

ALLEGHENY COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

MINUTES

March 1, 2017

Present: Lee Harrison, MD, Chair  
William Youngblood, Vice Chair  
Karen Hacker, MD, Secretary  
Anthony Ferraro (via phone)  
Caroline Mitchell  
Kotayya Kondaveeti, MD  
Ellen Stewart, MD  
Donald Burke, MD  
Edith Shapira, MD  
Joylette Portlock, PhD

Absent: none

1. **Call to Order**

The meeting was held at ACHD's office at 542 Fourth Avenue, Pittsburgh.  
Dr. Harrison called the meeting to order. Dr. Harrison announced that an executive session was held to discuss personnel matters and litigation.

2. **Approval of Minutes from January 11, 2017**

Dr. Harrison asked if there were any questions about the minutes.

**Action:** Dr. Youngblood moved to approve the minutes, Dr. Shapira seconded the motion.

**Motion passed unanimously.**

3. **Public Comments on Agenda Items**

There were no public comments on agenda items.

4. **Old Business**

**A. Information on activities related to the Opioid epidemic**

Dr. Hacked stated that efforts were ongoing regarding the opioid epidemic, with lots of work being done on overdoses. She stated that ACHD and DHS released a joint report in July of 2016. The report's methods linked everyone who died of an opioid overdose, between 2008 and 2014, and linked them with DHS data. Review of this data indicated that 60% of those who died of an overdose were linked to DHS services.

The major drugs contributing to overdoses were heroin and fentanyl. Most who died were between the ages of 25-55, with an increase specifically in the 25-34 age range. Most fatalities were white males. Hotspot communities for overdoses were in the Mon Valley, and Pittsburgh City Council District 4. The report identified times when individuals were most at risk to suffer from an overdose: within 30 days of release from jail, within 30 days of completion of the end of mental health services, and within 30 days of the end of substance use disorder services.

The report contained several key recommendations for ACHD. Regarding high-risk communities, ACHD should: use data to continually monitor overdose activity in the County, utilize prevention strategies that target active drug users and their families in higher-risk areas within the County, and expand the use of Naloxone in high-risk communities. Regarding Act 139 and Naloxone, ACHD should: improve the education of the public regarding naloxone, and expand the number of stakeholders who carry naloxone and actively refer users to treatment. And regarding Medication-Assisted Treatment, ACHD should: promote health communication strategies that educate the public about effective treatments for opioid use disorders.

Dr. Hacker informed the Board of activities undertaken by ACHD since July 2016 regarding the opioid epidemic. As part of ACHD's opioids efforts Colin Dwyer, a FUSE Corps fellow supported by the Heinz Foundation, has been working with ACHD since October.

Mr. Dwyer stated that he has conducted a listening tour in hot-spot communities, collecting input from stakeholders from across the spectrum. Mr. Dwyer stated that hot-spot communities are asking for "one-stop shop" access to legitimate information about addiction and treatment, and referral to quality resources; treatment-on-demand, regardless of insurance coverage; and social supports (such as housing, education, and employment) for individuals in early recovery.

Mr. Dwyer said that localities need assistance implementing responses that don't repeat the mistakes of other communities, address the epidemic comprehensively, and engage systems that encompass multiple communities.

Mr. Dwyer ended the presentation by speaking about next steps that emerged from his listening tour. Such steps included: routing an opioid response through ACHD programs that are on the ground and in touch with at-risk populations, such as the STD/HIV clinic and MCH home visiting; developing a strategic, comprehensive overdose prevention education and naloxone distribution strategy, and partnerships between police and heroin-impacted communities to co-develop new law enforcement responses.

Dr. Burke asked about the implications of fentanyl. Dr. Hacker stated that the East Coast did see a decrease in opioid overdoses, but then saw an increase after fentanyl was introduced. Fentanyl was also requiring more doses of naloxone to be administered. Mr. Dwyer stated that one dose of naloxone may have been enough previously, but now two or three doses may be required. He stated that the police may want to carry more naloxone. Dr. Burke expressed concern about what would happen if the price for fentanyl decreased. Dr. Hacker stated that due to market demands, heroin without fentanyl may not be able to be sold. She was concerned about seeing more carfentanyl and a subsequent increase in overdoses. Dr. Portlock asked where fentanyl was manufactured. Mr. Dwyer stated that some was made for medical purposes, but that it was also sent illegally from China and Mexico. Dr. Portlock asked if comprehensive education was happening. Mr. Dwyer stated that it was happening in pieces. Dr. Hacker stated that DHS was working on something, but that the treatment continuum was complex. Dr. Kondaveeti stated that health insurance companies have a role to play as well.

Dr. Hacker assured the Board that Governor Wolf is extremely invested in this issue.

#### **B. Update on the Allegheny Health Survey**

Dr. Hacker informed the Board that data was in from the survey, and that ACHD was looking for how to best disseminate it. She hoped to be able to provide additional data to the Board at the May meeting.

#### **C. Update on Live Well**

Dr. Hacker stated that 7 Mon Valley communities were members of Live Well, which is a great accomplishment. She informed the board that Steel Valley School District had joined as well.

#### **D. Update on E-Cigarette Regulations**

Dr. Hacker informed the Board that the e-cigarette regulation had been sent to County Council, and would be discussed this evening by a subcommittee.

### **5. New Business**

#### **A. Overview of Air Quality in 2016**

Jayne Graham informed the Board that in terms of criteria pollutants, ozone will be in attainment in Allegheny County, as it will be in all surrounding counties. Dr. Harrison asked what was most responsible for the decrease. Ms. Graham stated that better cars and power plant controls were. Ms. Graham stated that a downward trend has been observed in terms of PM-2.5, but that PM-2.5 levels at the Liberty Monitor will still be above the standard. She stated that the Air Quality program will return to the Board in a few months, with a plan to address this issue. The Liberty Monitor was also not in attainment of Sulfur Dioxide standards, Ms. Graham stated that she will be presenting a plan to the Board as part of the next agenda item to address that issue.

Ms. Graham stated that there were high levels of PM-2.5 at the Liberty Monitor on consecutive days from November 13<sup>th</sup> through November 17<sup>th</sup>. She explained that there were temperature inversions during this period. Additionally, there were wild fires in Appalachian states during this period as well.

Ms. Graham stated that the highlights of Air Quality actions in 2016 included completing the Downtown Pittsburgh Diesel Study, completing an enforcement agreement with US Steel - Clairton to inspect and improve battery walls and heating units, US Steel making significant repairs to quench Tower One, continuing to collect ambient data for the Neville Island area post-Shenango, and CMU's Create Lab releasing its "Smell Pgh" app. Dr. Harrison asked if the Smell Pgh app was reliable. Ms. Graham stated that it is a comment like any other complaint, that specificities help the Air Quality Program, and that its very good for the public to be involved.

Ms. Graham stated that Air Quality's plans for 2017 include addressing Sulfur Dioxide controls in a State Implementation Plan, a PM-2.5 State Implementation Plan, a complete analysis of the Neville Island area post-Shenango, and continuing to improve odor events management.

Dr. Kondaveeti asked what ACHD can do regarding particulate matter from other states. Ms. Graham stated that this was covered by Section 126 of the Clean Air Act, under which ACHD could file a complaint about other states and ask the EPA to take action. Dr. Harrison asked if there were any indications of what may happen to EPA standards under its new leadership. Ms. Graham stated that there were no indications yet. Dr. Hacker assured Dr. Harrison that ACHD is earnestly following news regarding the EPA.

#### **B. Sulfur Dioxide – State Implementation Plan, request for public comment period**

Dr. Hacker informed the Board that this Plan has gone through the Air Pollution Control Advisory Committee twice.

Jim Kelly informed the Board that current scientific evidence links short-term exposures of sulfur dioxide to adverse health effects. Such effects include bronchoconstriction and increased asthma symptoms. Children, the elderly, and asthma sufferers are particularly sensitive to these effects. Sulfur Dioxide also contributes to acid rain and reacts with other compounds in the atmosphere to form particulate matter (PM) pollution. Under the National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS), a new sulfur dioxide standard was promulgated in August 2010. The standard was set at 75ppb for one hour. The previous limit was 140ppb for twenty-four hours. Areas were designated in October 2013, and a State Implementation Plan was due in April 2015.

Mr. Kelly stated that we have complex meteorological and topographical challenges in Allegheny County, in that we don't have flat terrain, we have temperature inversions, and we have fugitive emissions. All of which the model does not process well. He stated that ACHD has been working to improve EPA's model to accommodate these challenges, and that ACHD's work has helped advance the science of this model. He informed the Board that the area of Allegheny County that comprises the Nonattainment Area (NAA) is in Mon Valley located in the southeast part of the County.

Mr. Kelly informed the Board that the original attainment SIP was due in April 2015. The Finding of Failure to Submit (FFS) was published in the Federal Register (81 FR 14736) in March 2016. The effective date of the FFS was in April 2016. A Complete Attainment Demonstration SIP is due in October 2017. By April 2018, the EPA must approve the SIP or issue a their own plan known as a FIP as well as impose an Offset Sanction for permitted sources under New Source Review. And by October 2018, if the area fails to attain the standard, transportation funding sanctions will come into effect, resulting in a loss of federal funding for transportation. Mr. Kelly warned the Board that Federal penalties stemming from this issue may be draconian. Dr. Burke asked why there was a delay in submitting the SIP. Mr. Kelly stated that it was due to how complex modeling issues, time required to hire a consultant to assist in modeling, a delay in EPA updating the modeling guidance, and the complex nature of negotiating emission limits with US Steel.

Mr. Kelly stated that the SIP's Control Strategy includes working with US Steel's Mon Valley Works to lower sulfur content in coke oven gas by upgrading a vacuum carbonate unit, engaging in a desulfurization plant tail gas recycling project, and lower sulfur content in downriver gas used by all plants. There will also be a new stack for boilers at the Edgar Thomson Steel Works, combining boiler flues into a single stack which will be twenty meters taller than current stacks. There are also lower allowable limits for nearly all US Steel sources and Harsco/Braddock Recovery. Dr. Burke asked how important stacks are. Mr. Kelly replied that stacks have some of the largest impacts.

Mr. Kelly stated that the modelled results of the SIP show that all locations within the NAA will attain the NAAQS at maximum emission rates. Mr. Kelly stated that the schedule for the SIP was to present it to the Board on March 1<sup>st</sup>, have a public comment period in March and April, conduct comment responses and revisions in April, have final committee and Board reviews in April and May, send a final SIP to the PA DEP in June, forward the SIP to EPA Region 3 by August 17<sup>th</sup>, and have the EPA determine the SIP complete by October 18. Mr. Kelly apologized to the Board for the short notice, but stated that a lot of work went into this Plan.

**Action:** Mr. Youngblood moved to approve the requested public comment period for the Sulfur Dioxide State Implementation Plan. Dr. Portlock seconded the motion.

**Motion passed unanimously.**

6. **Director's Report**

Dr. Hacker informed the Board that Prevention Point Pittsburgh received approval from the City for its new location.

7. **Announcements**

There were no announcements.

8. **Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items**

**A. Angelo Taranto – Shenango and Clairton Coke Works**

Mr. Taranto, of Allegheny County Clean Air Now (ACCAN), stated that he wanted to make sure the story of Shenango and ACCAN was told. ACCAN published a booklet of stories about those harmed by Shenango. Mr. Taranto stated that he would provide copies of the booklet to the Board. Mr. Taranto also asked the Board to find a way to eliminate DTE Shenango's emission reduction credits.

**B. Ms. Alison Fujito, re: HPV vaccination**

Ms. Fujito expressed concern regarding Gardasil. She was concerned that Gardasil 9 has not been evaluated for the potential to cause carcinogenicity. She stated that an ingredient of Gardasil, polysorbate 80, may cause cancer based on animal test data. Ms. Fujito was concerned that Gardasil may cause cancer, but it has not been evaluated for its potential to cause cancer.

**C. Mr. Thaddeus Popovich, re: DTE Shenango and Calgon Carbon**

Mr. Popovich stated that he is a co-founder of ACCAN and lived in Ben Avon. He stated that he uses the Smell Pgh app. He encouraged ACHD to get another Lynn Marshall on staff. He informed the Board that he will be meeting with DTE management to discuss the dismantling and remediation of Shenango's site, and that he will be happy to share that information with the Board. He stated that Calgon Carbon releases the fourth highest amount of toxic chemicals in the Pittsburgh MSA, according to EPA data, and he asked ACHD to help the public understand this threat to the public's health and environment.

9. **Adjournment**

Mr. Youngblood moved to adjourn the meeting, Dr. Kondaveeti seconded the adjournment.