



Conference of Local Health Officials

May 20, 2021

Meeting of the Conference of Local Health Officials

Meeting Began: 9:31am

Executive Members: Present: Jocelyn Warren, CLHO Chair, Lane; Carrie Brogoitti, Vice-Chair, Center for Human Development, Union; Tricia Mortell, Past Chair, Washington; Nic Calvin, Small County Rep, Harney; Pat Luedtke, Health Officer Rep, Lane; Jackson Baures, Large County Rep, Jackson; Katrina Rothenberger, Secretary/Treasurer, Marion; Lindsey Manfrin, Public Health Administrator of Oregon Caucus; Shane Sanderson, Small County Representative, Linn; Joseph Fiumara, Coalition of Local Environmental Health Specialists

Absent: None

Members Present (x if present):

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|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| X Baker - Nancy Staten | X Hood River - Trish Elliot | X Multnomah – Adelle Adams |
| X Benton – April Holland | X Jackson - Jackson Baures | X North Central PHD - Shellie Campbell |
| X Clackamas – Julie Albers | X Jefferson - Mike Baker | X Polk - Jacqui Umstead |
| X Clatsop – Margo Lalich | X Josephine - Audrey Tiberio | X Tillamook - Marlene Putnam |
| X Columbia - Mike Paul | X Klamath - Jennifer Little | X Umatilla - Joseph Fiumara |
| Coos - Anthony Arton | X Lake - Judy Clarke | X Union - Carrie Brogoitti |
| X Crook - Muriel DeLaVergne-Brown | X Lane - Jocelyn Warren | X Washington - Tricia Mortell |
| X Deschutes – Nahad Sadr-Azodi | X Lincoln - Florence Pourtal | X Wheeler - Shelby Hahn |
| X Douglas - Bob Dannenhoffer | X Linn - Shane Sanderson | X Yamhill - Lindsey Manfrin |
| Grant - Kimberly Lindsey | X Malheur - Sarah Poe | |
| X Harney - Nic Calvin | X Marion - Katrina Rothenberger | X HO Caucus - Pat Luedtke |
| | X Morrow – Nazario Rivera | X CLEHS Caucus - Joseph Fiumara |
| | | AOPHNS - Vacant |
| | | X PHAO - Lindsey Manfrin |

Public Health Division: Sara Beaudrault, Andrew Epstein, Brett Sherry, Cara Biddlecom



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Coalition of Local Health Officials: Morgan Cowling, Executive Director; Laura Daily, Program Manager

Guests: None

Motion: Jennifer Little moved to approve the April minutes. Sarah Poe seconded the motion. Unanimous vote, motion passed.

Agenda Items

Appointments: None

Environmental Health IGA: Brett Sherry provided an update on the Environmental Health Intergovernmental Agreement. A workgroup revised this IGA beginning in 2019 and completed their work in 2020. The IGA is currently in the contracts and procurement office. The hope is to have it completed by the new biennium (07/01/2021). If the remittance from the pool/lodging fees goes up or down, an announcement will go out to LPHAs (to administrators, so please forward to appropriate staff).

Joe Fiumara (CLEHS Rep) asked for an overview of how this relates to pools – this was a discussion at CLEHS and administrators should also be aware of it. OHA delegates the pool program to LPHAs. Right now, there are 7 counties that conduct their own pool programs, but there will be 6 LPHAs once this new agreement goes into effect (Clackamas County is returning that to OHA). There will be no changes for the 6 counties that are keeping this authority.

Triennial Reviews: Andrew Epstein provided an update on how Triennial Reviews will operate going forward. These reviews were paused in March 2020 due to COVID. OHA began a modified review process in October 2020 but halted again in December due to vaccination efforts. The plan is to begin reviews again in July 2021 and to operate based on the document provided in the meeting materials. The hope is to get back on track by April/May 2022. Andrew and Kari Christensen will begin reaching out to administrators in the next few months, and



OHA will revisit in-person reviews as travel restrictions are lifted. No questions from CLHO members on the new process or schedule.

PE Priorities Tables: Andrew Epstein reviewed the PE Priorities Table. At the beginning of the pandemic, this table (included in meeting materials) was developed to help LPHAs identify where their focus should be while also responding to COVID. With anticipated increased capacity at LPHAs with vaccinations increasing and the state reopening and with increased federal funding streams, OHA is proposing that the PE Priorities Table be retired as of 7/1/21. In retiring this table, one option would be to have program-specific documents that prioritize work within each program. Andrew asked for feedback on this plan to retire the table. CLHO members made the following comments:

- Jocelyn Warren pointed out that while cases are declining, the work is not decreasing for public health departments because temporary staff hired for COVID will be leaving and EOCs will be demobilized.
- Lindsey Manfrin also discussed that retiring the PE Table needs to be done in tandem with our long-term plans for COVID recovery.
- Florence Pourtal offered that Lincoln County has health promotion staff on COVID response right now, particularly for vaccination efforts among hard-to-reach populations. Retiring this table would make these staff members shift back to previous without anyone to continue vaccination efforts focused on equity.
- Katrina Rothenberger stated that Marion County will have to prioritize certain programs rather than pieces within each program and will still have to shift staff around to different programs to meet all requirements.

The discussion on whether or not to retire this table moved into workforce difficulties in general. Jocelyn Warren stated that this is a separate agenda item and asked that the rest of the discussion be saved for the sake of time. These comments provided during this time are summarized below:

- Joe Fiumara and Julie Aalbers both stated that they have federal funding streams but that they need to have skilled professionals to use the funding and run the programs.
- Shane Sanderson stated that Oregon needs to develop skilled, long-term staff rather than temporary staff who are funded through short-term funds.
- Sarah Poe also discussed pay equity for public health nurses and that it will be necessary to address this to solve any staffing issues.

Andrew and Sara Beaudrault will take these comments back to leadership to discuss next steps for the PE Priorities Table.



New Staff/Administrator Orientations: Andrew Epstein also provided an update on the new staff/administrator orientations. These orientations were previously held for new administrators, managers, and staff for LPHAs and Tribes, but they have been halted during COVID. OHA is exploring options of how to begin these and the best format for them. At JLT last month, there was an idea for virtual monthly drop-in sessions that can be recorded. OHA is looking for other ideas and feedback from LPHAs.

- Margo Lalich stated that these orientations would be very helpful for some of her newer staff and is excited for them to start back up. Andrew offered to connect to offer support in the meantime.
- Shane Sanderson, Shellie Campbell, and Adelle Adams all requested shorter sessions be held more frequently rather than half-day or full-day sessions.
- Shane Sanderson also requested that these sessions be on a predictable schedule (such as quarterly) so that it can be worked into hiring plan and to create cohorts of staff across the state.

The goal is to begin these sessions sometime this summer. Andrew will take this feedback back and will provide more information to CLHO at a later date.

HO Caucus: Pat Luetdke provided a brief update on the Health Officers Caucus. The Caucus is continuing to work on COVID Lessons Learned – this was presented to Director Banks and Dr. Sidelinger recently and was received well. Several counties have provided examples of the work they have done during COVID. Some examples include:

- Deschutes: EH staff working with businesses on infection control to then move into vaccination promotion
- Josephine: \$75 payments for vaccine promotion to practices
- Jackson has gone on listening tours and have worked with ranchers on messaging
- Lane: repositioned PH Grand Rounds

Dr. Luetdke also discussed conversations around congenital syphilis – Oregon has seen an increase in congenital syphilis rates. The Health Officers discussed some of the gaps in the system for identifying and preventing cases. This will be an ongoing conversation for Oregon's Public Health System.

Systems & Innovation Committee Update: Florence Pourtal (co-chair of S&I committee) presented some information on the discussions this committee has had on Modernization. Modernization plans for the next biennium will likely still be in the form of a program element, but S&I is proposing a menu option to give LPHAs



flexibility. The focus is on foundational capabilities that were most important during COVID: communications, leadership and organization, community partnerships, epidemiology and assessment, and equity/cultural competency. S&I is still exploring ideas for metrics and is waiting to see what PHAB will come out with this summer. For deliverables, S&I has been discussing a summary that can be given to CLHO for future advocacy to the Oregon Legislature since future funding is dependent on legislature approval.

ARPA Funds and Local Ideas: Cara Biddlecom provided an overview of the ARPA funds that have come to OHA to date. All funds are categorical, and information on how we can use these funds is being updated regularly, so there is limited clarity or plans for these funds. Some of the funds are (this will be provided in writing from OHA soon):

- Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity Grant supplement (for school reopening and testing in schools and summer camps)
- Vaccines for Children supplementals (65% of funds must go out LPHAs and community). This includes a vaccine communication campaign
- Funds to support and maintain the public health workforce (this is only a two-year timeframe)
- Advanced molecular and diagnostic laboratory work for COVID
- Funds to bolster the MIECHV Program
- OHA also expects some funds for STD work.

OHA is also interested in how LPHAs' counties planning to use ARPA funds. Marni Kuyl (Washington County) stated that getting these categorical funding sources outlined in writing will be helpful for counties deciding how they are spending local funds. Cara stated that these funds listed above should not preclude LPHAs from getting funding from county-level Coronavirus Reliefs Funds.

Pat Luedtke asked if there are conversations at Association of Oregon Counties or League of Oregon Cities about braiding together some of the funding streams together. Nahad Sadr-Azodi also asked if there is a way to work with County Boards of Commissioners to make sure public health isn't forgotten in providing relief to businesses. Morgan Cowling offered that many counties are waiting to see how these categorical funds will be used and that she is working with AOC to gain information and clarity around plans.



Curry County Update: Cara Biddlecom provided an update on the Curry County transfer. As of May 2nd, the Curry County Boards of Commissioners transferred authority back to OHA. OHA is now taking the lead on Environmental Health, Communicable Disease, and WIC services. This transfer has caused some concern among LPHA administrators and led to the next agenda/discussion item.

Public Health Workforce and Infrastructure: Jocelyn Warren opened up a discussion around public health workforce and infrastructure (continuing conversation earlier from PE Priorities Table). Jocelyn asked how LPHAs have changed the way they function. Katrina Rothenberger stated that Marion discontinued their reproductive health clinic but will keep up the relationships with CBOs and health system partners. She also added that they will add data informaticist and general public health worker positions. Trish Elliott stated that Hood River is down to 4 RNs and is having difficulty filling vacancies. She expressed concern over meeting OHA's requirements, particularly in light of the Curry County transfer. She also stated that the local hospital pays nurses significantly more than the county can pay. Pat Luedtke stated that he learned recently about one Oregon county that has a rule that allows them to boost the salary of a high-need position if it has been open for six months or more – he offered this to get LPHAs to begin thinking outside the box for this issue. Trish stated that Hood River is discussing sign-on bonuses but that pay comparisons are always to like-sized county health departments and not to other local industries. Several counties agreed that they do not lose RNs to other county health departments – they are most often lost to other local industries. Nahad asked about having OHA hire positions that can fill in at counties based on needs. Jocelyn stated that this might be worth convening a small group to discuss ideas.

Jocelyn Warren took the last few minutes of the meeting to recognize Muriel DeLaVergne Brown as it is her last meeting before her retirement. Katie Plumb will be taking over as the Crook County Health Administrator. Administrators on the call thanked Muriel for her service and participation and wished her luck in her retirement.

Meeting Adjourned at 10:58am