

**BRUNSWICK COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
June 27, 2022 6:30 p.m.**

- I. CALL TO ORDER/SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS:** The regular monthly meeting of the Brunswick County Health and Human Services Advisory Board was called to order by Dr. Flint King at 6:34 p.m. in the Health Services Lobby (Building A).
- A. PUBLIC COMMENT:** Dr. King asked for public comments. There were none.
- B. SPECIAL PRESENTATION:** Dr. King asked if there were any special presentations. Mrs. Lytch introduced Robin Johnson as the DSS Employee of the Quarter. Robin moved to the Adult Medicaid unit after working in Health Services and in 2020, took her current position in Public Housing. Her coworkers praised her for being the hardest worker and being amazing at what she does. She is also always there to pitch in when needed in Adult Medicaid while continuing her Public Housing duties. Mr. Harrelson noted that Health Services also had an Employee of the Quarter, Stacie Holmes. He read the nomination from Stacie's coworker who praised her for a complete dedication to her mission to ensure all that wanted to be vaccinated for COVID in Brunswick County was afforded that opportunity. Even through long, cold, wet and hot and humid days she remained steadfast.
- II. REGULARLY OCCURRING ITEMS:**
- A. ATTENDANCE:**
1. The following members were present:
 - Dr. Flint King, Chairman
 - Mr. Hubert Reaves
 - Mr. Gene Ward
 - Ms. Lisa Narron
 - Mr. Michael Norton
 - Dr. Allen Williams
 - Mr. Marty Cooke
 - Dr. Justin Asbury
 2. Members absent:
 - Ms. Cindy Carver
 - Dr. Jerry Smith
 3. Staff members present:
 - Cris Harrelson, Health Services Director
 - Cathy Lytch, Social Services Director
 - Anita Hartsell, Veteran Services Director
 - Cherie Browning, Director of Nursing
 - James Murray, Business Manager
 - Marjorie Rayl, Quality Assurance Specialist
 - Travis Greer, Health Educator

4. Guests present: None

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Minutes for the monthly meeting held on **March 28, 2022** were reviewed. Dr. King asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. There were none. **Mr. Norton moved to approve the minutes as presented. Ms. Narron seconded the motion. The vote to approve the minutes was unanimous. (Closed)**

C. AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS: Dr. King asked if there were any adjustments to the agenda. **Mr. Harrelson asked that “Energy Outreach Plan” be added under New Business as Item B. Dr. Williams moved to approve the agenda with aforementioned change. Mr. Ward seconded the motion. The vote to approve the agenda was unanimous. (Closed)**

D. STAFF AND COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. VETERANS SERVICES: Mrs. Hartsell reported that on April 25th, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced they are adding nine rare respiratory cancers to the list of presumed service-connected disabilities due to environmental exposures to fine particulate matter. This presumptive exposure is for Veterans who served any amount of time in the Southwest Asia theater of operations beginning August 2, 1990, to the present, or in Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Syria or Djibouti beginning September 19, 2001 to present. Mrs. Hartsell announced on March 30th the Department of Veterans Affairs published in the Federal Register Notice their plans to implement a pilot program required by the Puppies Assisting Wounded Servicemembers for Veterans Therapy Act. This act, signed into law in 2021 requires the VA to conduct a five-year pilot program to provide canine training to eligible veterans diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder as an element of a complementary and integrative health program. This will help the VA explore the benefits of service dog training and give needed data to make recommendations going forward to assist veterans. Veterans participating in the program will have the opportunity to train potential future service dogs with the goal of helping Veterans manage their PTSD symptoms. Clinicians at pilot sites (Anchorage, AK; Asheville, NC; Palo Alto, CA; San Antonio, TX; W. Palm Beach, FL) will determine the eligibility of veterans interested in the program. **(Info)**

2. CHILD FATALITY PREVENTION AND COMMUNITY CHILD PROTECTION TEAMS: Ms. Browning reported three cases were reviewed at the June 14th meeting with no system problems found. The next scheduled meeting is August 9th. There will be cases to review. **(Info)**

3. **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH:** Mr. Harrelson reported that all pools with submitted applications have been permitted. Staff is working with a few operators who have not yet submitted an application to assure a pool closed sign is displayed. The water protection program reports parts of the county are 10 to 11 weeks out between submission and approval or denial of a system. Staff has recruited for three on-site water positions. All three have been filled with two starting today and the third beginning on July 11th. They will be signed up to attend the State training for August and September. The Food & Lodging program conducted 150 inspections, made 187 site visits, received 14 plans for new establishments, and issued 81 permits. Foodservice facility staffing issues continue to impact the food safety operation which is reflecting lower scores posted. One new staff member has completed the State training and is working toward obtaining their authorization by the end of next month. Due to environmental health staffing issues, staff continues to complete inspections based on the potential risk the facility has been assigned. Mr. Norton referenced the water sampling letters from Chemours that are being circulated and if Brunswick County has been asked to assist in the testing. Mr. Harrelson responded no. **(Info)**

4. **HEALTH SERVICES:** Mr. Harrelson discussed Monkeypox, a pathogen identified in multiple countries including the U.S. in 25 states (including North Carolina) and the District of Columbia. Some identified individuals have no travel history to endemic regions. Recent cases in non-endemic countries have been predominantly in men who have sex with men. Clinical presentation resembles that of smallpox including flu-like symptoms, swelling of the lymph nodes and a rash. Disease in many patients in the current outbreak has not presented classically, instead presenting as proctitis alone, or with a rash localized to the genitals or perianal area. Monkeypox is transmitted to humans through close contact with an infected person or animal, or with clothing contaminated with the virus. It is usually a self-limited disease with symptoms lasting from two to four weeks. The fatality rate has been around 3-6%. Staff met as an Epi-Team to become familiar with the disease which is sometimes confused as a sexually transmitted disease. Information was also sent to local providers and a link to the CDC added to the Health Services website. The disease was first identified in 1958 in a colony of monkeys used for research. Mr. Harrelson reported that, on June 23rd, the Food and Drug Administration ordered Juul to take its e-cigarettes off the market in the U.S. Juul has become popular with teenagers because of its sweet and fruit-flavored pods and it looks like a USB flash drive making it easy to conceal. The product has been scrutinized as targeting teenagers and has caused more vaping instead of smoking cessation. The product lacked evidence that it would be appropriate for the protection of public health. Juul is appealing and has asked a federal court to block the stop order. **(Info)**

5. **HHS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT:** Mr. Harrelson reviewed the QI report on the STD clinic. A total of 25 responses were received in April from patients. Most appointments were made for the same day or the next day. Potential barriers to care were identified during the survey, including no appointment being available, hours of the clinic, childcare, and transportation. Patients waited no more than 15 minutes to be seen, and in many cases waited less than five minutes. Patients were satisfied that their privacy was protected, they were treated with respect, and their diagnoses and treatment were explained in a way they understood. **(Info)**

6. **NC LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:** Mrs. Lytch discussed House Bill 149/Senate Bill 408 – Medicaid Expansion. Medicaid expansion is back on the table at the North Carolina legislature and could mean the state won't miss the deadline for the \$1.5 billion signing bonus from the federal government to expand it this year. There are roughly a half million uninsured North Carolinians unable to get healthcare and the costs would be paid for almost entirely by the federal government if it passes. Many of those who would benefit work retail, service or part-time jobs that don't offer benefits and make too little money to afford private health assurance. This could impact local DSS by a significant increase in workload due to the determination of eligibility being processed by DSS staff. **(Info)**
7. **PUBLIC HOUSING SERVICES:** Mrs. Lytch reported the annual public hearing to receive comments regarding the PHA 5-Year Plan occurred on May 16th. There were no comments received at the meeting or in the office. Mrs. Lytch requested to meet with the Public Health Subcommittee to review the lottery plan for the waiting list and FMR rates. She would like to ask the commissioners to adopt the plan that allows PHA staff to adjust FMR as needed and as long as it is within 90-110% as required by HUD (along with additional waivers currently offered by HUD) in order to have the ability to be flexible in a timely manner. She explained that if the rate is set at 110% it may attract landlords while keeping people at 30%. It could be made mandatory that renters have a job. Mrs. Lytch is working with Megan and Amanda to push out information. Mrs. Lytch added that a Landlord Outreach Session occurred last week with 10 individuals attending and eight interested in participating. Staff discussed landlord expectations and will continue to hold outreach sessions every six months. **(Info)**
8. **SOCIAL SERVICES:** Mrs. Lytch noted that the state is working on a managed care plan for child welfare and foster care. The statewide plan will enable children, youth and families to have continuous care and avoid a delay in care when a child is placed with a relative in another county. The Child and Family Services plan will be implemented in December of 2023. Mrs. Lytch reported that March was Social Worker Appreciation Month and April was Child Abuse Prevention Month with staff planting their annual pinwheel garden at the walking trail. **(Info)**
9. **HHS EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES:** Mr. Harrelson reported nine postings at DSS, eight of which are continuous postings for Income Maintenance Caseworkers and Social Workers. One CPS Investigator is also needed. Health Services is recruiting for a Public Health CD Nurse. **(Info)**

III. OLD BUSINESS:

- A. **COVID-19:** Mr. Harrelson reported Brunswick County, according to the CDC's Community Levels tool, is listed at Medium regarding community transmissions of COVID-19. The case rate is somewhat elevated while new admissions and the percent of staffed inpatient beds are both down. **(Open)**
- B. **COVID-19 RESPONSE PLANNING STATUS:** Mr. Harrelson noted vaccinations are averaging 120/week in May and 104/week in June. Last week Moderna and Pfizer vaccines for children aged 6 months to 5 years old were approved for use. **(Open)**

- C. **VACANT HHS ADVISORY BOARD POSITION:** Mr. Harrelson reported no update in filling the position. **(Open)**
- D. **NC DHHS FISH CONSUMPTION ADVISORIES:** Mr. Harrelson said that staff has met with the Duke Superfund Community Engagement program to review their materials. A local group in Navassa would like a sign posted at the Brunswick River noting advisory levels. Health Services has not been involved in sign placement in the past. The graphics cannot be produced by county staff and would need to be outsourced and it is unknown who would be responsible for maintenance. A discussion followed with board members suggesting while NC Division of Environmental Quality may have not been receptive in the past, they should handle posting the signs. **(Closed)**
- E. **OPIOID SETTLEMENT STATUS:** Mr. Harrelson announced the BOCC unanimously moved to receive the funds and approve a budget amendment and grant project ordinance designating the current estimate of \$13,609,604 being dispersed between years 2022 and 2038 into a special revenue fund to be used for county-eligible projects. Staff will present recommended strategies to use these funds to the Board for consideration at future meetings. **(Open)**
- F. **COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT:** Mr. Greer gave an update on the CHA noting that kickoff with the vendor, KSA, and members of Health Services, Doshier Hospital and Novant Health Brunswick Medical Center occurred on May 27th. The opinion survey will go live on July 5th to gather community opinions and needs regarding access to medications, healthcare, housing, etc. The teams' goal is 450 touches. Key informant interviews have been requested with 36 scheduled so far. The hope is to have 350 completed surveys via on-line, in-person, and phone options. The final report is expected in February or March 2023 so plans can be put into place with those findings. Once surveys are live, the county PIO will distribute the information. **(Open)**

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

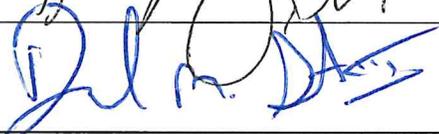
- A. **PUBLIC WATER:** Mr. Harrelson discussed the recent EPA announced interim and final health advisory levels for four PFAS found in public drinking water systems and wells across the country, including Brunswick County's public water system. The minimum reporting levels for PFOA and PFOS are .0004 parts per trillion (ppt) and the level for GenX is 10 ppt, formerly 140 ppt. The level for PFBS is 2000 ppt, although this compound is not generally found in North Carolina. These advisories indicate the level of drinking water contamination below which adverse health effects are not expected to occur. The county is constructing a low-pressure reverse osmosis water treatment system that should reduce PFAS to undetectable levels. **(Open)**
- B. **ENERGY OUTREACH PLAN:** Mrs. Lytch distributed the FY 2022-2023 plan that is required to be submitted annually to the BOCC. She added that the plan is similar to last year. The State automatically enrolls those who received a payment last year. Staff will work with the same partners for outreach and implementation. **Dr. Williams made a motion to recommend the Energy Program Outreach Plan be sent to the Brunswick County Commissioners for approval. Mr. Ward seconded the motion. The vote to forward the plan to Commissioners was unanimous. (Closed)**

V. **BOARD INPUTS:** Dr. King asked if there were any additional Board inputs. There were none.
(Info)

VI: **ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business, **the meeting was adjourned at 7:36 p.m. with a motion by Dr. Williams. Ms. Narron seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

The next BCHHS Advisory Board meeting will be held on **July 25, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. in the Health Services Boardroom.**


_____ Chairperson


_____ Secretary

Brunswick County Health and Human Services

Advisory Board Attendance Roster 2021-2022

NAME	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
King	X	X	X	X	X	*	X	X	X	*	*	X
Asbury	X	X	X	X	X	*	X	X				X
Carver	X		X	X	X		X	X	X			
Cooke						A		X				X
Narron	X	X	X	X		*	X	X	X			X
Norton	X	X	X	X	X	*	X		X			X
Reaves	X	X	X	X	X	*	X	X	X			X
Smith	X	X	X		X	*	X		X			
Sykes		X			X	*	O	O	O	O	O	O
Ward	X	X	X	X	X	*	X	X	X			X
Williams		X	X		X	*	X		X			X
Optometrist	V	V	V	V	V	*	V	V	V	V	V	V

A = Month Appointed/Installed

C = Conflict with CC's Meeting

O = Off Board

X = In Attendance

V = Vacancy

AA = Approved Absence

Blank Space = Absent

Quorum equals six members present.

^ = Specially Called Meeting

*** = No Meeting**