

**Minutes of the  
Chicago Board of Health  
Wednesday, January 31, 2024  
9:00 AM – 10:30 AM  
Damen Building  
1340 S. Damen Ave., 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Training Room (4024)**

**I. Roll Call**

Quorum was established based upon the following:

**Present In-Person:** Janet Lin, MD, MPH, MBA  
Joel Johnson, MEd  
Debra Wesley, MSW  
Rosa Martínez Colón, MS  
Carmen Vergara, MPH, RN-BSN  
Steven Rothschild, MD

**Absent:** Oscar Ivan Zambrano, MPH, MBA, CDM  
Horace E. Smith, MD

For the Department: Olusimbo Ige, MD, Commissioner  
Chicago Department of Public Health

**II. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 9:04 am by Janet Lin, M.D. President.

**III. Approval of the Minutes**

The Board voted and approved the October minutes. The Board voted and approved the November minutes, and Rosa Martinez Colon abstained.

**IV. Commissioner's Update**

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

- **Departmental Move**
  - CDPH staff move from DePaul Building to three separate locations and interim meeting space for Board of Health meetings.
    - On 1/12, CDPH staff moved from the DePaul building and integrated into two existing CDPH buildings and a new temporary City-owned site. There are ongoing considerations for a permanent CDPH location.
- **Bureau of Community Health**
  - Medicaid Redeterminations Winter Campaign
    - CDPH deployed its Community Health Response Corps and activated 211 Metro Chicago for coordinated training efforts for the City's homeless services community. In partnership with the MICAH Bureau, a new bilingual messaging campaign, "Don't Freeze. Renew Your Medicaid Before You're Due," will be available in Spring 2024.
  - Diabetes Empowerment Education Program

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- The Community Health Response Corp received Diabetes Empowerment Education Program (DEEP) training, described as a multi-cultural, diabetes self-managed education program that enables individuals to control their diabetes and reduce complication risks at the University of Illinois at Chicago.
- **Bureau of Health Protection**
  - COVID-19 Vaccination
    - CDPH is working on an intergovernmental agreement with the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) to reimburse HFS to cover administration costs of COVID-19 vaccines to eligible uninsured or underinsured participants of the Bridge Access Program. CDPH is re-engaging the six (6) regional leads through the HCEZs to increase vaccine uptake and confidence in the 2023-2024 COVID-19 vaccine.
- **Publications**
  - HJ Barbian, A Kittner, R Teran , S Bobrovska , X Qiu, K English, SJ Green, I Ghinai, M Pacilli, MK Hayden (2024). A response playbook for early detection and population surveillance of new SARS-CoV-2 variants in a regional public health laboratory. *BMC Public Health*. 2024 Jan 2;24(1):59.
  - EAG Faherty, D Yuce, EAG Faherty, D Yuce , C Korban, K Bemis, R Kowalski, S Gretsche, E Ramirez, R Poretsky, A Packman, K Plaisier Leisman, M Pierce, A Kittner, R Teran, M Pacilli. Using Wastewater Surveillance Data to Complement Influenza Surveillance in Cook County, Illinois, October 2022–March 2023. (2023). *Science of the Total Environment*. 2023, 169551, ISSN 0048-9697.

**Board Member Comments and Questions:**

- Encourage advocating for CDPH to continue collaboration with community health clinics.
- Considerations of the determination of a new CDPH location to include post-COVID environment, upholding its public health mission, community integration, and cross-departmental interaction with other City departments; as well as collaboration with communities and community partners with preexisting development plans for next CDPH location.
- CDPH’s Medicaid redetermination efforts do not include New Arrivals, e.g. Health Benefit for Immigrant Adults (HBIA) and Health Benefit for Immigrant Seniors (HBIS). However, are engaged with a community which is navigating gaps.
- Redirection of COVID dollars impact on CDPH’s current work—CDPH underspends due to City processes and timelines. However, the department

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does actively attempt to redirect dollars to other areas of opportunity and aggressively spends active dollars.

**V. Board President’s Comments:**

Comments regarding standing business and new business will be made after the presentation.

**VI. Presentations:**

**Department:** Chicago Department of Public Health

**Title:** CDPH 2023 Accomplishments & 2024 Key Priorities

**Speaker:** Olusimbo Ige, MD, MS, MPH, Commissioner

**Board Member Comments and Questions:**

- Question regarding workforce retention considerations.
  - The department considers various constraints through the hiring process, grant limitations and interest.
- Question regarding specific actions from the Cumulative Impact Assessment.
  - Working groups are leading policies based on the recommendations that hold departments accountable for committing to the work that begins in 2024 and the future.
- Question regarding CDPH’s outlook on crisis management.
  - CDPH has a preparedness and response team that embed crisis management in all aspects of work. In the event of a crisis, current resources are directed and redirected to support.
- Question regarding public health work in the City of Chicago in comparison to New York.
  - Previous work centered health equity and clarity about anti-racism in the work. The new landscape focuses on life expectancy, which is a best practice, and amplification of health care versus the public health component.
- Comment regarding the use of existing community resources for senior populations and advocacy for embedding faith-based organizations in the public health component to best educate faith-based leaders and respective communities.

**VII. Public Comments**

There was one public comment from Joy Bunton.

Express concerns over the CDC masking guidelines and the effectiveness of a surgical mask compared to respiratory masks for high-risk individuals. Addresses the importance of respiratory masking for healthcare professionals to reduce the risk of Long Covid and its harmful effects. Recommends that the Public Health Department evaluate the CDC’s

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masking guidelines with ADA considerations to ensure the protection of the immunocompromised.

**Response:** CDPH routinely meets with leaders of Chicago healthcare systems to discuss strategies to mitigate the risks of respiratory virus and we share health alerts to the network weekly to provide guidance and updates. The department remains vigilant and continues to work to reduce the impact of COVID on people's lives.

**VIII. Standing Business**

- **Policy update**
  - City council meeting on 1/31/24 that CDPH Policy is monitoring.
  - Exploring opportunities to work with the State and Federal government.
  - Waiting on the Board regarding policy interest and feedback in current impact.
- **Finance update:**
  - Submitting Invoices for Payment
    - CDPH's payment process is structured such that vendor invoices are received in most cases, by the program first and then the program attaches the invoice to an Expenditure Processing Form (EPF). It is imperative that Program Directors ensure that invoices are submitted, via EPF, within 3 business days of receipt. Programs will need to reach out to the vendor asap if the invoice has not been received once the goods have been delivered or services have been provided. These invoices need to be submitted to Finance via the EPF app.

**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. Janet Lin.