

**Minutes of the
Chicago Board of Health
Wednesday, April 19, 2023
9:00 AM – 10:30 AM
DePaul Center
333 S. State Street, 2nd Floor Boardroom (Room 2002)**

I. Roll Call

Quorum was established based upon the following:

Present In-Person: Joel Johnson, MEd
Óscar Iván Zambrano, MPH, MBA, CDM
Matthew M. Davis, MD, MAPP
Horace E. Smith, MD
Carmen Vergara, MPH, RN-BSN
Steven Rothschild, MD

Virtual Participation: Debra Wesley, MSW
Rosa Martínez Colón, MS

Absent: Janet Lin, MD, MPH, MBA

For the Department: Allison Arwady, MD, Commissioner
Chicago Department of Public Health

II. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:00am by Steven Rothschild, MD.

III. Approval of the Minutes

The Board voted and approved the March minutes.

The Board voted and approved February (Addendum) minutes.

IV. Commissioner's Update

Commissioner Arwady provided the following department wide COVID and non-COVID updates:

- **Mayor-elect:**
 - Dr. Arwady shared the mayor-elect's transition website and encouraged all to voice their concerns and/or opinions on www.chicagoforthepeople.org.
- **Bureau of Community Health Strategy:**
 - CDPH has launched the search for its next Chief Racial Equity Officer/Deputy Commissioner, closing May 5th, and Chief Public Health Informatics Officer, closing May 12th.
 - The City launched the Cumulative Impact Assessment website, which includes information about the assessment goals, project management structure, and timeline. Visit the website at chicago.gov/cumulativeimpact for more information.
 - CDPH is honored to have been selected by Smart Cities Connect as a 2023 Smart 50 Award recipient for the Chicago Health Atlas. The Awards celebrate top global projects in place each year to improve quality of life using data.
 - Within CDPH's Office of Epidemiology & Research, there were three abstracts submitted to the 2023 APHA Annual Meeting.
- **Bureau of Behavioral Health**

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- The CARE Team launched its fifth team in the Loop. So far, CARE teams have responded to over 700 911 calls without use of force or arrest.
- CDPH mental health clinicians are now providing free mental health services at 4 Chicago Public Library locations.
- CDPH published a Xylazine informational handout for people who use drugs and is working to connect people to Chicago Recovery Alliance's drug checking program, which can provide Xylazine test strips.
<https://overcomeopioids.org/free-resources>
- The Medication Assisted Recovery NOW (MAR NOW) program that connects people to immediate buprenorphine, methadone, and naltrexone statewide has officially expanded to 24/7 access.
- **Bureau of Health Protections and Disease Control**
 - Dr. Arwady discussed the Public Health Emergency ending and the indirect effects of this funding ending. This includes the pause on the re-enrollment for Medicaid despite the huge growth of Medicaid in previous years. Illinois, at the end of May, will be sending out the notification of re-enrollment with CDPH to support in re-determination process. There will be significant drops in SNAP benefits with the funding ending leading to high levels of food insecurity. CDPH WIC clinics are feeling the effects of this ending already.
 - COVID vaccines remain free due to the state purchasing an influx of quantity, they remain free while the supply lasts. Dr. Arwady discussed how this many become an issue for those who are under and uninsured, who will have to pay for vaccines when the supplies run out. CDPH continues to advocate for vaccines-for-adult program. CDPH intends to continue to maintain COVID data, Dr. Arwady's Facebook lives, and surveillance.

Board Member Comments and Questions:

- **Joel Johnson:** What is the funding source for the CARE team? Is there an opportunity to bill for these crises encounters? Are the 6 mental health clinics certified?
- **Dr. Smith:** Requested the data that determined having the mental health clinicians at libraries is necessary. Stated that there is no mechanism to have everyone covered by public health for covid and in general.
- **Carmen Vergara:** Is there an estimate timeline for the vaccine-for-adult program, as there are many crises of individuals rationalizing their medications.
- **Dr. Davis:** Does Chicago have dollars for a stockpile of Paxlovid when the next wave occurs?
- **Debra Wesley:** What are the thoughts on moving CSCC from Mayoral Office to CDPH?

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- **Dr. Rothschild:** Communication is fundamental to Public Health despite it continuing to get harder with public health getting politicized.

V. Board President’s Comments:

Comments were not made due to board president being absent from meeting.

VI. Presentations:

Title: Public Information Office

Andy Buchanan

Director of Public Affairs/Public Information Officer

Chicago Department of Public Health

Board Member Comments and Questions:

- **Óscar Zambrano:** How diverse is the PIO office? In the long term, what is the strategic position in reaching marginalized communities? Encouraged reframing the mindset to one that integrating language in the communications of Public Health, not looked at just as an “additional cost”.
- **Debra Wesley:** Does PIO have a strategy to engage youth in providing a pipeline to this career?
- **Rosa Martínez Colón:** Emphasized the importance of language and representation being integrated in the hiring processes.
- **Dr. Smith:** Emphasized that thinking must change at the top level to reach the marginalized communities, speaking about the black community. Favoring those who have been shut out. Emphasized the importance of representation at the top levels to reach the marginalized communities.
- **Dr. Rothschild:** How does the Board of Health members support the advocacy work that CDPH is doing about sustainability in funding?

VII. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

VIII. Standing Business

- **Policy Update:**
 - **Federal:**
 1. Sustainable Funding for Public Health: CDPH continues to advocate for sustainable, flexible funding for public health. Dr. Arwady and former Commissioner Dr. Julie Morita published an op-ed in Chicago Tribune elevating the importance of funding local public health.
 - **State:**
 1. Data modernization: CDPH continues to advocate for data modernization efforts, including supporting the Access to Public

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Health Data Act ([HB2039](#)) which allows existing public health data to be shared more easily between state and local health departments.

2. Sustainable public funding: Dr. Arwady is testifying at the Senate Committee Hearing for Appropriations—Health and Human Services to advocate for an increase in state allocation to the Local Health Protection grant ([SB2492](#)), which funds activities required of local health department to keep their communities healthy and safe.

- **City:**

1. Transition: CDPH looks forward to working with the new administration and City Council. The vision Mayor-elect Brandon Johnson articulated during the campaign is aligned with Healthy Chicago 2025 and its commitment to address racial justice and health equity.

- **Finance Update:** There were no financial updates.

IX. New Business

There was no new business.

X. Old Business

There was no old business.

XI. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:32 am by Dr. Steven Rothschild.