



CATTARAUGUS COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Cattaraugus County
Health Department
Established 1923

Joseph Bohan, MD, President

Giles Hamlin, MD, Vice-President

Kelly J. Andreano, Legislator

Zahid Chohan, MD

Sondra Fox, RN, MSN, C.S.

Richard Haberer

Theresa Raftis

David L. Smith, Mayor

Kathryn Cooney Thrush, NP, MSN

MINUTES May 5, 2021

The 895th meeting of the Cattaraugus County Board of Health (BOH) was held at the Old Library Restaurant on May 5, 2021.

The following members were present:

Joseph Bohan, MD

Giles Hamlin, MD

Legislator Kelly Andreano

Sondra Fox

Richard Haberer

Theresa Raftis

Mayor David L. Smith

Kathryn Cooney-Thrush, NP, MSN

Also present were:

Kevin D. Watkins, MD, MPH, Public Health Director

Ashley Milliman, County Attorney

Legislator Richard Helmich Jr.

Legislator Kip Morrow

Legislator Ginger Schroder

Legislator Chairman Howard VanRensselaer

Alyssa Dean, Guest Speaker

Jessica Helmbrecht, Guest Speaker

Gabrielle Runfola, Guest Speaker

Raymond Jordan, Sr. Public Health Sanitarian

Debra Lacher, Secretary to the Public Health Director

Collette Lulay-Pound, Administrative Officer

Rick Miller, Olean Times Herald Reporter

Lynne Moore, Director of Patients Services

Dave Porter, Hearing Officer

Matthew Tyssee, Resource Specialist

Gilbert Witte, MD, Medical Director

Eric Wohlers, Environmental Health Director

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Bohan. The roll was called and a quorum was present.

Dr. Bohan asked the Board for a motion to accept the April minutes that were distributed by email. Mayor Smith made a motion to approve the Board of Health (BOH) meeting minutes held on April 7, 2021, the motion was seconded by Ms. Raftis and unanimously approved.

Dr. Bohan introduced three guest speakers who recently completed their Public Health Internships with the Cattaraugus County Health Department. They included Alyssa Dean, of Olean, NY, who will be graduating from St. Bonaventure University this year, Class of 2021, Jessica Helmbrecht, of Cheektowaga, NY, Class of 2022, and Gabrielle Runfola, of Amherst, NY, Class of 2022. Each student intern completed a rotation in various programs of the department, one program involved analyzing death certificate for the years 2018-2020.

Provisional data analysis indicates that there were (719) deaths in Cattaraugus County in 2018. The five leading causes of death in 2018 included: 1) Heart Disease, 2) Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease, 3) Cancer, 4) Failure to Thrive, and 5) Sepsis.

Provisional data analysis indicates that there were (693) deaths in Cattaraugus County in 2019. The five leading causes of death in 2019 included: 1) Heart Disease, 2) Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease, 3) Sepsis, 4) Cancer, and 5) Multi-Organ Failure.

Provisional data analysis indicates that there were (734) deaths in Cattaraugus County in 2020. The five leading causes of death in 2020 included: 1) Heart Disease, 2) Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease, 3) Cancer, 4) Sepsis, and 5) Chronic Kidney Disease. Additionally, in 2020, there were (12) deaths attributed directly to COVID-19 related complications.

Three of the five leading causes of death in all three years has a direct association with tobacco use, these include 1) Heart Disease, 2) Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease, and 3) Cancer.

Proposed interventions for the modifiable behavior risk factors include: 1) working with health care organizations and providers to facilitate the delivery of tobacco dependence treatment programs; 2) establishing partnerships with fitness centers or encourage employers to create incentives for employees to utilize the gym with flexible spending accounts; 3) increase awareness of health coaches who directly work with patients to change lifestyle habits; 4) promoting a community garden that would provide more healthy foods at a lower cost; 5) accessible water fountains in office buildings; 6) healthier side options for children's meals offered in local restaurants; 7) provide blood pressure monitors to individuals who have hypertension so they can monitor their blood pressure at home; 8) improve the walking/bicycle options throughout Cattaraugus County; 9) fitness in parks with free classes.

Dr. Witte shared that the lack of access to healthcare is one of the largest problems or health needs that Cattaraugus County currently faces. There is a shortage of providers, and there are those who do not have sufficient health insurance to cover their visits or medications.

DIRECTORS REPORT: Dr. Watkins informed the Board that COVID-19 response continues to be at the forefront of what is being done within the department but a large portion has expanded to include providing COVID-19 vaccinations.

He updated the Board on the latest COVID-19 data statewide and locally. He conveyed to the Board that as of Monday, May 3, 2021 New York State (NYS) reported a total of (2,173) newly confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 and (36) deaths. On the same date, there were (2,573) COVID-19 patients hospitalized, of which (625) were in the intensive care units statewide.

Dr. Watkins stated that the total number of COVID-19 tests that have been administered in Cattaraugus County was (142,052) of which (136,609) were negative and (5,443) were positive. This reflects a (96%) negative rate and a (4%) positive rate.

Of the (5,443) positive cases, (5,183) cases have recovered, this reflects a (95%) recovery rate. There are currently (153) active cases, and (100) recorded deaths, this reflects a (2%) death rate.

Looking at the number of hospitalizations in Cattaraugus County, of the (153) active cases (19) are hospitalized.

A breakdown of the (5,443) positive cases shows that (4.1%) of the cases were healthcare workers, (22%) of the cases were asymptomatic, and (45%) of the cases were contacts of other positives. The age range of 20 thru 29 continues to be the age range where the highest number of positive cases are occurring, currently there are (925) cases within this age range, but the age range of 0-19 is closing in, currently there are (901) cases within this age range, as a large number of positive cases are occurring within the schools.

Dr. Watkins displayed a percent positive dashboard which compared the percent positive cases among five counties in the western region. This is a metric used by NYSDOH to determine how well a county or region is doing. He stated that the number of percent positives cases are based on the number of COVID-19 test administered and the number of positive cases confirmed. In Cattaraugus County, as of May 3, 2021, the daily percent positive was (3.2%), the 7 day rolling average percent positive was (3.5%), and the 14 day rolling average percent positive was (3.1%). NYS is seeing its lowest positivity rates in sometime but Western NY continues to be the region with the highest positivity rate.

Since the last BOH meeting, the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recommended that the use of the Jansen/Johnson & Johnson (J&J) COVID-19 vaccine be placed on pause after reports were received of blood clots developing in patients receiving the vaccine.

Six women who had recently received the J&J vaccine developed cerebral thrombosis thrombocytopenia syndrome (TTS). The advisory committee of immunization practice (ACIP) reviewed these cases to assess whether there was an association between the vaccines. Individuals who develop TTS appears to have clots that appear in the brain, the abdomen, and in the legs. The mechanism for this new syndrome appears to be similar to autoimmune heparin-induced thrombocytopenia. Diagnosis of this syndrome includes identifying an acute thrombosis AND thrombocytopenia followed by a Heparin-induced thrombocytopenia (HIT) enzyme linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA) test.

Ten days after the pause, the ACIP recommended lifting the pause as it was decided that the benefits of using the J&J vaccine outweighed the potential risks.

The ACIP suggested that a warning be placed on the J&J vaccine indicating that women younger than 50 years of age should be aware of this rare adverse condition if they are administered the J&J vaccine.

Individuals who develop shortness of breath, chest pain, leg swelling, blurred vision, or abdominal pain after receiving the J&J vaccine should immediately seek medical assistance. Medical providers are asked not to use heparin in individuals presenting with these symptoms after receiving the J&J vaccine.

The department has noticed an increase in its COVID-19 vaccines inventory and a decrease in the community demand for the vaccine. This vaccine hesitancy that has started to take place in the county has been identified in individuals concerned over the safety and effectiveness of the vaccine, those who just don't trust the medical system, and among youth who feel that they are invincible.

Current vaccine data for Cattaraugus County indicates that (34%) of the county's population (76,840) has received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. County vaccine data by Zip Codes indicate that Ellicottville, Great Valley, and Hinsdale is doing extremely well when it comes to the number of residents who received a vaccine within those community zip codes. The same data indicates that Conewango Valley, Dayton and Franklinville residents have shown a much lower percentage of residents who have participated in the COVID-19 vaccine campaign compared to the rest of the county municipalities.

At our last meeting, Dr. Bohan asked what was the county's vaccination rate for those over the age of 65, and based on the data recently released for Cattaraugus County, the vaccination rate of those 65 years of age and older is (65%) at this time.

The vaccines that are being used against COVID-19 are clearly showing that they are effective, and they are reducing the risk of severe complications against the virus. However, of the (28%) of the county's population that has been fully vaccinated, (30) of those individuals or (0.14%) have experienced a breakthrough which means that they have tested positive for COVID-19 after being fully vaccinated. Of the (34%) of residents who only received one dose of vaccine, (27) of those individuals or (0.10%) have tested positive for COVID-19.

There are several potential reasons behind these breakthroughs. 1) The vaccine does not give 100% protection from contracting the virus; 2) Cattaraugus County continues to lag behind NYS with individuals vaccinated; 3) COVID-19 variants can evade the immunity system; all of which can be a potential reason behind these breakthrough.

Legislator Helmich inquired if residents could attend any of the school vaccination clinics or if it was just for students. Dr. Watkins replied that the schools have agreed to allow the public to use their facilities to receive vaccinations as well. Dr. Witte shared that the residents that are being seen at the hospital with COVID are now all under the age of 65, with (6) of them being on a ventilators in the intensive care unit. Dr. Watkins stated that Pfizer has submitted an application to the FDA to use its vaccine on those who are 12-15 years of age as their research indicates the vaccine is extremely effective in this age group.

Mr. Haberer asked if there was any discussion regarding booster shots for the vaccine. Dr. Watkins replied that research is underway to determine if a booster will be needed. At this point researchers are unsure whether it would be a one-time booster or something that will be required annually. Dr. Bohan stated that it is great that we have twice the number of seniors that are getting vaccinated but it is still not enough. Dr. Bohan encouraged more publicity for walk-ins to be vaccinated at the clinics.

ENFORCEMENT LIST: Mr. Porter, Hearing Administrator Officer reported on the administrative hearings held April 13, 2021.

DOCKET #21-010:

Respondent: Bennie Baskin, P.O. Box 364, South Dayton, NY. Location of property. 274 Main Street, town of Randolph.

Violations: SCCCHD Subsection 16.6.1, respondent owns subject property found to be discharging inadequately treated wastewater onto ground surface, eventually flowing into the neighbor's property. Respondent was given several opportunities to correct the illegal discharge violation. To date, violation still exists.

DOCKET #21-010 (continued):

- Recommendation: 1.) Change the \$75.00 civil compromise to a \$150.00 fine to be paid on or before 5/28/21.
- 2.) Respondent to contact CCHD and jointly prepare a plan to fix the violation at 274 Main St., Randolph, NY of discharging inadequately treated wastewater onto the ground by 5/14/21.
- 3.) Violation of discharging inadequately treated wastewater at 274 Main St., Randolph, N.Y. to be corrected to CCHD satisfaction on or before 5/28/21. With Mr. Baskin present or his adult designee, allowing health inspector's onsite to inspect the cause of the discharge. The Board gives the Health Director in consultation with the County Attorney the discretion to act on behalf of the Board, if the respondent does not comply with Board Order, to utilize all of the enforcement mechanisms allowed, including placarding the residence.
- 4.) A \$10.00 per day per diem will be levied for every day not in full compliance.

A motion was made by Mr. Haberer to accept Mr. Porter's recommendation, seconded by Mrs. Fox, and unanimously approved.

DOCKET #21-012:

Previous Docket #20-031:

Respondent: David Feely, Co-owner of Cow Palace Bar & Grill, LLC DBA Cow Palace Bar & Grill, LLC, 72 Hillside Drive, Carrollton, N.Y. 14748.

Violation: 10NYCRR Subpart 66-3.2(c) during a routine visit to the Cow Palace Bar & Grill conducted on 3/24/21 multiple persons observed to be not wearing face coverings over their mouths and noses as per New York State (NYS) executive orders and associated NYS Phase III guidance and 10NYCRR 66-3.2(c). This is repeat violations.

Recommendation: The respondent pay a fine of \$1,000.00 on or before 5/28/21. A \$10.00 per day per diem will be levied for every day not in compliance.

A motion was made by Mayor Smith to accept Mr. Porter's recommendation, seconded by Mrs. Fox, and unanimously approved.

NURSING DIVISION REPORT: Mrs. Moore reported that the homecare census is (281) with (24) prospective admissions. There were (98) admissions in April, and (87) discharges. Part of the homecare staff is still assisting with COVID duties, and others are out for various reasons which has put a strain on the remaining workforce.

The homecare nurses have administered (275) COVID-19 vaccines to homebound residents. Initially, (220) J&J vaccines and (55) Moderna vaccines were administered. The second dose of Moderna will be given this coming Monday. There is currently a waiting list of (11) residents for homebound vaccinations, the department is planning to administer these residents with the J&J vaccine as soon as it becomes available.

In the lead program there were (3) new children added in April with the highest Elevated Blood Lead Levels (EBLL) of 12ug/dl, [normal <5ug/dl]. Testing for lead is lower due to COVID-19, and WIC is not holding active clinics at this time, but the program continues to follow (103) children.

Clinic testing for HIV; there were (10) tests performed in Olean, (6) in Salamanca, and none in Machias, with no positives results.

STD report for April; there were (13) positive case of chlamydia; (4) confirmed cases of gonorrhea; and (5) positive cases of syphilis.

In the month of April; there were (7) Hepatitis C chronic cases; (3) hepatitis A cases with no known source and no hepatitis B cases.

In April, tests for influenza resulted in (2) positive for influenza A, and (3) positive for influenza B. In addition, there was (1) group strep A and (1) positive salmonella.

In the month of April there were (5) suspected cases of Lyme disease. One rabies post exposure prophylaxis series administered due to a dog bite.

Dr. Bohan asked if COVID-19 vaccines were given in the provider's office, would the county see an increase in its vaccination rates. Dr. Witte replied that periodically, at the medical group, they do receive some vaccines, but they are also finding when they go through their waiting list, that many have already received the vaccine elsewhere.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH REPORT: Mr. Wohlers reported that in 2019 the State legislature budgeted millions of dollars into the State's environmental protection fund to create what is known as the drinking water source protection (DWSP) program. This new funding was supposed to be a multi-agency initiative led by the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), including the State Health Department, and the States Department of Agriculture, Markets, and the Department of State. They invited communities with public water supplies to apply for grants to do a source water protection plan. Through this program, grants will be awarded up to \$50,000.00 each, to forty or fifty individual communities. The department nominated (3) communities from Cattaraugus County and all (3) were granted awards, (40) were selected throughout NYS. The three communities include the Town of Allegany, the Village of Ellicottville, and the Town of Machias. Grants were also awarded through the 604B program to regional planning boards.

New York State DEC issued the department's new wetlands permit effective May 3, 2021 which will not expire until May 2, 2026, for the mosquito program. If the County needs to spray any larvicide on the wetlands we are permitted to do so. We also have submitted our applications for the larvicide products, which also must be renewed. Due to COVID-19, we are not planning on doing active surveillance this year but we will take complaints of residents if needed. The last few years we have been fortunate as it has been dry, and not a lot of complaints. The department has not needed to spray larvicide for quite a few years.

Dr. Bohan asked if the \$50,000.00 grant was a sizeable award compared to what a community would have to spend. Mr. Wohlers replied that \$50,000.00 should cover 100% of what would be needed for a community to spend through the whole process.

Old/New Business: Dr. Watkins reminded everyone that there would not be a Board of Health Meeting in the month of June, and the next scheduled board meeting is set for July 7th.

There being no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Haberer, seconded by Dr. Hamlin and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kevin D. Watkins, M.D." in a cursive style.

Kevin D. Watkins, M.D., M.P.H.
Secretary to the Board of Health