

KNOX COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING MINUTES
February 24, 2021 5:00 PM
Knox County Health Department
Via Zoom Meeting

Present:

Martha Buchanan, MD, Secretary
Jack E. Gotcher, Jr., DDS, Chair
Marcy Souza, DVM
Maria Hurt, DNP
Glenn Jacobs, Knox County Mayor
Patrick O'Brien, MD
Ani Roma, Citizen Representative
James Shamiyeh, MD
Lisa Wagoner, RN; representing Superintendent Bob Thomas, Knox County Schools
Dianna Drake, PharmD (joined 5:48)

Absent:

none

Others Attending:

KCHD: Katharine Killen (Zoom Host), Charity Menefee, Anderson Little (recorder)
Knox County: David Sanders, Esq. representing Knox County Law Department
UTK: Spencer Gregg, MD, UTK Health Center

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Dr. Gotcher called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM

II. ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM

Chair Dr. Gotcher requested Ms. Little take roll call to confirm establishment of the quorum. Nine Board members were in attendance with one joining late. Quorum was met.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM February 10, 2021 MEETING

Mayor Jacobs moved to approve the minutes seconded by Dr. Hurt. The motion passed via roll call vote with those present, with one member abstaining.

IV. SET THE AGENDA

Motion made by Ms. Wagoner and seconded by Dr. Buchanan to set the agenda. The motion passed unanimously with those present, via roll call vote, 9 to 0.

V. KNOX COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT BENCHMARK PRESENTATION BY DR. BUCHANAN

Vaccine Update:

Currently, KCHD is vaccinating those who fall in the first three priority groups – such as health care workers, childcare staff and K-12 teachers and staff – and those who are 65 and older. A full list of eligible groups can be found on KCHD's Vaccination Information webpage. As stated previously, with the expanded eligibility groups this week, there are thousands more people who can now receive the vaccine. However, eligibility doesn't mean access. The demand for this vaccine continues to greatly outpace the supply. So, KCHD asks everyone to please be patient.

For an updated look at vaccine numbers across the county, visit KCHD's Vaccine Information Page. KCHD will be updating the data every Tuesday and Friday. On this page, visitors can see that nearly 85,000 vaccinations have been given in Knox County. KCHD has administered more than 17,600 vaccines.

Per the State data, which was updated yesterday, Knox County leads the big four metro counties in percent of the population vaccinated with at least one dose. Dr. Buchanan stated there is a long way to go, but she is encouraged by the progress our community is making. It's a testament to the great partnerships within the larger public health system in the County.

Local COVID-19 situation:

- 55 new confirmed cases since yesterday's report.
- 1,367 are active cases.
- 54 Knox County residents are currently hospitalized.
- 2 additional deaths were reported today, raising the total to 530.

All of the data discussed can be found on the KCHD website at covid.knoxcountyttn.gov/case-count

Benchmark 1: Sustained reduction or stability in new cases for 14 days / GREEN

Over this time period, KCHD saw daily new cases drop to approximately 91 cases per day – down from the previous reporting period, which was around 120. The average number of cases over the past 7 days was 67. This is a lower average than the previous months.

Because of these factors, KCHD is representing this benchmark as a cautious green.

Benchmark 2: Community-wide sustained and increased diagnostic testing with consistent or decreased test result reporting turnaround time / YELLOW

Regarding testing, KCHD continues to see this figure trend down. KCHD is hopeful that this is an indication of a lower burden of disease across the community, but they will continue to keep a close eye on it. KCHD continues to urge anyone who has symptoms or has been exposed to COVID-19 to get tested.

Regarding lab turnaround time, this number continues to be consistent at less than 1.5 days for the community.

Because of the lower testing numbers, coupled with a shorter lab turnaround time, KCHD is representing this benchmark as yellow.

Benchmark 3: Sustained or increased public health capability

As previously mentioned, KCHD has changed up this benchmark to better reflect current capacity. As the bulk of the response activities have shifted from case investigations and contact tracing to vaccine distribution, this benchmark needed to change to reflect that.

The goal is to increase vaccine distribution across the County. For this benchmark, KCHD is looking at the full public health system, not just KCHD, but also community healthcare partners. The graph on this benchmark will be used to show trends related to vaccine administration by provider. KCHD is working to build standard deviations into this data to demonstrate trends. However, as illustrated by the graph,

vaccine distribution continues to trend in the right direction across our community. Knox County did experience a slight dip in vaccines distributed over the past week, but not all vaccine efforts have been documented during this time yet.

This week, KCHD is representing this benchmark as yellow.

Benchmark 4: Health care system capabilities remain within current and forecasted surge capacity / GREEN

During this time period, KCHD continued to see hospitalization numbers decrease. This is encouraging and something KCHD hopes to see continue.

After speaking with hospital partners, they have recommended that the benchmark be represented as green.

Benchmark 5: Sustained or decreased COVID-19 related death rate for identified positive or probable cases / YELLOW

During this time period, KCHD has seen 27 deaths associated with COVID-19, which is down from 32 last week. Since the beginning of the year, there have been an average of 4 deaths per day, but an average of 1.9 deaths a day over the past 14 days. This is trending in the right direction, but it needs to see it continue.

The information available leads KCHD to represent this benchmark as yellow.

Supplemental Data:

Chart 1: New daily COVID cases per 100,000 population.

The first chart shows new daily COVID cases per 100,000 population. As of today, the 14-day trendline shows 17 new cases per 100,000 and our seven-day trendline shows 14 new cases per 100,000, which is down from last week.

Chart 2: Percent positive Test

The second chart shows the percent positive for COVID-19. This data is received from the Tennessee Department of Health. The seven-day average for percent positive in Knox County is 13.57%, which is slightly down from last week.

VI. UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE MEDICAL CENTER AT KNOXVILLE DATA UPDATE BY DR. SHAMIYEH

Dr. Shamiyeh presented data from the University of Tennessee Medical Center and regional data on COVID hospitalization, (see attached PowerPoint).

VII. QUESTIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS (presentations sent previously)

University of Tennessee Knoxville/Knox County Schools (KCS)

No additional information was added by either institution to the previously submitted reports.

VIII. DISCUSSION OF MEETING SCHEDULE IF IN-PERSON MEETINGS RESUME

Due to the Governor's possible decision to not extend his Executive Order permitting virtual meetings, the Board discussed the meeting schedule moving forward. Motion was made by Ms. Roma and seconded by Mayor Jacobs to move to meeting once a month, with the next meeting being on March 17, 2021, unless otherwise needed with virtual meetings to begin at 5PM; if in-

person they would begin at 5:30. The motion passed, via roll call vote unanimously among those present.

IX. REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

A. COVID-19 FACE COVERING REGULATION, NO. 2020-1

No action was taken on this regulation. This regulation has no expiration date

B. COVID-19 RESTAURANT OCCUPANCY LIMITATION AND EARLY CLOSURE REGULATION, NO. 2021-1

This regulation is set to expire on March 4, 2021.

Motion made by Dr. O'Brien and seconded by Mayor Jacobs to sunset this order and extend the closure time for bars/restaurants from 11 PM to 12 AM. Regulation No. 2021-2 (Restaurant Occupancy Limitation and Early Closure) to go into effect February 25, 2021 at 11:59 pm EST. The Board voted 9-1 (confirmed by roll call) to continue the measure until 11:59 pm EST AM March 18, 2021.

C. COVID-19 SOCIAL GATHERING LIMITATION REGULATION, NO. 2020-8

This regulation is set to expire on March 4, 2021. Motion made by Ms. Roma and seconded by Ms. Wagoner to extend Regulation 2020-8 to 12:01 AM March 18, 2021. The motion passed, via roll call vote, 9-1.

X. OTHER BUSINESS

Dr. O'Brien brought up a typographical error in the minutes for the November 10, 2020 regarding bar and restaurant closure time. The Board will make this an agenda item for the next meeting on March 17, 2021.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, Dr. Souza moved to adjourn the meeting with a second by Dr. Drake. Meeting was adjourned at 6:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Martha Buchanan, MD, Senior Director and Public Health Officer
Knox County Health Department
Secretary, Knox County Board of Health

List of Attachments:

- COVID-19 Update February 24, 2021; PowerPoint Presentation by Dr. Shamiyeh