



Statewide Advisory Commission on Immunizations

Meeting minutes 12/1/22

I. Attendees Members and Staff:

- Monique Soileau-Burke (Chair), David Blythe, Yen Dang, Rebecca Carter, Aditya Chopra, Toby Gordon, Victoria McIntyre, Janaki Deepak, Russell Lewis, Dianna Abney, Alyson Bennett, Sara Vazer, Elizabeth Elliott, Eleese Booker-Ragin (staff)
- Public Comment Guest: Mr. Mazer

II. Welcome and Introductions

- Dr. Soileau-Burke called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM. Commission Members introduced themselves. Guests introduced themselves.
- Dr. Soileau Burke - spoke with commission members over the summer to discuss views and thoughts about commission goals since we are not a policy or enforcement body.
- Dr. Vazer – feels there is a lot of resistance involving the adult population regarding COVID, particularly in veterans. Looking for input from other commission members to help encourage adult patients to get flu and COVID-19 vaccines.
- Dr. Chopra – People have to be better educated about the boosters; people are frustrated because they are being asked to get yet another vaccine. We have to be able to explain about bivalent boosters - not because the others are not working as well and we have to be able to provide education. This education should not just come from CVS and Walgreens who are trying to immunize everyone just to get their numbers in.
- Dr. Deepak – In the primary population the flu shot is starting to become a hurdle, so is pneumococcal. We just had a young person admitted for strep pneumonia and we have vaccines to prevent this. Our group can put together some kind of messaging about how vaccines can help and include patient stories about how vaccines can help.
- Dr. Soileau-Burke – I took a look at the goals and bylaws which include making recommendations to increase immunizations for children and adults. In the past we have been able to write letters recommending more education and more distribution of education. That would be our first step. We will have new MDH administration that have strong public health advocates. We should look to partner with other commissions to help promote vaccination and education.
- Dr. Gordon – The more that we can bring a coalition together the better. Some of groups may be looking at the barriers and who is not getting vaccination or who does not have access to primary care. We can look at how other groups are looking at the same questions, maybe we can work on the same priorities. We have to look at removing the barriers.
- Dr. Lewis – Do we have any data or literature about the barriers? Can we explore more innovation in the ways we interact with our patients? Can we send out videos about the importance of vaccines, since so many people have access to technology at least on their cell phones. Just wondering if any has tried this.

- Dr. Burke – We are working on strategies to become a source of information for parents and patients. At my office we are hiring younger staff to increase our social media presence. Having staff dedicated to social media cost money this can be a barrier. How people access and look for information looks different depending on your age. We are identifying ways to use social media and I'm curious about how others are using social media.
- Dr. Deepak - Tag team with other groups like the tobacco prevention group, they are always sending messages about smoking and vaping.
- Dr. Abney – There are local people that people can talk to, we want to find local people that they can listen to, they can see and trust. Not everyone is going to listen to their doctor.
- Dr. Dang – Maybe we can collaborate with other organizations to create a best practices document. In the bylaws there are points about cost and access, maybe in the future we can do a yearly review for each vaccine about cost and access. People who are making policy and laws don't know what a huge undertaking it is to administer vaccine.
- Dr. Gordon – We have to talk to the people who are not getting the vaccine to find out why. There are ways to get that information, we need to talk to the people we are trying to target. Getting a push from news coverage.
- Dr. Blythe – Agrees that we should try to work with other commissions. We can work with the department that oversees the commissions. Suggest an intentional review of what vaccines are routinely recommended by ACIP.
- Elizabeth Elliott – In school health, in Montgomery County, access is an issue, the clinics are full and there have been vaccine availability issues from the state and there are staffing issues. There is mistrust from parents as to why the students have to be vaccinated now but didn't have to be vaccinated last year. School have not been willing to exclude children. When we get the students an appointment there are many other barriers such as, vaccines out of stock, missed appointment, cannot get appointments for weeks to months. Please consider doing outreach with diabetes groups, they are in need of vaccination.
- Dr. Carter - vaccine needs to be available at the time of outreach. There is no easy way to fund vaccines or supplies for a mobile clinic. Look at less traditional sources of vaccine delivery.
- Dr. Soileau-Burke – let's come up with action items that we can work on in the next month or two that we can put forth to the next administration.
- Dr. Gordan – is the vaccine available? Are there spaces for appointments? We can come up with talking points to discuss with other commissions.
- Dr. Deepak - how do we engage with other commissions so we can talk about our need for education and leverage the COVID vaccine availability like the mobile unit for vaccine availability?
- Dr. Lewis – is there a way to do an inventory? What do we have to leverage? Where are we getting our data from? Do we have talking points? What are the existing resources. And also access, do we have anyone who would be will to take on a mobile pilot? Would Hopkins or University of Maryland be willing to take something like this on?

- Dr. Vazer – In Montgomery County has access to COVID and Flu but it is difficult to pull the patients to the clinic.
- Dr. Soileau-Burke – The state has a lot of this information about vaccination rates and availability.

III. Public Comment

- Public Comment – Comments from Mr. Mazer

IV. Meeting Adjournment

- Dr. Soileau- Burke will create and email a list of action items for the Commission to tackle for 2023.
- Commission meetings will continue quarterly, with evening meetings at or after 6 PM.
- El ease will send out meeting minutes and dates and time for out next commission meeting.