

Sudbury Board of Health

Virtual Meeting March 23rd, 2021

Attendees: Carol Bradford-Chair, Linda Huet-Clayton-Member, Susan Sama – Member, Bill Murphy – Health Director, Patricia Moran – Public Health Nurse, Bethany Hadvab – Social Worker, Beth Porter – Admin. Kay Bell – Comm on Disabilities, Pat Lewis – Counsel on Aging, Sue Berry – Finance Comm, Janie Dretler – Select Board, Jennifer Roberts – Select Board, Jordan DaSilva-Martins – SW Intern

Meeting Commenced at 4:10 PM

Public Comment: Pat Lewis Counsel on Aging liaison introduced herself. Sudbury resident.

Pat Moran – Public Health Nurse Update:

COVID Numbers: Positives and deaths are trending down. Population that is testing positive are ages 20 – 40. These age groups are not vaccinated. Within these groups are sports teams and families that are presenting clusters. Sama thinks that masks should be worn with close contact sports that are played outdoors. She believes that there should be messaging that addresses this problem. The contact tracing case load continues to be busy, but manageable.

COVID Guidelines: are changing and evolving causing confusion in all sectors. State travel guidelines are now aligned with CDC guidelines.

Variants: B117 (UK Variant) is starting to be identified through testing. Huet-Clayton asked what the parameters are for testing for variants? The state is starting to test for these variants when a specific DNA strain is identified.

Reinfections: Exposure 14 days past full vaccination not considered a reinfection. Within 14 days of vaccination is considered reinfection. The state is looking to see what impact the variants have on re-infected individuals. Sama asked if we had seen any reinfection cases from fully vaccinated residents? The answer is no.

Vaccination: For those who have had COVID, it is recommended that they are vaccinated past the 90-day recovery period. Re-infection is prevalent with the variants. Longevity of the efficacy of the full vaccine is still unknown. Just like the flu shot, boosters may address the most prevalent strains of COVID. Individuals who are fully vaccinated can spread COVID to those who are not vaccinated. This will be messaged to the public.

Mitigation: Basic mitigation techniques continue to be the most effective form of prevention.

SCHOOLS:

Sudbury Public Schools targeting 4/5/2021 – as the start date for in person learning.

Pool Testing: The schools are refining the process for pool testing. This is imperative to the success of in person learning so that positives can be identified. Testing mitigates the spread of infection amongst the school population and keep schools open. The schools continue to onboard parents into the pool testing program. Huet-Clayton asked why parents hesitate to allow testing of their children. Bradford feels that students can be anxious and that some parents tend to be less diligent. Sama noted that the high school has 70% of the students signed up for testing and that there is frequent messaging.

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SCHOOLS Continued:

Logistics of opening: Using monitors and outdoor spaces for lunch, snacks, etc. Mr. Murphy indicated that there are many residents that do not understand the effort put forth to get kids back to school. Basic health guidelines are difficult to meet. The 3-foot spacing between classmates makes contact tracing more difficult in schools that don't have assigned seating for the students. Sundays have become a crucial time when positives are reported to the nursing staff. It is important that we are staffed over the weekends in order to contact cases prior to returning to school on Mondays. It is unknown how many teachers have been vaccinated.

Emotional Impact: There will be adjustment issues for students returning to school. The elementary schools are sending student instructions for activities that promote emotional stability. School psychologists have been preparing.

Sports: Continue to present COVID clusters. Contact tracing remains critical. Teachers, coaches, and parents must be aware of the risks of active play and number of activities children participate in. If close contacts cannot be identified, the entire team must be quarantined. There are concerns for the upper grades.

Bill Murphy Health Director Update:

Re-Opening Town Buildings: Henry Hayes and Department Heads have been meeting to strategize re-opening and to facilitate an easy transition for employees.

Roll Back of Re-Opening: Jen Roberts was concerned that there has been a sharp rise in cases internationally. Mr. Murphy countered that the vaccines administered in the U.S are more substantial. Gov. Baker's approach to policy is data driven. If cases start moving in the wrong direction the state will pull back on re-opening.

Town COVID Vaccine Clinics: Janie Dretler inquired if the Health Department will be holding COVID vaccine clinics. The Health Dept. is currently involved in a multi-community collaborative in trying to obtain vaccine. Sudbury's commitment to the clinic (if vaccine is supplied by the state) would be ½ day per week.

Sudbury Pharmacy: will be conducting 2 clinics at the Sudbury Community Center Gymnasium on 3/31/2021 and 5/5/2021 (second dose) for 100 residents. Sudbury employees will support the clinics.

Multi Community Grant Application: Mr. Murphy has been working on applying for a grant that will involve several communities (similar to Sudbury) to increase capacity of staffing.

Health Permitting: The Health Department processes permits annually. Because permitting is not automated, there are many hours dedicated to this process. Delinquent establishments have created a bottle neck causing more unnecessary hours of work. The Health Department would like structure a process for delinquency.

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Bill Murphy Health Director Update Continued:

View Permit: Online permitting software platform. Currently being used by the Sudbury Building Department. The Health Department is slated to be the next department for online permitting. This will take time and planning. Meetings will start in April.

EEE: East Middlesex Mosquito Control Project will be conducting aerial spraying after April 1st. 2020 was a low activity year for EEE. This season should conclude the 3-year cycle. Brian Farless from EMMCP has increased the testing of species in targeted areas. He will work with the Board of Health with sample testing.

VOTE: Bradford motioned to publish 3/9/2021 meeting minutes as edited. Sama seconded the motion. Huet-Clayton abstained. Motion passed 2-0-1.

Meeting adjourned: 5:18 PM