. All schools, except the charter school, are in person for all grades. Public Health has been able to vaccinate the school staff, that have opted for the vaccination, and the schools will be looking at different quarantine guidelines because they'll be fully vaccinated. Today in Minnesota and Itasca County, 70% of the 65+ population have received their first dose of the Covid vaccine. This will allow for shifting to different priority groups for the vaccines. Itasca County is making great progress with the vaccines, 24.8% of our adults have started the series and about half of them have completed the series. We are at 49 Covid deaths in Itasca County and a few more

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hospitalizations but very minimal compared to what we saw last fall. Grand Itasca received 250 doses of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, and administered at a vaccination clinic last weekend to the 65+ population. As of this time, Public Health has not received a supply of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. If you have any questions on Covid, please feel free to reach out to the Covid Call Line @ 218-327-6784.

**IMCare Update:**

Eric provided an update from Sarah, stating IMCare had a good 2020 fiscal year. They are in amidst of their 2020 audits and reporting, so it is not finalized yet, but the projected gain looks good. DHS has issued the metro procurement in 2021 for contract year 2022. In 2022 they'll release the procurement for greater MN for contract year 2023, so we are reviewing the metro procurement closely to ensure that we are adequately prepared to respond when that does come out. IMCare is also continuing to monitor the long term Covid impacts, especially due to members not seeking routine care and doctor visits during this pandemic.

**Legislative Update:**

Eric included out a handout on 2021 Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) Federal Update and Minnesota Association of County Social Service Administrators (MACSSA) Legislative Update in the agenda packet.

Minnesota Association of County Social Service Administrators (MACSSA) Legislative Update highlighting a couple bills, the first doses of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine were administered in the state this week. Senate File 1324 priority bill to make permanent some of the program modifications authorized as human services waivers during the pandemic. Senate File 1160 which is a comprehensive telehealth bill that modifies coverage for services and consultations delivered through telehealth under private and public health care coverage. Senator Rosen walked through the bill and underlined the importance of this bill particularly for greater Minnesota and noted that telehealth is not meant to supplant care but rather supplement it.

Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) Federal Update highlighting the federal relief package that was passed today. Counties are eligible to receive another allocation of Covid funding. The time frame will be more generous, giving a deadline of December 31, 2024. The replacement of reduction of revenue under certain circumstances is being allowed in this allocation, more information to come on this.

Ben reiterated Eric's legislative update pertaining to the Federal Relief Package and the new allocation coming our way, the County Board wants to be very thoughtful on how we invest those funds and do the greatest good. Ben recognized HHS Accounting for receiving a letter of accommodation from Commissioner Harpstead for the great job they've done meeting the requirements laid out for fiscal reporting this year.

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**HHSAC Subcommittee Reports:**

**AMHAC:** Dan updated that they have not been able to meet in a year, due to the YMCA being closed to open meetings. The county coordinator, Craig Pierce, contacted Dan suggesting they reach out Keisler house to utilize their meeting space. Dan connected with Keisler House and the Advisory Committee's first meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 6<sup>th</sup> at Noon. The committee completed an electronic report card for the First Call for Help organization. At the next meeting, the committee will be looking into initiating an infomercial for the 211 First Call website and most importantly looking at recommendations to the county commissioners for mental health issues in our county. If anyone has any suggestions for recommendations, please contact Dan via email at [dk1seward@yahoo.com](mailto:dk1seward@yahoo.com).

**ICCOA:**

Eric provided an update from Lloyd. Lloyd updated the Committee on Aging hasn't met since last March, they did send out a survey to see how many senior clubs will continue to meet with Committee on Aging once restrictions are lifted and all clubs want to continue. With regard to Tax Aid Program, they have been overwhelmed with phone calls and are trying to get the call list down. With the restrictions put on the program, they will not be able to do the same numbers as in the past. They do have a few appointment vacancies left and are filling those. If the tax season is extended that would help with more clients, so far, no word on that extension. Since our meeting, it has been announced that the federal tax filing is extended until May 17<sup>th</sup>, at this time the state tax deadline stayed as April 15<sup>th</sup>. Originally, they were going to do the no contact method where taxpayer scan their documents from home into a secure scanner, but it was found that many people do not have computers, scanners, or technical background for this. Therefore, Mike and Lloyd volunteered to do the low contact method, scheduling appointments, and scanning their documents into a secure server. It has been a lot more work this year due to the process and restrictions put on the tax preparer, but we have been able to help a lot of people this year. We have changed our voicemail to state, "If you have not heard back from us by Mid-March, please find another method of doing 2020 taxes".

**Provider Updates:**

**Northland Counseling** – Northland received a grant through SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services) to transition over to be a CCBHC (Certified Community Behavioral Health Center), they are almost completing their first year working under this grant. The CCBHC operates as a coordination of care across primary care and mental health services and substance abuse services and works to coordinate care for everything that somebody might need. Another project update is

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on the Aurora Heights project located on 4<sup>th</sup> Street behind the YMCA. They have 14 tenants that will be moving into that apartment complex when that project is done and those units are for long term homeless, but all together there will be 56 units between the apartment building and town homes that will be developed on that site, and they expect tenants to be able to move in in December of this year. Northland will continue to provide housing services for long term homeless at this site and will have some office space in the building, but there will not be services provided there.

**Elder Circle** – Renee stated they are still closed to the public but providing all their services. As of April 1<sup>st</sup>, they will be opening up the Adult Day to a larger cohort, therefore they will be able to serve more people in person. ElderCircle worked with Public Health to get participants and caregivers vaccinated, therefore feeling confident to increase the size of their groups for that service. ElderCircle is partnering with the Reif and offering a monthly virtual Bingo session, the winners are put into a drawing each week, and names are drawn, and gift cards are mailed out. They are looking for additional items to offer to help combat the social isolation for people that are at home. ElderCircle received a 3-year grant from the Northland Foundation and have hired a resource navigator that will be working on a universal referral process for aging services. They currently have about 30 services signed up and are working through all the aging providers. They are currently using a referral form and looking for a web-based HIPAA compliance platform in the future. Kelly thanked Renee and her team for helping getting people signed up for vaccines and the help has been much appreciated.

**First Call for Help** – No update provided.

**Other:**

Eric highlighted that all schools are back in session and there was a board update that you can catch on ICTV. There is some good information from the Superintendent's from ISD 317 and ISD 318, as well as the Grand Rapids High School principal. It has not been ideal for schools and they've had to go through several models, but they are all open and in person and hope to stay that way through the end of the year.

The next meeting is May 13, 2021.

**Adjournment:**

There being no further business to come before the Advisory Committee, Lester Kachinske adjourned the meeting at 12:58pm.