



JOHNSON CO. HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Vital Records
460 N. MORTON STE. A
FRANKLIN IN 46131

(317) 346-4367
FAX: (317) 736-5264

October 2021

The bi-monthly meeting of the Johnson County Board of Health was held at the Johnson County Health Department on October 27, 2021.

Those present from the board were Dr. James Pease (Chairperson), Amanda Stevenson-Homes, Ruth Freese and Dr. Michael Pauszek. Paul Hass, board attorney attended as well. Dr. Qualls, Betsy Swearingen, Jen Warner, Lisa Brown, Liz Schultz, Bob Smith, Randy Pease and Cheryl Snider represented the department.

The meeting opened at 7:30 am. A motion was made to accept the meeting minutes from June and August by Amanda Stevenson-Holmes and a second was made by Dr. Pauszek. The motion passed.

Health Officer's Report:

With COVID-19 in the schools, the department tried to back up a mask optional plan implemented by the schools. It was decided to go by the CDC guidelines. At the start of school, there were protesters out front of the Health Department and other places. Protesters wanted information about who's responsible for the mask mandates, the school administrators or the Health Department. Dr. Qualls provided a written statement which stated the decision was left up to the school board which left some of the administrators unhappy. The Health Department has since taken the responsibility to take the heat off the administrators. Dr. Qualls has been holding weekly meetings with administrators which is going well. Schools are sharing numbers and ideas of where the needs are. As of this past week, most schools are back to "mask optional" or "mask recommended but not required". Some schools tried to implement their own policies on quarantine which the State Department of Health did not appreciate and told the schools to go back to quarantine at 6'.

Vaccine rates are about 70% with the rates being higher at the northern section of the county to the lesser at the southern part of the county. Case rates across the county are going down as are the hospitalizations and COVID deaths.

Dr. Qualls stated he thinks the solution to COVID is natural immunity plus vaccines. Herd immunity is not going to happen with only vaccine. In the 5 – 11 age group the profit from vaccine is marginal at best.

Nursing Report:

Lisa reported, at the Local Public Health Symposium last week the State Department of Health informed they would be lowering the blood lead levels from 10 to 5. Right now it is between 5 and 9. The patient gets tested and then there is a follow up. At 10 there is a home visit, determine the cause and notify the State. By lowering the level to 5, it will increase the load of reporting to the local Health Department.

We have one patient receiving rabies prophylaxis. She received a bite by a bat. The ER doctor was concerned as there were muscle spasms around the bite site. The bat was not caught for testing.

There are currently 19 open latent TB infection patients. There may be as many as three afghan refuge LTBI patients at Atterbury.

The department had an active TB case on October 14th. The patient was treated with medicine and was doing well. While he was being treated with TB medication he went to St. Francis with chest pains. While running test, the doctors found nothing and took him off the medication and sent him home. The next day he was sent to IU Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis because he was vomiting blood. They put him back on the medication, he is currently still there. They believe other underlying conditions may have exacerbated the problems with the TB medication.

The nursing division is trying to catch up on its immunization rates. Because of COVID, some patients have fallen behind on their vaccines. Jordan has been sending out notices to said patients to get them into the office for their shots.

The State Department of Health has informed the nursing department the local health departments will again be taking over the contact tracing for Covid.

Environmental Report:

Liz reported the department has a verbal policy to not allow perimeter drains to discharge to the ground surface. The environmental department would like to implement a written policy with the board's backing. This would take the pressure off the environmentalist who are inspecting septic. This way when the home owner ask to show them the rule, said environmentalist can and therefore has some backing from the county.

Right now, Bob is being challenged on a project on 6 acers near Legends Golf Course. The owner cannot get a hook up to the sewer system. Soil scientist has told them they can put a special type of septic but has to be put in a certain spot. The owner wants to put it in a different place but the run off would either go into the sub-division or onto the golf course. Bob told him no but the owner challenged him and there is no written rule to back him up.

Jen reported there is some new construction for restaurants but it is slow because of supply issues. Between the supply chain, restaurants are having to open months later than anticipated. Because of low staff places are cutting hours and not opening on weekends etc.

There are some calls for new Indian restaurants wanting to open. Crumble Cookies will open on November 4th.

Emergency Management Report:

Betsy reported, the State Department of Health has come up with a new preparedness grant. This grant would start on November 1st and is good for two years. This Grant allows us to partner with the schools to track COVID cases. The State is really pushing the grant and have stated they will send letters to county officials letting them know that this grant was offered but denied by Health Department heads. We accepted the grant.

We are part of a group consisting of the county Prosecutors and Courts, Probation, Health Department, Johnson Memorial, the Sheriff's Department and Coroner's office. We have a grant worth approximately \$125,000 for substance abuse. This grant is managed by a group called "Upstream Prevention" so we will not be managing it but can take part in it.

The department will be purchasing some "Community Aid" boxes. All boxes will consist of a first aid kit, AED, Narcan and a Stop the Bleed kit. Needles are not included as it has not been proven effective to prevent disease spread as addicts still typically share needles anyway. Betsy has gotten approval to place these boxes out in strategic places in the community. She reached out to the police chief to find out the best places to put the boxes for the most effective use. These boxes will be accessible to anyone who needs it.

Vital Records Report:

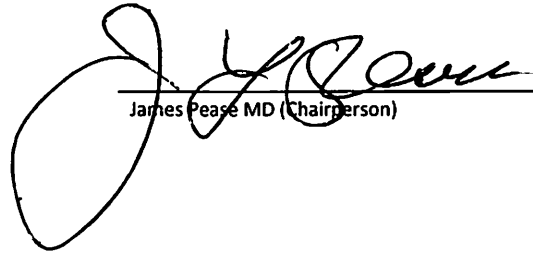
Cheryl reported September deaths numbered 107.

A breach of the hospital computer system slowed down the entering of births. We reached out to the hospital to see if we could help, but they declined citing they had a computer set up just for that use.

The Indiana State Dept. of Health reached out to Cheryl to see if they could help with the Afghanistan Refuge births. There was really nothing they could help with as the hospital was sending their birth to Bartholomew Co. Hospital. Johnson Memorial had four refuge births before the breach. Notices were sent out to them but some had already left the state.

Food & Tattoo permits have been mailed out. Payments are starting to trickle in. It is estimated Johnson Co. has about 700 food establishments.

There was no new business and the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 am.


James Pease MD (Chairperson) _____ Date _____