

Chicago Board of Health  
December 16, 2020  
Virtual Meeting  
By Remote Means

*Pursuant to applicable law, the President determined that an in-person meeting was not practical or prudent. Accordingly, attendance at this meeting was via remote means only.*

**Roll Call**

Board Members Present

Carolyn C. Lopez, M.D., President  
Adele Joy Cobbs, M.D.  
Joseph B. Starshak  
Horace E. Smith, M.D.  
Victor M. Gonzalez  
Melanie Dreher, RN, PhD.  
Caswell A. Evans, Jr., D.D.S., M.P.H.  
Steven K. Rothschild, M.D.

Board Members Absent

Juan M. Calderon

For the Department

Allison Arwady, M.D., Commissioner

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 9:02am by Board President, Dr. Carolyn Lopez.

**Approval of Minutes:** Minutes of the November 2020 meeting were approved by the Board.

**Commissioner's Update:** Dr. Arwady presented Board members with an overview of the City's efforts on COVID-19. Dr. Arwady also provided Board members with an update on the Chicago Department of Public Health's (CDPH) COVID-19 vaccination planning, CDPH's collaboration with the Illinois Department of Public Health on vaccine registry, and the Chicago Scientific Vaccine Work Group, an independent group formed to assess the integrity of the Food and Drug Administration's processes that resulted in granting an Emergency Use Authorization for the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine.

**Board Member Comments:** Mr. Gonzalez inquired about the City's COVID-19 vaccine outreach to minority communities. Dr. Arwady informed Board members that outreach to minority communities is a primary focus of the City and CDPH's vaccine rollout strategy, and has established a vast community-based outreach program in collaboration with the Protect Chicago initiative to ensure accurate information on the COVID-19 vaccine reaches all Chicagoans. Mr. Starshak inquired about differences in how the virus was spreading in the second wave. Dr. Arwady informed Board members that in spring COVID-19 cases were overwhelmingly among older populations, in the summer in younger individuals, and presently cases are primarily among people in their 20's, 30's and 40's.

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**Mental Health Update:** Matthew Richards, Deputy Commissioner for Behavioral Health at the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) provided Board members with an update on the City's Framework for Mental Health Equity. The Framework for Mental Health Equity, led by CDPH, creates a system of mental healthcare where all persons can receive care regardless of ability to pay, health insurance status, or immigration status.

**Board Member Comments:** Dr. Rothschild inquired if the Framework for Mental Health Equity would be available in COVID-19 hotspots. Mr. Richards informed Board members that the expanded mental health program would offer services in areas where COVID-19 is most prevalent. Dr. Smith inquired about how information about the Framework for Mental Health Equity was being shared with the community. Mr. Richards provided Board members with an update on the City and CDPH's community-based outreach efforts to promote access to the expanded mental health programs in partnership with service providers and community leaders. Dr. Lopez inquired if the City and CDPH were considering using media to help promote the expanded mental health services. Mr. Richards informed Board members the City and CDPH's outreach program will use both social and earned media to help promote information about expanded mental health services on various platforms. Dr. Lopez complimented CDPH for their work to ensure that communities which are most impacted by trauma have more accessible access to mental health services.

**Old Business:** Dr. Lopez shared an update on the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board's recent decision to reject Trinity Health's plan to close Mercy Hospital.

**Public Comments:** Various representatives of Slaughter Free Chicago, an organization advocating to ban live markets and make Chicago a slaughter free city, shared remarks on the group's review of City and CDPH complaint and inspection reports, and recommended that the Chicago Food Code be amended with stricter enforcement measures for businesses with multiple violations.

**Board President Comments:** Dr. Lopez provided brief remarks in response to the Slaughter Free organization's public comments. Dr. Lopez also provided words of encouragement to Board members as a difficult year was ending, and wished all happy holidays.

**Adjourn:** Meeting adjourned at 10:21 AM.