



Onondaga County Legislature

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HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE MINUTES – FEBRUARY 10, 2021 JULIE ABBOTT-KENAN, CHAIR

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. Chase, Ms. Cody, Mr. Bush, Mr. Kinne

ALSO ATTENDING: Chairman Knapp, Mrs. Ervin; Ms. Velasco, Mr. Frateschi, Mr. Graham, Mr. Wears, Ms. Whiteside, Ms. Rooney, Dr. Gupta, Mr. Frantzis, Ms. McNamara, Ms. Lesniak, Ms. Vilardi, Mr. DeSantis

Chair Abbott-Kenan called the meeting to order at 10:33 a.m. *A motion was made by Dr. Chase, seconded by Mr. Bush to waive the reading of the minutes. A motion was made by Mr. Bush, seconded by Dr. Chase to approve the minutes of the previous committee meeting. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.*

1. **HEALTH DEPARTMENT:** Dr. Gupta, Health Department Commissioner and Dan Wears, EMS Commissioner
 - a. **INFORMATIONAL: Pandemic and Vaccine Update**

Dr. Gupta:

- Started vaccine on 12/28/20 – have done multiple clinics– given over 20k first and second doses
- Using both Moderna and Pfizer –
- Pop up clinics – Zion church, Syracuse Housing (Toomey Abbott), Dr Weeks school and the NE Community Center
- Second dose at Zion Church on Monday
- Vaccinate based on NYS Department of Health and Governor’s Direction for priority
- Partnered with Kinney’s - administering over to those over 65
- Strong partnership with EMS and CE’s office
- Anne Rooney is strong part of all the work – working closely with priority groups
- Consider visiting the clinic – streamlined process with registration – separate path for those with disabilities both physical and mental
- Anne worked closely with Zion leaders – registered 250 and vaccinated 247 – shows acceptance from community leaders and residents
- Syracuse Housing Authority and Dr. Weeks – a lot of work in advance performed by Dan Wears and staff
- Enroll people and help with language translation
- Moved from the War Memorial to the OnCenter – yesterday was peak with over 2,200 vaccinated – more than 1,200 signed up for everyday this week
- Stable at 1,200 vaccines every week – was a large fluctuation
- Working with grocery store HR to assure employees have access to register for vaccine
- Registration link fills up within seconds
- CE has been supportive of nurses and staff to make the clinic a smooth operation
- Rooney, Wears and CE strong team – open for suggestions – goal is to vaccinate in a timely manner – continue to have pop up clinics

Mrs. Abbott-Kenan:

- Glad to see that those with underlying conditions and disabilities are able to get vaccinated
- When a parent signs up a 16 or 17 year old with disabilities - are they guaranteed to get a Pfizer dose

Dr. Gupta:

- Those with disabilities will qualify to get vaccination – Pfizer is for under 18 years old and Moderna is for over 18
- Have received very few Pfizer doses – generally sent to hospitals because of freezer requirement
- 65 years and older have more opportunities because Kinney is 100% dedicated to just seniors
- More demand and less supply – those that don't fall into the categories of age or job are now eligible if they have underlying conditions -
- Question remains - who gets priority – eligibility has to align with severity of conditions - those with three diseases or only one disease but more severe – have to be sure that people with multiple conditions gets the vaccine – try to find a metric to be fair
- Answered Mrs. Abbott-Kenan's question - how many more in Onondaga County will be eligible with disabilities and underlying medical conditions – State has provided the information - Ms. Rooney is working on outreach and getting this group registered
- 55K out of 476K have been vaccinated – ask for patience
- Thanks to Legislatures Chase and Cody for their help

Ms. Cody:

- Well run operation – kudos to the team – very positive responses

Dr. Chase:

- Very organized – almost 2,300 people vaccinated yesterday – no one waiting – everyone is great to work with

Mr. Wears:

- Two major areas are testing and PPE distribution – demand for both is down
- Asymptomatic demand is shrinking so trying to right size – symptomatic is down to 100-200 per day
- PPE distribution has decreased – last year - total 1.2M pieces given to 700 different organizations – supply chain has improved so organizations able to purchase their own supplies
- As vaccines go up testing and PPE demand goes down

Mrs. Abbott-Kenan:

- School break next week – any thoughts on impact

Mr. Wears:

- Will continue community sights – if demand increases will ramp back up – keep testing going because of school break
- Community test sights – were doing six appointments for every five minutes – now at three for every five minutes - reduce staffing accordingly
- Remain flexible to meet demand as it arises

Mr. Bush:

- Pop up vaccination sights – constituents have been asking – selection process

Dr. Gupta:

- Collaboration with NYS – they will provide vaccine and Onondaga County goes into areas with less intake of vaccination
- Last month data analysis – demographics of those vaccinated 80% Caucasian, 13% African American, 7% others – shows us where to target – apprehension with African Americans so doing more outreach – trying to make the vaccination pool look like the community
- Team looks at sights, how to put the clinic together logistically, mini version of the OnCenter with registration, vaccination and monitoring
- Goal has to be data driven and a work in progress – target zip codes with less vaccinations

Dr. Chase:

- Listening to CEO at Loretto – only 43% of employees are vaccinated – upsetting because employees don't want the vaccine
- One person was sure that the vaccine will insert a chip in them

Dr. Gupta:

- Hesitancy is a big concern – remains a challenge – trying to educate – until it is required this will be a work in progress – hope that in time people will get more in tune
- There is no tracking device in vaccine – no ulterior motive

Mr. Bush:

- Please clarify - large nursing homes have employees that are working with elderly and are not vaccinated

Dr. Gupta:

- They have been provided vaccines at their facility; one of the first groups to receive vaccine, if they declined maybe a struggle to get vaccine now, problem is it isn't mandatory
- The vaccine is about the entire community not just a single person
- Message to Legislators – please encourage constituents to get the vaccine when it is available – they jeopardize their family, friends and coworkers if they are not vaccinated – some are reluctant
- Energized to positively convince people to get the vaccine; small personal interactions by everyone will build trust

Mrs. Abbott-Kenan:

- Similar to flu shots – there is still a distrust – great news that those with disabilities are being accommodated

Ms. Rooney:

- Strategy is the trusted messengers within the community – County has connections to agencies but leaders within the agencies have connection to their community
- Continue to use the trusted messenger method – have used it pre COVID so have a history of building trust
- Pop up clinics are established by NYS - next week maybe at St Lucy's church

Dr. Chase:

- Churches are a good source – builds trust in the community – can reach a lot of people

Mr. Knapp:

- Shout to Legislatures and staff in assisting with pandemic– to include Leader Ervin getting people to pop up clinics – John, Nick , Ryan, and Melanie working test and vaccine sites
- Great team effort and appreciate everyone and all they are doing to help the community move forward

A motion was made by Ms. Cody, seconded by Dr. Chase, to adjourn the meeting. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:14 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



MELANIE VILARDI, Deputy Clerk
Onondaga County Legislature