

Chicago Board of Health  
Meeting Summary: August 15, 2018  
DePaul Center, 333 South State Street

**Roll Call**

Board Members Present

Carolyn C. Lopez, M.D., President  
Melanie Dreher, RN, PhD.  
Victor M. Gonzalez  
Steven K. Rothschild, M.D.

Board Members Absent

Juan M. Calderon  
Adele Joy Cobbs, M.D.  
Caswell A. Evans, Jr., D.D.S., M.P.H.  
Horace E. Smith, M.D.  
Joseph B. Starshak

Julie Morita, MD., Commissioner

For the Department

Fikirte Wagaw, 1<sup>st</sup> Deputy Commissioner

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**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 9:06 a.m. by Dr. Lopez, Board President.

**Approval of Minutes:** No quorum, July 2018 minutes were not approved.

**Commissioner's Update:** Fikirte Wagaw reported the following:

**West Nile Virus:** In July we determined the need to spray in parts of Chicago Lawn to eradicate adult mosquitoes. July was the first time we sprayed this year, following an increase in mosquitoes testing positive for the virus. The second plan to spray is set for tomorrow evening in the same area and our vector control team will continue to monitor traps citywide to determine future spraying, if needed. Don't forget to 'FIGHT THE BITE'! Use EPA-approved mosquito repellents and remember to use 311 to report dead birds, high grass and weeds and standing water.

**Food Access.** Last month, CDPH joined the Greater Chicago Food Depository to launch our new Mobile Food Veggie Rx initiative at our Greater Lawn clinic, which serves Mental Health and Women Infant and Children (WIC) clients. The Veggie Rx program invites Greater Lawn clients that have responded affirmatively to CDPH's 2-part food insecurity questionnaire to attend a monthly free food and vegetable distribution hosted by GCFD. At the kick-off, we distributed about 5,000 pounds of food to nearly 200 CDPH clients. In addition, clients received healthy recipe tips, using the foods being distributed. This is a new pilot initiative that we will be tracking closely in the coming months, with the hope of expanding to other CDPH sites if successful.

**Hepatitis C.** We released our first comprehensive data report on Hepatitis C virus (HCV) in Chicago last week as part of World Hepatitis Day. More than 26,000 people in Chicago—one of every 100 residents-- has HCV. Nationwide, HCV-associated deaths exceeded the number of deaths from the 60 next infectious diseases combined (including HIV). Yet approximately half of infected people do not know their status and HCV is funded significantly less than many other infectious diseases including Zika, tuberculosis and HIV. In addition to the new report, CDPH is working with the University of Chicago to improve HCV testing and treatment rates in Chicago. HCV is a viral infection that causes liver inflammation and can lead to serious liver damage, but is entirely treatable if detected.

**HIV primary care support.** Last Friday, Mayor Rahm Emanuel and CDPH announced that so far this year, through the expansion of HIV primary care support the city has served 1,814 more people living with HIV in Chicago. Now in the third year of the HIV primary care expansion partnership between CDPH, the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) and Howard Brown Health, the program is on track to serve five times as many individuals than were served in prior years. This milestone is due to an expanded partnership and greater collaboration between CDPH and community providers, now able to serve more residents living with HIV.

**2018 All Staff Development Conference.** Last Thursday, 500+ CDPH members gathered for our annual all staff development conference. Many great opportunities were offered throughout the day including healthy equity, cultural competence and healthy living workshops. My favorite was workshop was 'Innovation'! Also a special thank you to Deputy Commissioner Brian Richardson, for leading the charge and ensuring a smooth impactful successful day. To conclude the commissioner's update, she wanted me to share a special video from CDPH staff. Enjoy.

**Comments by the Board President:** Dr. Lopez mentioned that she enjoyed the morning car drive to attend today's meeting. She is returning from vacation and had an opportunity to reflect on how our society needs to restore civility in communication. In addition, she completed courses on how to understand what is happening currently at our U.S. border. She learned the University of Texas has a program that could assist the people detained at the border by offering translators, specifically the translation of the Mayan language.

**Policy Update:** Jesse Lava reported on the Policy Update:

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- *Opioids.* Mayor Emanuel announced new efforts to prevent over-dispensing of opioids as part of a continued fight against the epidemic. The City has implemented a policy that puts a seven-day limit on the amount of time a City employee can be covered for opioids for acute pain. Mayor Emanuel sent a letter to the city's largest employers asking them to follow suit. These efforts are a way of encouraging physician adherence to the CDC opioid guidelines released about two years ago and will also help restrict the availability of unused prescriptions on the black market.  
*CDC Funding.* The CDC announced that it will give hundreds of millions of dollars in grants for opioid prevention, but it has so far excluded the five biggest cities from consideration—New York, Chicago, LA, Houston, and Philadelphia—even though the needs and patterns of use in urban, suburban, and rural areas are very different. We spoke with Senator Durbin to inform him of the issue, following which he sent a letter alongside six other senators calling on the CDC to make such grants available to big cities. No Republicans signed the Senate letter, but Durbin did reach out to his House colleagues from the affected cities, and they sent a bipartisan letter to the CDC.
- *Chicago Prescription Benefit Program.* Mayor Emanuel and City Clerk Anna Valencia announced the selection of the vendor for the ChicagoRxCard, which will provide discounts on name brand and generic prescription drugs to any Chicago resident who wants to participate. The vendor is called Coast2Coast, and the cards will be available online, at libraries, and at many aldermanic offices. The discount benefit will also be included with the CityKey card, which is an ID for city residents. The prescription benefit involves a list of drugs that have fluctuating prices; while these prices are usually lower than the norm, occasionally they are higher, and the new benefit will require price transparency, so pharmacists must tell patients if there's no discount. In some other jurisdictions, this transparency is not required, or even prohibited.
- *Teen Pregnancy Evaluation Funding:* You'll recall the Trump Administration cut the final two years of funding (totaling \$2,000,000) from our evaluation of our teen pregnancy prevention work. A judge recently overturned that decision, allowing agencies including ours to reapply for funding. We have submitted our application and are hopeful the dollars will be restored, allowing us to continue this important work. The Trump administration has appealed the decision.
- *ACA.* As you may know, earlier this month, the Trump administration adopted a policy to allow greater use of short-term insurance plans that don't have to cover essential health benefits like prescription drugs, labs, mental health care, and maternity care, or be transparent about what they'll cover. They can also charge more for preexisting conditions. Originally intended as a stopgap, consumers will now be able to renew these plans for up to three years. As young, healthy people leave the long-term plans to get these bare-bones plans, premiums for everyone else could rise. However, some states are not cooperating, such as California and Maryland, which are allowing short-term plans for only three months, and Hawaii, which has banned short-term plans for anyone eligible for the ACA exchange. The Illinois General Assembly passed legislation to limit the use of short-term plans to six months and it is awaiting Governor Rauner's signature.

**Presentation:** "Public Health Accreditation" Kirsti Bocskay, PhD, MPH, Director of Performance Improvement

**New Business:** None

**Old Business:** Dr. Lopez mentioned, she will follow-up again and contact BOH members relative to their role as members.

**Public Comment:** None

**Adjourn:** The meeting adjourned at 10:39 a.m.

**Next Board Meeting: Wednesday, September 19, 2018, 9:00 AM**