

**Allen County Department of Health Minutes**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
January 27, 2020

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Allen County Department of Health was called to order in the Council Chambers located at 200 East Berry Street, Fort Wayne, Indiana, at 5:45 p.m., pursuant to the notice sent to all Directors in accordance with the bylaws.

The following Directors were present: Ted Sobol, Deb Lambert, Dr. Thomas Dykstra, Mary Hess, Dr. William Pond, Patti Hays and Dr. James Cameron.

Dr. Pond presided over the meeting. Jennifer Miller recorded the proceedings of the meeting.

Dr. Pond called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m. The minutes from the previous meeting were approved. Motion was made and approved to accept the October 21, 2019 minutes.

Summary of Motions Passed at this Meeting:

- Motion was made to approve the October 21, 2019 minutes. (MPU)
- Motion was made by Patti Hays to elect Dr. Pond as President for the year 2020. (MPU)
- Motion was made by Ted Sobol to elect Patti Hays as Vice-President for the year 2020. (MPU)
- Consent Agenda – motion was made by Ted Sobol to approve the consent agenda. Dr. Dykstra seconded the motion. (MPU)

**SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS:**

**Antimicrobial Resistance - Angel Hyerley, PharmD:** Dr. McMahan said there is such a lack of awareness about the severity of antimicrobial resistance and what good stewardship looks like. Dr. McMahan said that is why she invited Dr. Angel Hyerley, a local expert on the topic, to speak to the board so they can become more aware of why a community wide strategy is needed to address this issue.

Dr. Hyerley said that each year, antibiotic-resistant bacteria and fungi cause at least an estimated 2,868,700 infections and 35,900 deaths. She said in the US, someone gets an antibiotic resistant infection every 11 seconds and every 15 minutes someone dies from this. She added that in 2050, Antimicrobial resistance is expected to be the number one cause of death. Dr. Hyerley shared information about five urgent threats, two new threats and a watch list with three threats. She said the lack of new antibiotics threatens global efforts to contain drug-resistant infections. Since, 1990, 78% of major drug companies have scaled back or cut antibiotic research due to development challenges. She said inappropriate antibiotic use approaches 50 percent of all outpatient use. She said 64 percent of public believe colds and flu could be cured with antibiotics and 25 percent of the public report it is okay to use antibiotics that were given to a friend or family member.

To help combat these issues, Dr. Hyerley said we must increase public knowledge about antibiotics and resistance. In addition, we must promote vaccination, improve infection prevention practices and promote diagnostic stewardship. Tracking and reporting local antimicrobial use and resistance data is also important.

Dr. Hyerley shared information about a program called Indiana Aware, a new local project in Allen and Wells County Schools. “We are going into high school biology classes to educate students on antimicrobial resistance,” she said.

**Board Discussion:**

Ted Sobol said he was shocked at the lack of research being conducted in this area. Patti Hays asked Dr. Hyerley to explain more about how agriculture can contribute to this problem. Dr. Hyerley said, “It can come in a few ways. Antibiotic resistant bacteria can be found in animals that are given antibiotics. Then the bacteria can be transferred to the meat or milk products. When we use fertilizer on crops, resistant microbes can be found in our crops and that can be ingested.” Deb Lambert said that antimicrobial resistance is such a big issue in the long-term care field that the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) requires each organization to have an infection control professional at each community. She said that her organization was awarded a grant to study what the long-term care community can do to mitigate this.

(See board handouts for complete presentation by Dr. Hyerley)

**Board Appointment Reports:**

**Health Commissioner’s Report – Deborah A. McMahan, MD**

- Dr. McMahan said the county’s STD numbers continue to be a problem. “We do need to have a strategy for how we can combat these issues. This is a national problem. One of our biggest issues is that people are not as concerned or worried about this as they used to be. People are not as engaged in getting treatment as they were in the past. We need different mechanisms to get people engaged and ensure they are treated. Unlike private entities, we are obligated by law to see that these people get treated and their potential contacts are identified and treated,” said Dr. McMahan.
- Dr. McMahan said she wants to convene an inter-professional group to look at developing a strategy and treatment plan for STDs. “We want the group to consider expedited partner therapy. What that means is as a practitioner, if you see someone in the office or ER, you can write a prescription for their partner without having seen them. Hopefully, then that patient takes that home and has a conversation with someone. In public health, we take this one step further. We actually give the patient medication for their partner,” said Dr. McMahan. She continued, “There are pros and cons to this. Number one - I am trusting that the patient will go home and give the medication to their partner. Number two – we have no idea how many people are truly infected. Number three- We are not sure if people are treated. You have lost control. You also have to be worried now if there will be antimicrobial resistance. In the past, this has not been the case.” Dr. Pond asked, “Are there any places that have tried this?” Dr. McMahan answered yes. She said, “They say it’s effective. I am not sure how you measure that.”
- Dr. McMahan asked Dr. Hyerley if she wanted to share her opinion about this treatment. Dr. Hyerley said, “I could argue this either way. It is a huge trouble in our community and it’s definitely something we need to get a better handle on and take care of. Expedited therapy gives you the feeling that you are getting a better handle on the issue by getting the people who need the drug right at their fingertips because they are not seeking treatment. The antimicrobial

side of me is nervous about just handing out antibiotics. Places that have done expedited partner therapy haven't shown a spike in resistance but that can be hard to measure. The stewardship side of me is concerned about this. But I am also concerned about the STD rates."

- Kathy Thornson, Director HIV/STD Prevention, said ISDH has made the Expedited Therapy process very easy for the medical community to understand and legally be able to prescribe.
- Patti Hays asked, "What follow up is done with the partner?" Kathy replied, "You lose the trail of surveillance. However, to get the first line of treatment out there could potentially stop a lot of other infections," said Kathy. Dr. McMahan added, "The tradeoff is you lose control of the process. It's done. No follow up. No lab. You don't even know their allergies. You are just giving an anti-biotic to a person and hoping they will share it with the right person." Kathy said she thinks that this treatment might be most effective with patients who have a single partner who for some reason is unable to come get tested and treated.
- Dr. McMahan also asked the board to consider waving a \$10 fee for co-partners to get treated at the department. She said this would also remove one more barrier for co-partners.
- In addition, Dr. McMahan asked the board, "What does outreach look like in 2020? If there is somebody who can't get to us, do we go to them? What lengths do you want us to go to? Most people have no idea that these kind of problems exist." She asked the board to consider this question for future meetings.
- Dr. Cameron asked if it was possible to find out what percentage of Allen County's increased STD rates are due to antimicrobial resistance. Kathy responded without lab cultures, we won't be able to know that.
- Dr. McMahan shared that Erika Pitcher and Dr. Hyerley will be working to develop a community wide strategy to help the public understand the antimicrobial issue.
- Dr. McMahan said that soon the first edition of the CIDNAC newsletter will be sent out. CIDNAC stands for, "Community Infectious Disease Network of Allen County." She said this was a group of community partners who used to meet and discuss infectious disease. Because meeting is more difficult now, she wanted to develop a method to continue sharing vital information. The CIDNAC quarterly publication will detail information about communicable diseases of interest to the community. Dr. McMahan said this is a great opportunity to share some really timely issues with partners.
- Dr. McMahan also said she wanted all businesses to know that the department's clinic offers travel immunizations. She said with all the international travel taking place, she wants all business owners and residents to know what is offered at the clinic.
- Dr. McMahan said overdose deaths continue to increase. The department is partnering with Drug and Alcohol Consortium of Allen County (DAC) to formalize an Overdose Fatality Review Team (OFRT). She said, "We have been working with the Coroner's office to get data, but this will allow us to find out what else we could do." She added that current legislation would make it easier for all entities to share information with the OFRT. "This is an important tool for us to

have and we need partners confident they can share information with us,” she said. Dr. Dykstra said that his research on overdoses was made possible by the department’s research done with through the overdose studies. He thanked Jana Sanders and the Fort Wayne Medical Education residents for their hard work on the study.

- SEE ACTUAL COMMISSIONER’S REPORT FOR ALL OTHER ISSUES.

**Communicable Disease Report – Deborah A. McMahan, MD**

- Dr. McMahan said the Novel Coronavirus has mutated and is now infecting people. “We are in early stages. We don’t know how big this will get. We will see some cases,” she said. She added, “Take travel seriously. I don’t know how concerned to be about this yet. Healthcare physicians need to be fit tested. This needs be an initiative that needs to be worked on now.”
- SEE ACTUAL COMMUNICABLE DISEASE REPORT FOR ALL INFORMATION SHARED (but not discussed.)

**Administrator’s Report – Mindy Waldron**

- Mindy said she hoped it was helpful to the board to see some of the 2019 accomplishments that each department detailed in her report.
- She said the Annual Report is in development and will be sent out by March 31.
- Mindy said that there are currently several bills of concern in the legislature. Mindy said one bill of particular concern would step on the department’s abilities to permit micro markets. She said, “These are unmanned mini-markets. They are trying to cap fees. All our fees are based on what it costs us to provide a service. I am hoping to fight this on Thursday at a hearing about the bill,” she said. Mindy thanked Beth Lock at the Commissioner’s office for her continued support with help on legislative efforts that affect the department.
- SEE ACTUAL ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT FOR ALL INFORMATION SHARED (but not discussed).

**Consent Agenda**

- Personnel Report – (Mindy Waldron)
- Sewer Board Appointment Report –(Mindy Waldron)
- Appointment of the Allen County Regional Water and Sewer Board’s Representatives:
  - Kevin McDermit – Voting Member (Jan 1, 2020-Dec 31, 2021)
  - Gary Chapple –Ex-Officio members (ongoing appointment without expiration)
- Motion was made by Ted Sobol to approve the Consent Agenda. Dr. Dykstra seconded the motion. (MPU)

**Old Business**

None

### New Business

- All board members were asked to update contact information.
- Dr. McMahan said to the board, “All things must come to an end. Starting June 1<sup>st</sup>, I am going to retire. I love this job but due to family health reasons. I need to retire.”
- Dr. Pond said, “We certainly have been blessed by having you here. The community is better for all that you have done. We really appreciate it. In an effort to move this process along and find a quality candidate, I would suggest a small working group to get some of the logistics taken care of and stream line the process for applications. We will then take this in front of the entire board. I will chair the committee and I would like to have two more volunteers if we could.” Dr. James Cameron and Patti Hays volunteered.
- Dr. McMahan said she would summarize for the board what issues the department is currently working on in order to help the board prioritize what qualities they might be looking for in a candidate. “This position is very different than when I first started,” she said. Mindy said that Dr. McMahan has agreed to stay on in a temporary roll after June 1<sup>st</sup> while the new Health Commissioner gets started.

Adjournment: 7:01 p.m.

Next Board Meeting: April 20, 2020.

Respectfully Submitted,

Matthew Sutter, MD  
Health Commissioner

William Pond, MD  
Board President