

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF HEALTH

Thursday, September 13, 2018

Attendees: Dr. Cheryl Bettigole, Dr. Jeff Hom, Dr. Caroline Johnson, Jean Ottis, Josh Roper, Esq., Lauren Ryder, Raynard Washington, Diane Warren.

Board Members: Dr. Ana Diez-Roux, Dr. Thomas Farley, Dr. Marla Gold, Dr. Jennifer Ibrahim (by phone), Dr. Scott McNeal, (Dr. Amid Ismail (by phone)).

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:

Health Commissioner and Board President Thomas A. Farley, MD, MPH called the meeting to order at 5:38 pm, welcoming the Board and guests. Dr. Farley asked for comments and questions on the minutes from the August 9, 2018 Board meeting. Hearing none, he entertained a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. It was moved and seconded. Motion passed.

MANDATORY REPORTING OF NEONATAL ABSTINENCE SYNDROME

Dr. Caroline Johnson presented on Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS); revisiting the Board-requested updates to the initial proposal for mandatory reporting identified information on NAS directly to the Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH). The Board requested a reconsideration of broadening the original cases definitions to include (1.) Reporting requirement for NAS due to substances other than opioids (2.) Reporting requirement for asymptomatic, but exposed neonates.

Dr. Johnson outlined each consideration as follows:

Should NAS due to substances other than opioids be reported?

Pros:

- Limiting reporting to opioid-related NAS, may reinforce the perception that people who use opioids are treated better than those who use other drugs
- Limiting reporting to opioid-related NAS may lead to unclear diagnosis and under-reporting as presenting symptoms could be connected to other drugs
- Intervening in all cases of NAS may provide an opportunity to provide resources on drug and addiction treatment programs and harm reduction services
- PDPH reporting intervention will serve as a distribution point for Narcan
- Intervening in all cases of NAS will allow for access to social / health services and HIV and HCV testing

Cons:

- Intervening in all cases of NAS may require more resources

PDPH Recommendation: The Department recommends having all cases of NAS – regardless of drugs used by mothers - reportable to accurately measure the incidence of NAS and offer interventive services to families.

Should asymptomatic, exposed neonates be reported?

PDPH Recommendation: The Department recommends NOT requiring reporting of asymptomatic NAS cases at this time for the following reasons:

- Including asymptomatic NAS cases would rely on mother’s known or suspected history of substance use
- Including asymptomatic NAS cases would lead to an unmanageable workload for providers and PDPH administrators

The Board voted as follows:

Yes:

- Dr. Ana Diez-Roux
- Dr. Thomas Farley
- Dr. Scott McNeal
- Dr. Jennifer Ibrahim

No:

- Dr. Marla Gold

Dr. Farley motioned to approve the recommendation to report cases other than opioid-related NAS and not to report asymptomatic, exposed neonatal cases. Motion seconded. **Motion passed.**

NUTRITION POLICY UPDATE

Dr. Cheryl Bettigole presented on PDPH chronic disease prevention division’s policy updates on bill 180555 that permits Philadelphia merchants to sell fresh fruits and vegetables on the sidewalks outside of their building. Highlights below.

Issue:

- Low income neighborhoods and communities of color have a lesser access to fresh fruits and vegetables and disproportionate numbers of fast food outlets and advertising that comes with them
- 23% of Philadelphians live in high poverty areas with low-to-no access to healthy food
- Residents of low-income neighborhoods are half as likely to have access to quality grocery stores as those living in high-income neighborhoods

Current State of Sidewalk Produce Sales in Philadelphia:

- A small number of stores sell outdoor produce

- For interested stores, there is confusion about City policies and licenses permitting outdoor produce sales
- Prior to new policy, the City required merchants bring in produce and their shelving each night

Dr. Bettigole then outlined PDPH's next steps in supporting the revised policy, which includes promotion and outreach. There will also be free technical assistance with produce purchasing, equipment, marketing and merchandising support for interested stores.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

Dr Farley adjourned the meeting at 6:27.