

MINUTES
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HHSAC)
Thursday, September 9, 2021
Virtual Teams Meeting / Itasca Resource Center / Room 122

Members Present:	Renee Bymark Angela Baratto Daniel Miesle Dave Holmbeck Crystal Terveer Lloyd Adams	Sarah Anderson Dorothy Abrahamson Lester Kachinske Ben Denucci Craig Menozzi
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Members Absent:	Melissa Weidendorf Chris Jenkins Dan Seward - E	Brandi Worrath Cheryl Lemler - E Kelly Chandler
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Others Present:	Eric Villeneuve Brenda Oberg	Jayme Smith
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Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order Chair Lloyd Adams at 12:15 pm.

Approval of May 13, 2021 Minutes:

A motion was made by Lester Kachinske and seconded by Dan Miesle to approve the May 13, 2021 minutes. Motion carried.

Additions/Corrections to Agenda:

There was an addition to the agenda, a resignation from Melissa Wiedendorf. This will be added under the Director update as item 2.D.

Eric Villeneuve, Director:

Public Health Update: Jayme Smith, Public Health staff, updated the group on Coronavirus/COVID-19. Itasca County cumulatively has 5013 cases, 76 newly identified positives in the past 7 days, 175 in the last 14 days. Testing and positives were down over the holiday weekend. The 14-day case rate per 10,000 as of 09/05/21 is at 41. There are 70 total confirmed COVID deaths. Itasca County in entirety by all vaccinators receiving dose 1 is at 22,822, 21,827 have completed the series. The 65+ population is 87% receiving dose 1, the 16+ population is at 60%, and the 12+ is at 58%. The percentage of total population receiving dose 1 (including those who are ineligible because of age) is at 50%. Itasca County Public Health has given 7,121 doses, this includes dose 1's and 2's. Public Health is waiting on guidance from Minnesota Dept of Health regarding

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offering booster doses of Moderna. Public Health also received a small allotment of Johnson & Johnson for ages 18 and older and are still taking requests for homebound or otherwise persons with barriers for vaccination and are coordinating access to vaccinations. On 8-23-2021, Pfizer received full FDA approval for their COVID vaccine for those who are 16 and older. The marketed name will be Comirnaty (koe-mir'-na-tee) Pfizer remains under Emergency Use Authorization for ages 12-15. Pfizer vaccinations are available for those ages 12 and older at Essentia Health, Grand Itasca Clinic and Hospital, Walmart by appointment and Thrifty White North by appointment. Moderna vaccinations for ages 18 and older are available at Scenic Rivers clinics, Thrifty White North, Walmart and Walgreens. Delta is the active variant in Itasca currently. For viruses to mutate, a host is needed. The more spread we have of the virus, the more mutations will occur. Vaccines remain effective against the variants in preventing severe illness, hospitalization, and death. In Itasca, approximately 1/2 of 1% of our fully vaccinated residents have tested positive for COVID (0.58%). Of those, only 9 were hospitalized, 2 in ICU – both elderly males. Of those, Zero (0) have died. Vaccines remain extremely effective in preventing the spread of COVID and severe illness, hospitalization, and death. The CDC recommends masking in public indoor spaces regardless of vaccine status in areas of substantial or high community level transmission, Itasca County remains in the high community transmission category. Questions related to COVID or vaccines, if someone is homebound or needing access to vaccines, please call the Itasca County Public Health COVID message line at 218-327-6784 and leave your information for a return call. If you have an organization or group that would like to host a vaccination clinic, please contact Public Health.

COVID-19 testing for Riverfest happening today at KAXE tent 10am-2pm. Public Health was donated testing supplies for this event.

Public Health has completed Community Readiness Assessment for suicide prevention. Public Health will be working collaboratively with First Call for Help and other community organizations to help more suicide prevention forward.

IMCare Update:

IMCare underwent a Minnesota Department of Health audit earlier this year, this audit reviews all of IMCare's policies, case files, procedures, and reports, submitting thousands of documents and hundreds of files and for the first time received no findings in the audit. This was a very positive outcome that shows all the hard work and is very rewarding for staff. IMCare is reviewing legislative changes and working on how to implement these changes with DHS contracting. IMCare is currently in contract negotiations for 2022 and also working on their budget with the county board.

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There have been several recent staffing changes, a new Medical Director, Dr. Jay Huber, a new dental director Dr. Rachel Buchert, and Celeste Tarbuck, Claims Supervisor, is retiring the end of the year. Along with some other staff shuffling to various positions within the HHS agency and also HHS agency staff moving to IMCare.

Resignation of Melissa Weidendorf:

Melissa Weidendorf is no longer a District 3 resident and submitted her resignation. A motion was made by Ben Denucci and seconded by Sarah Anderson to accept the resignation of Melissa Weidendorf from the HHS Advisory Committee. Motion carried

Legislative Update:

Eric updated that the opioid settlement was reached this summer. Minnesota is estimated to receive \$300 million over the course of multiple years, with a portion of funds specifically dedicated to local governments. In September, AMC (Association of Minnesota Counties) will be working to discuss their role and how they can help counties to use these settlement funds proactively at the local level. Eric reviewed the Legislative Platform Development Process handout for the 2022 legislative sessions. The update from the Association of Minnesota Counties reviewed the 2021 priorities stating the COVID-19 response with local public health, Health and Human Service Waivers, and the substance use disorder billing error. Lastly, Eric reviewed the 2021 Health and Human Services legislative priorities that were submitted to the county board. Those being the COVID-19 response, using local public health as a resource to get out the vaccine, allowance for some of the temporary waivers that have been in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic to become permanent, Anoka Regional Treatment Center cost shift to counties, appropriate reimbursement on ICWA (Indian Child Welfare Act) funding, County Based Purchasing (CBP) clarification that counties are allowed to choose a CBP, and hold counties harmless for the underbilling by DHS (Department of Human Services) to counties on the county share of Substance Use Disorder Institutes of Mental Disease Payments.

HHSAC Subcommittee Reports:

AMHAC: Dan was unable to attend but did email Brenda an update to share. The Local Advisory Council held its last meeting on August 3rd. Luke St. Germain was the invited speaker. He spoke on veteran status in our county and particularly on how they can better receive services. He pointed out that veterans are often very independent minded and a large percentage of them do not seek the full complement of services they are entitled to. Luke urged the council to reach out to any family or friends who might be veterans and encourage them to investigate the possible services the VA may

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be able to help them with. Veteran screening forms were made available and referred to during the meeting. The remainder of the meeting consisted of usual council business. The board chair urged members to look for any gaps in services over the course of the next month and bring these concerns to the next meeting.

ICCOA: The committee had not met since February of 2020, yesterday was the first meeting, allowing seniors to gather and visit. Lloyd updated on tax season, last year was handled a bit differently, the space at the airport is no longer available so they did intake through the United Methodist church. They normally serve around 1100 clients, but due to COVID and restrictions they were only able to serve 400 clients. They are still waiting on direction from AARP on how this year will be handled. They are hoping to do it by appointment and at the church again.

Provider Updates:

Northland Counseling – Angie provided an update for Northland Counseling. She stated their greatest struggle has been staffing. They had to close their children shelter down for a short time, and then with recruiting, hiring, training, it takes time to get staff ready but as of yesterday they were finally able to reopen the children shelter with 2 clients and 2 more coming in the near future. If staffing issues continue, they may need to close that program down. Northland is also struggling with staff getting trained in and then moving on to independent practices. They also had to close one of their adult chemical dependency centers in I 'Falls due to staffing. They are hopeful with the end of unemployment benefits people will be returning to the workforce and it will bring in some qualified candidates for their positions.

Elder Circle – Renee stated ElderCircle is still closed to the public but are continuing to serve people. They plan to keep their office closed until 2022. On August 12th there was a Senior Day Pavilion luncheon, drive thru style serving about 300 people. They were given bags with a lot of aging service information, providers, and resources. ElderCircle is starting a license with Aunt Bertha, and our platform is called All About Aging and will be utilized by aging service providers. Providers will be able to search this platform for services and put in a referral. Some agencies are signing a memorandum of agreement, which means they will turn around within 48 hours and reach out to that client. All ElderCircle services have continued despite the pandemic. The health and wellness classes and living well classes are being offered virtually and some in person. There is a library of about 30 iPads that are available to be signed out to help with technology barriers. ElderCircle hired an outreach coordinator, she will be working on activities focusing mostly on older adults. There will be calendar going out monthly with these activities. She is also working with Committee on Agency senior groups.

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First Call for Help – Crystal stated they have been very busy. Suicide calls are up and have been increasing since COVID. They continue to try to keep enough staff available on the phones. They are taking more contracts on for counties for dispatching. It has been a little over a year now that they started the National Suicide Lines for 12 Minnesota counties. Expansion is happening due to call centers closing and staffing is definitely becoming an issue.

Other:

Ben Denucci stated he recently attended the Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) board of directions meeting and the opioid issue came up. Other counties in other states are getting 80-85% of the opioid settlement and AMC will continue to work with and be in close communication with the Minnesota Attorney General's office and law firms representing counties as details of the settlement are finalized.

The next meeting is Thursday, November 4th with both in-person and virtual options available. This meeting will be held on the 1st Thursday of the month instead of the 2nd Thursday due to the Veterans Day holiday.

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before the Advisory Committee, a motion was made by Lester Kachinske seconded by Dan Miesle to adjourn the meeting at 1:05pm. Motion passed.