

Public Health Advisory Council (PHAC)

Meeting Minutes

September 10, 2019



ATTENDING: Ann Marie Paulsen, David Eppelsheimer, Dick Stenson, Larry Boxman, Larysa Thomas, Nicole Bowles, Pam Treece, Rachel Schutz, Robin Bousquet, Tom Engle, Andrea Lara Silva, Shabba Woodley, Hemi Pariyani

ABSENT: Jennifer McElravey, Leticia Vitela, Karen Reynolds, Eileen Derr

STAFF: Tricia Mortell, Alex Coleman, Amaralis Perez

GUESTS: Alex Vidal, Chris Keating, Erin Parrish

Welcome

Alex Coleman called the meeting to order with introductions and an ice breaker.

PHAC Updates

- The Oregon Public Health association conference is coming up this month.
- The new proposed bylaws and the 6 new members were presented to the commissioners and voting will take place Tuesday, September 24, 2019. PHAC has demonstrated leadership for other advisory councils with their focus on diversity, equity and inclusion in their bylaws.
- Ann Marie and Larysa provided public comment at the BOC meeting on September 10th where the commissioners passed the access to care resolution in response to several changes to federal rules that will impact access and service delivery for critical programs.
- Discussed changes to the federal rules around Title X and Oregon's decision to withdraw from the program.
- SNAP eligibility is recommending asset testing. For example, if you have a car you may have to sale it. Washington County Public Health don't approve those changes, we support advocacy level and we will inform the public what is true and not true.
- A call to action will be sent later with information on how to provide public comment on the proposed rule changes to SNAP. The period for public comment is open until the 23rd of September. Everyone is encouraged to provide comment.

Approve August Meeting Minutes

August meeting minutes needs clarity on who 10 million dollars are for and what are Virginia Garcia patients are being tested for.

- Larry Boxman made the first motion to approve August meeting minutes and Robin Bousquet send the motion. All in favor, no opposition and the motion passed.

PHAC Leadership

PHAC members decided to vote for a new vice chair after the new 6 members have been voted in by the Commissioners. An email for a new vice chair will be sent out next week.

PH in Action

Chris Keating presented on a project that had been done to address infection control related to flu and flu like illness in long term care facilities (LTCF). The impact of influenza in Washington County carries a high burden among the elderly and those in long term care facilities. Two staff from the Disease Control and Prevention (DCAP) program were awarded a grant to improve the vaccine rates among staff working in LTCF.

Staff worked with two facilities: Maryville and Elite Care at Fanno Creek. They did presentations to the staff on vaccination rates and barriers. Presentations were done in English and Spanish. Purchase promotional items including 4 fully stocked isolation carts. They also created a toolkit which could be distributed to facilities. The toolkit contains links to educational materials and resources, flu shot campaign materials and information on reporting and surveillance. There is also information on how to order and store vaccines. They are currently getting feedback on the toolkit and working with the State and other partners to distribute.

Feedback and questions from PHAC:

- What is the threshold for something to be considered an outbreak?
- Are there any requirements in facilities for staff to be vaccinated?
 - o Each facility has their own policy on vaccinating staff
 - o Issues are with high turnover rates among floor staff
- Are there ways for the county to require facilities to report their staff vaccination rates? If the information is public can we hold facilities more accountable?
- What is the cost to a facility when there is an outbreak?
- Are there ways to help facilities incentivize getting vaccinated?

STI and Harm Reduction Update

Chris Keating talked about the rising rates of STIs in Washington County. HIV, gonorrhea, chlamydia, and syphilis are required to be reported by the State. Providers and lab are required to report a positive test within 24 hours. DIS (Disease intervention specialist) assist with treatment access; conduct interview with patients to determine risk factors, provide counseling, conduct field visits, provide HIV+ case management, and work with HIV+ clients not engaged in care.

Gonorrhea trend, it keeps increasing. This is concerning since rectal GC/CT, especially among men who have sex with men (MSM) greatly increases the chance of HIV infection.

Syphilis is also continuing to rise. Syphilis is particularly concerning since it can cause complications if left untreated, including neurological issues and damage to organs. We have also seen a 600% in early syphilis among women which has led to an increase in

the number of congenital syphilis cases seen. We now see 2-3 congenital syphilis cases a year in the County. Congenital syphilis can cause severe complications during and after pregnancy.

Why the rise in rates – STI programs have been underfunded for years at the national, state and local levels. People do have more sex partners and social media and hook up apps allow for more anonymous sex. Some of the increase is also due to better testing methods and better access to testing and treatment. There are still populations where more work is needed including among persons who inject drugs. Other barriers include lack of comprehensive sex education in schools and providers not taking accurate sexually histories in order to capture risk factors.

Overall the rates of HIV have remained steady in Washington County, however we are starting to see a slight increase particularly among certain populations. The biggest issue we're seeing is that many of the new cases are being diagnosed at a later stage which means they've had the infection for several years before being tested.

Feedback and questions from PHAC:

- Are there any community based sexual health programs for youth in the county?
- Why is there a concern about HIV in folks using meth as compared to opiates?
- Does the County have programs to help get people tested?
 - o County has a low barrier, high-risk testing clinic where folks who are at higher risk can get screen for HIV and STIs.
 - o Will be rolling out a mobile testing program using the new testing van which will allow us to go out into the community and access folks who may not go into a clinic and are harder to reach.

Erin Parrish gave an update on where the County is at with their Harm Reduction Services. Provided an overview of what harm reduction is – a set of strategies to reduce harm associated with a behavior – and talked about new services the county will be providing including:

- Syringe exchange and testing for communicable disease.
- Overdose prevention education.

Provided an update on the feasibility assessment that PHAC had previously contributed to. Also talked about the naloxone distribution program they had been piloting in partnership with parole and probation, community corrections, Washington County jail and Washington County juvenile department. They have purchased naloxone, a drug used to reverse an opiate related overdose, and put together kits that these programs can distribute to their clients. The pilot has been very successful.

Erin and Chris were available with the new testing and syringe exchange van for folks to tour after the meeting.