

Sudbury Board of Health Virtual Meeting

January 26, 2021

Attendees: Carol Bradford - BoH Chair, Linda Huet-Clayton – BoH Member, Susan Sama – BoH Member, Bill Murphy – Health Director, Bethany Hadvab – Social Worker, Patty Moran – Health Nurse, Beth Porter – Health Admin, Janie Dretler – Select Board, Jennifer Roberts – Select Board, Kay Bell – Comm on Disabilities, Sue Berry – Finance Committee, Elaine Taranto – Resident

Meeting called to order at 4:00

Public Comment – None

Bethany Hadvab – Social Worker Update:

Food and housing insecurities – Continue to be problematic with Sudbury residents.

Mental Health Trauma – Has been an issue and continues to be one of the prominent problems promulgated from COVID financial and social constraints.

Patty Moran – Public Health Nurse Update:

Nursing Team: Phyllis Schilp has taken a position with the state and Patty Moran has stepped in as coordinator for the nursing team. There are 4 part-time nursing positions that are being managed by Patty. She has been working with the town since March of 2020 and the transition has been critical with continuity of service.

COVID Cases: December had the highest numbers for cases in schools, generated from sports and social interaction.

Contact Tracing: Board of Health Nurses are helping school nurses with contact tracing for students that have been identified as close contacts. Team sports have been generating up to 30 close contacts to 1 COVID positive case. Sudbury remains a yellow community. This is a testament to the town's aggressive approach to contact tracing. As cases begin to decline the more complicated cases will remain with the town nurses and the less intricate cases will be sent to the CTC (Community Tracing Collaborative) which is state run. Sama voiced concerns that the CTC may not be nearly as effective at making direct contact with potential spreaders that are Sudbury residents. This compromises the efforts put forth by our nursing team. Patty assured Ms. Sama that she is speaking directly with the CTC supervisors twice weekly to be sure that all steps are taken to ensure that contact and messaging is made clear.

School Nurses: The schools have been generating the highest percentage of work for the nursing staff. On January 12th the Board of Health passed a vote to make the Sudbury school nurses Health Agents in order to facilitate the process of students coming out of isolation and quarantine to get back to school. Patty praised the SPS and LSRHS nurses for their hard work and perseverance. Communication with the schools has improved.

Clusters: Sports and families are the biggest facilitator of spreading COVID. When a cluster has been identified the nursing staff has been sending out blast emails to all close contacts, CTC and school nurses. The emails contain quarantine information so that all effected parties have the same information.

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Patty Moran – Public Health Nurse Update Continued:

Clusters Continued: Huet-Clayton asked if there is awareness in the sports communities and if they have considered limiting practice and play time, possibly holding off on sports until it is safe to reconvene. Mr. Murphy noted that state mandates have not restricted indoor sports, but that we will be moving to outdoors activities and sports.

Family Spread: There is a high rate of spread in families. Most likely they are not isolating or quarantining according to CDC guidelines.

Re-Investigations: as a result of people getting the COVID vaccine, should the recipients become symptomatic and get a COVID test, there are instances where there are false results between first and second doses. MDPH has taken a strong interest in these statistics and is watching this scenario closely. Vaccination does not guarantee COVID immunity. This is a message that needs to be stressed. Protocol should be issued when vaccinated.

Variants: New strains of the COVID virus are starting to appear. Now that the state is opening up in stages, what is the expectation of COVID being spread? Sama believes that it would be prudent for the general population to wear N95's or double up on masks (one surgical and one fabric or two surgicals). This would mean that these masks would need to be available to the general public. Sama noted that public health experts are pushing for more production of N95's so they are available for everyone. One must pay attention to resistance when wearing multiple masks—too much resistance (too hard to breathe through) causes air to leak around the sides of the mask which is detrimental. It is important to strike the right balance.

Bill Murphy – Health Director Update:

Vaccine Distribution to Date: Concord Health Department headed the effort in distributing the vaccine to Concord, Carlisle, Maynard, Bedford and Sudbury first responders. The First Clinics were held on Jan 14th, 15th and 16th. 400 first responders were vaccinated. Concord used a tent that was located in the Concord/Carlisle High School parking lot. The collaboration was a success.

Sudbury Vaccination Clinic: Sudbury has applied for the vaccine. There are no guarantees that Sudbury will receive the supply that has been requested. DPH will be allocating 100 doses per week to towns. There is an equity component to how much vaccine will be distributed and to whom. Sudbury will be playing a small role in vaccinating. Some communities have received vaccine and are already vaccinating residents. Questions raised include: 'What are the risks of not having clinics? How do we keep the Health Department functioning? How do we address the vaccination of 400 teachers?'

Planning of Clinics: There are still many moving parts in place that need to be ironed out. Assuming that we receive 100 doses per week, we are planning that the first doses will arrive mid-February and the second doses will arrive mid-March. The Health Department will be adhering to the state mandates of who will be receiving the doses. Right now, Phase 2, step 1 = Seniors 75 years and older is the demographic who are getting their first and second doses.

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Bill Murphy – Health Director Update Continued:

Staffing the Clinics: Clinics will need to be staffed weekly. Positions would include traffic monitors, check-in staff, screeners, vaccinators, PrepMod processors, recovery monitors and EMT's for emergencies. EMT's and nurses will vaccinate, however this will mean that nurses will be pulled off of contact tracing.

Sudbury Vaccination Sites: The DPW building would be the easiest location to vaccinate out of. The vaccine is housed in the Health Dept. Set up and take down would be convenient. Once we move to a single dose vaccine, this may be that the DPW may be the location of choice. Because of winter weather and recovery area the most logical location would be the EDS (Emergency Dispensing Site) at the Curtis Middle School.

Other Locations for Vaccine Distribution: Over time Mass Vaccination Sites, Pharmacies, Hospital and PCP's will be where most Massachusetts residents will be receiving their vaccine. Natick Mall may be used as a vaccination supersite. Massachusetts is not restricting out-of-staters from getting the vaccine.

Update on Filling Public Health Nurse Position: Mr. Murphy will start interviewing for the position next week. He has offered board members the opportunity to sit in on the interviews.

Vote: Sama motioned to approve Dec 16th and January 12th minutes as edited. Huet-Clayton seconded the motion. Motion passed 3-0-0.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:14 PM.