



Macon County  
Public Health

**MACON COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH  
MINUTES  
2/23/2021**

**Members:** Mitchell Bishop, Engineer and Chair; Ross Dodge, General Public and Vice-Chair; Melissa Bell, Pharmacist, Nathan Brenner, Dentist, Teresa Murray, General Public; Jeff Todd, Veterinarian; Paul Higdon, County Commissioner; Gosia Tiger, General Public; Vacant, Physician, Ellen Shope; Nurse Representative; Vacant, General Public

**Members Absent:**

**Staff Present:** Kathy McGaha, Melissa Setzer, Julie Rogers, Jennifer Garrett, Carrie Pazcoguin and Emily Ritter

**Guests:** Three people from the public did join the meeting by Zoom.

**Media:** None

**Public Comment:** None

**Call to Order:** Mitchell Bishop called the meeting to order at 6:29 pm.

**Welcome/Intro:** None

**Agenda Approval:** Nathan Brenner made a motion to approve the agenda adding the County Salary Study to the Agenda as Old Business. Dr. Jeff Todd seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Presentations:** None

**Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:** Melissa Bell made a motion to accept the minutes. Nathan Brenner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Old Business:**

COVID-19 Update Kathy McGaha gave an update on where MCPH was on vaccine distribution. She stated that they have slowly seen the amount of doses that are coming in increase. The base line for doses is 300 a week; recently we were notified that we would be receiving 500 doses each week for the next 3 weeks. One week we did not receive a shipment then the next week we received 800 doses with an addition shipmen of 1070 doses for a special event

that will start on Thursday. These additional doses should help decrease the wait list. 3500 people, ages 65 years and older are still on the waiting list. Ross Dodge asked the question, "if there were one entity that decides how many doses MCPH would receive". Mrs. McGaha stated that DHHS (NC Department of Health and Human Services) is the only entity that makes the allocations for everyone in the state. Mr. Dodge asked about the doses that Walgreen receive. She explained that Walgreens is participating in a federal program, where MCPH is through the state of North Carolina.

On February 24, the Governor will issued the statement for teachers and childcare staff, that he is leaving it up to the county administrator as to when teachers and childcare staff will receive their vaccine. The state has not provided special allocations for teachers. Mrs. McGaha has decided that the normal allocations will continue to go toward, some 65 and older population that are on the wait list. There have been some vial have more doses in them, which show as bonus doses. Those bonus doses and the doses from individuals not showing up to their appointments will go toward the teachers and childcare staff. Mr. Bishop asked if she could put an estimate on how many bonus they are getting each day. Mrs. McGaha stated that it varies, it depends on how many doses they are giving that day and if the vials have more than the expected doses in them. There is just no way to know an exact number. She stated that she does have a list of all staff from the school system that is interested in getting the vaccine. Once they know that they have extra doses available, they will be calling school staff to come in. Some counties have been able to move into group three. Macon County has a higher number of 65 and older, is why our county has not moved into a new group. Mr. Bishop stated that he believes that Mrs. McGaha and the MCPH staff have prioritize the 65 and older wait list very well and now are trying to vaccinate the teachers is to be commended.

Ross Dodge made a motion to approve the use of bonus doses for teachers and childcare workers. Melissa Bell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Garrett stated that the total numbers of COVID cases are 2943, 58 of those are active positive case. 2855 cases have recovered with 30 deaths. These updated numbers had not published prior to this meeting. Testing numbers have started to fall; they are only testing 15 to 30 people a week now. The public seems to be focusing more on vaccines than testing. Turn around for test results right now is 2 days. Dr. Todd asked if the HD was doing any rapid testing. Mrs. Garrett stated that they were not. One reason is you have to be sick for a while before the rapid test will work. Most of the individuals being tested are due to exposure and they are a-symptomatic. Even if you have a rapid test, you still have to have a PCR. If you have a rapid and it comes back negative, you would still be required to quarantine until the PCR comes back.

Dr. Todd also asked if having the vaccine would affect the test results. Mrs. Garrett stated that having the vaccine does not affect the test results. The vaccine does not protect you from getting the virus it just lessens the effect of the virus.

#### County Salary Study

Mrs. McGaha stated that the salary study has been the topic of conversation of the Board of Health for months. She stated that the county has signed a contract with a company called Gallagher to do a new salary study. The commissioners have asked that study be complete before the budget is finalized.

#### **New Business:**

#### Flu Season Update

Jennifer Garrett developed a power point that was shown explaining NC Direct. This is where she pulls information for different surveillance and monitoring of different viruses and diseases across the state.

## **NC DETECT**

- The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) uses multiple surveillance systems to monitor respiratory diseases across the state. These surveillance systems include information related to outpatient visits, emergency department visits, laboratory data, as well as hospital data from epidemiologists at seven of the state's largest healthcare systems.
- The North Carolina Disease Event Tracking and Epidemiologic Collection Tool (NC DETECT) is North Carolina's statewide, electronic, real-time public health surveillance system. NC DETECT was created to provide early event detection and timely public health surveillance using a variety of secondary data sources, including data from the NC Emergency Departments (EDs).

## **Influenza like illness.....**

- Chief complaint or triage notes:  
(fever OR febrile OR FOU OR temperature OR Documented Initial ED Temp > 38C) AND (cough or sore throat))

## **COVID Like Illness.....**

- loss of sense of smell / taste or no taste / smell or unable to smell / taste or loss sense of smell / taste or lost taste / smell
- OR
- ((Chief complaint or triage notes: (cough or shortness of breath or SOB or SHOB or respiratory distress or cannot breathe or cyanosis or difficulty breathing or dyspnea or hypoxia or pleural effusion or pneumonia or stridor)
- AND
- (Febrile or fev\* or fvr or temp or chills or rigor or shivers or initial ED temp > 38))  
OR  
Specific ICD-10-CM codes

## **Influenza-Associated Deaths Reported in North Carolina (10/3/20-5/8/21)**

- Flu Deaths Week Ending in 02/13 = 0
- Total Flu Deaths = 5
- 4 deaths were in over age 65 +
- 1 death was age 25-49
- There have been no pediatric deaths to date

## **Influenza Virus Isolate Results for 2020–2021 Season\***

- A (unknown) 25
- 2009 A(H1N1) 2
- A(H3) 2
- B (unknown) 8
- B (Victoria) 1
- B (Yamagata) 0
- Total 38

## **Macon County Public Health Flu Distribution and Clinics**

- State Flu: 171
- High Dose: 283

- Private Flu: 1021
- Clinics:
  - - Off site: MCH (9/2020) and Highlands Flu drive through clinic (10/2020)
  - - Drive Thru Flu: Clinics October and November 2020 and one clinic December (12/15/20)

Mrs. Garrett hopes they will continue to do the flu clinic as drive through clinics in the future. People very much liked the ability to drive through not having to get out of their vehicle and people have been more diligent in fighting the flu this year.

Mid-Year Budget Update

Carrie Pazcoguin asked the board members to refer to the two documents handed out to them in regards to expenses and expenditures. Mrs. Pazcoguin stated that everything in green means that line is in good standings for the year. She also explained that they are underspent on most our budgets due to COVID. The focus this budget year has been on COVID instead of their regular services. The two red lines the COVID budget lines are maxed out. The revenue side has mostly red due to COVID. Since the HD has not been able to provide many services due to COVID there has not been much revenue brought in. Overall looking at where revenue sets at this time the HD is doing well, family planning, immunizations are two programs that are still generating revenue along with Environmental Health. Environmental Health's revenue is above average, due to that section being extremely busy. Mrs. McGaha stated that there is COVID money left to spend and we do see more funding coming from the state.

Community Health Center Telehealth Grant

Julie Rogers stated that they have had an opportunity to apply for a grant for school based telehealth center. This would be available for every student in the county to join this program and would have the ability to be seen that same day with a nurse practitioner. They would even be able to have an appointment while at school. This grant is for \$150,000 for each year for 3 years. Mrs. McGaha stated that they just needed to know the board approves of the HD applying for this grant. If they are approved it will be brought back to the board. Mr. Bishop stated that he thinks this is a good opportunity to help the community. Dr. Todd agreed stating, "this is a no brainer". Mrs. McGaha stated that there is revenue to be generated from these services. Mr. Bishop asked if this program would be self-sufficient. Mrs. McGaha stated that after the grant there would be an expense in the future. The grant time period should give them enough time to be up and running and generate the revenue to fund the providers. Julie Rogers stated that they would also have the opportunity to reapply for the grant.

Ross Dodge made the Motion to approve the use of the grant. Jeff Todd seconded that motion. Motion to adjourn passed unanimously.

**Discussion:** Ross Dodge stated he would be interested in hearing what the role of the Medical Director is at the next meeting.

**Closed Session:** None

**Announcements:** None

**Next Meeting Date:** 3/23/2021

**Adjournment:** Ross Dodge made the Motion to adjourn made by. Melisa Bell seconded that motion. Motion to adjourn passed unanimously at 7:38 pm.

**Minutes Recorded by:** Melissa Setzer, MCPH Administration Assistant