

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EXECUTIVE BOARD
January 13, 2021

The virtual meeting of the Executive Board of the Indiana Department of Health (IDOH) held via Adobe Connect was called to order at 10:35 am in the Robert O. Yoho Executive Board Room of the ISDH building by Brenda Goff, Chair. The following Board members were present for all or part of the virtual meeting:

Naveed Chowhan, MD, FACP, MBA
Blake Dye
Brenda Goff, HFA (Chair) – in-person
Robin Marks, DVM
Joanne Martin, DrPH, RN, FAAN
Holly Robinson, MD
Suellen Sorensen, PharmD, BCPS
Stephen Tharp, MD (Vice Chair)
Kristina M. Box, MD, FACOG, Secretary

Members not attending:

Martin Hanneman, DDS
Patricia Spence, PE

The following staff members were present for all or part of the meeting:

Shane Hatchett, Chief of Staff
Pam Pontones, Deputy State Health Commissioner/State Epidemiologist
Shirley Payne, Director, Children's Special Health Care Services
Dr. Lixia Liu, Assistant Commissioner, Laboratory Services Commission/State Lab Director
Kelly MacKinnon, Director, Office of Legal Affairs

Call to Order

Brenda Goff, Chair, stated that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 10:35 am. She then asked if Board members had any known conflicts of interest to declare. Hearing none she proceeded with the meeting.

Minutes

Ms. Goff asked for discussion and/or corrections to the minutes of the November 18, 2020 Executive Board meeting. Hearing none, she entertained a motion for approval. On a motion made by Dr. Stephen Tharp, seconded by Blake Dye and passed by majority roll call vote via Adobe Connect chat box, the Board approved the minutes as presented.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

SECRETARY'S REPORT

A Summary of COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout was sent to the Executive Board members prior to the meeting. Currently there are two vaccines with Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) which are Pfizer and Moderna. Both are mRNA vaccines, and both have excellent safety and efficacy data. Dr. Box explained why the IDOH took the approach to first vaccinate health care workers, long-term care facilities and first responders. On December 16, 2020 we started vaccinating the health care workforce. On December 28, 2020 CVS and Walgreens began vaccinating residents and staff in long-term care facilities, skilled nursing, and assisted living. On January 4, 2021 we began vaccinating first responders, firefighters, EMS, law enforcement and Department of Correction officers. On January 8, 2021 we started vaccinating Hoosiers 80 years and older. As of today, we are now vaccinating 70 and older. By targeting Hoosiers age 70 and older, we are continuing our mission of protecting our most vulnerable Hoosiers. Once we open vaccines to Hoosiers age 60 and over, we will have targeted 22.5% of the state's population. This population accounts for 64% of all Indiana COVID-19 hospitalizations and 93% of the deaths. The goal is to reduce deaths and hospitalizations which is why this is the right approach. Indiana is now one of 10 states reporting cases of the B117 (UK) variant. This new strain does not cause a greater number of deaths or more severe illness than the current strain, but it is much easier to spread, which could increase the burden on our health care systems. We are reporting 59 new deaths today, which brings our total losses to more than 9,100 Hoosiers when you include the probable deaths based on clinical diagnosis. It is important to stay the course and not let our guard down. Continue to wear a mask, social distance, and wash hands frequently even after being vaccinated.

Suellyn Sorensen asked what percentage of vaccine has been administered and allocated? Dr. Box reported that 457,100 doses have been allocated to Indiana thus far. 90,000 were allocated to CVS and Walgreens federal partnership to vaccinate long-term care facilities and staff. This leaves 362,000 vaccines available to put in arms. 236,028 vaccinations have been completed with 115,719 appointments scheduled. Therefore, 351,747 vaccines are accounted for. Indiana should receive 79,000 per month through the end of January 2021.

Shane Hatchett, Chief of Staff reported that we separated the Public Health Protection and Laboratory Services Commission. Dr. Shirley Payne is the Assistant Commissioner for the Public Health Protection Commission and Dr. Lixia Liu is the State Lab Director and Assistant Commissioner for the Laboratory Services Commission. The Public Health Protection Commission includes Environmental Public Health, Food Protection, Emergency Preparedness, Lead & Health Homes, and Immunizations.

He also provided a brief legislative update. This is a budget year, and all agencies were asked for a 15% reduction, although the Governor's budget restored many of the cuts we proposed. The agency bill:

- 1) Aligns the former agency name of Indiana State Department of Health to the current rebranded name of Indiana Department of Health;
- 2) Makes the State Health Commissioner's office under Indiana Code consistent with other agency heads;
- 3) Makes the State Health Commissioner's salary and authority to re-organize agency personnel consistent with how other state agencies operate;

- 4) Extends the same statutory standards that apply to the State Health Commissioner to other physicians employed by the agency;
- 5) Removes the second Appeal Panel designated by the Executive Board, although no new evidence is heard, to be consistent with the Administrative Orders and Procedures Act (AOPA). Other state agencies only allow one appeal at the executive branch level. This change does not infringe on the individual's rights and, in fact, speeds up the appeals process to allow the individual to receive a decision sooner; and
- 6) Amends Title 16 to extend the syringe service program (SSP) sunset to July 1, 2030 to align with the national End the Epidemic initiative and allow for greater stability and effectiveness of SSPs in Indiana.

Distribution

Ms. Goff thanked staff for the Professional New Hire and Separation Reports and Summary of Final Orders and Consent Decrees.

Adjournment

Hearing no additional comments from the Board, staff and/or public, Ms. Goff adjourned the meeting at 11:25 am. The next meeting is scheduled for March 10, 2021.