

WILSON COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH MINUTES

September 12, 2023

The Wilson County Board of Health held a regular meeting on Tuesday, September 12th, 2023 in the Board Room at the Wilson County Health Department. Members present were:

Scott Dixon, D.D.S.
Ronald Stahl M.D.
Catherine Melin
William T. Bass

Leslie Atkinson
Dr. Shannon Drohan (Virtual)
Ijeoma Uwakwe (Virtual)

Others present:

Cinnamon Narron, Jessica Williams, Jennifer Dixon, DeEtt Taylor, Celita Graham, Shereen Mitchell, Tomi Meachum, Kate Webb, Lori Winstead.

Welcome

Dr. Scott Dixon, called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm and welcomed all in attendance.

Approval of Minutes of July 2023 Meeting

The minutes from the July 11th, 2023, BOH meeting was accepted without corrections, additions, or deletions.

The motion to accept was made by Mr. Ronald Stahl and seconded by Ms. Catherine Melin. The motion carried unanimously.

Review and approval of the minutes shall be construed as review/discussion/approval/of all items distributed prior to the meeting for consideration and shall be so reflected in the minutes.

Administration

Ms. Jessica Williams, Deputy Health Director reported that the Health Department recently implemented a new kiosk system. Ms. Celita Graham presented a video to the BOH members on how the new kiosk system works. The Health Department had intended on implementing a kiosk system prior to Covid-19. Phase one of the new kiosk system has been introduced. A patient may check in for their appointment on the kiosk using their phone number, birthdate, or last 4 digits of their Social Security number. The new check in process has been received very well by patients. Phase II may include consent forms for the patient's specific appointment.

Social Work

Kate Webb, Social Work Supervisor covers care management for at-risk children birth to 5 years old, and high-risk pregnancies. Social Workers have seen a surge of referrals recently in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, and Plan of Safe Care (substance affected infants). There is also an increase in pregnant women with higher risk factors. The issue affects the Wilson Community as a whole. Currently Care Managers are working above the caseload standard. If North Carolina State approves Medicaid expansion, caseloads will continue to grow, and the Social Work program may need additional staff. Currently there are 3 Social Workers in each program. Ms. Webb serves as the supervisor. Social workers see patients at the Health Department, Wilson OBGYN, and residents of Wilson County.

Personal Health

Ms. Jennifer Dixon, Director of Nursing reported Personal Health updates. Anna Oakley, FNP is a Physician Extender and started at the Health Department August 1st, 2023. Ms. Oakley is still in orientation and precepted by Rebecca Hunt-Hawley FNP, and Lisa Wepler CNM. Dr. Michalak is contracted with the Health Department and sees patients once a week for family planning, and minor Primary Care illnesses. One vacancy for Physician Extender II is posted, and Preparedness Coordinator is vacant. There is a meeting scheduled within the next few weeks to possibly contract the Preparedness Coordinator position. Former Health Department employee Lisa Blevins, FNP will work at the Health Department as a contract provider starting 9/13/2023 seeing patients one time a week for Primary Care only.

No new reports for the Child Fatality Prevention Team. The next CFPT meeting is scheduled for September 21st, 2023. Flu Vaccines will be available October 1st, 2023. The Wilson County Senior Center received a grant and has asked the Health Department to partner with them to help host a Flu Vaccine Clinic. The Clinic will be on October 21st 2023, at the Health Department. The Flu Vaccine Clinic target population is 60 and older but the vaccine will be available for people of all ages. Patients 60 and older will receive an incentive gift card. The target Vaccination goal is 500 people. After the Vaccine clinic the Health Department will be having a gift card incentive Mondays to further assist the Senior Center. The Health Department is unsure if the Covid vaccine will be available for the Flu Vaccine event.

The new COVID Vaccine was approved by the FDA September 11th, 2023. The CDC approved the new COVID Vaccine September 12th, 2023. The Health Department will start ordering the new approved Covid Vaccine with hopes to start Vaccinations in the next two weeks. The new challenge will be funding the new vaccine to keep up with the demand of the community now that the vaccine is not funded by the Federal Government. The commercialized price of the new Covid Vaccine is \$120- \$130 per dose. The Health Department is unsure of a specific reimbursement amount but will do its best to keep up with the demands of Wilson County.

Ms. Shereen Mitchell, Quality Improvement, Accreditation, and Managed Care Coordinator presented a power point presentation (See Attachment). The Health Department is in alliance with Community Care Physician Network (CCPN). “CCPN is a non- exclusive, high performing network of independent practices working to improve the health of all patients in North Carolina. As a collaborative and Physician-led organization, CCPN provides programs and tools to enhance the quality and efficiency of health care services and help control costs while also improving patient outcomes.” The Wilson County Health Department became a member of CCPN in 2016. CCPN Provides Education, Free Cologuard Kits, A Mobile Mammography Bus. Weekly webinars to keep everyone up to date on various issues. CCPN Provides each practice with a “Patient Relations Representative”. They help to support quality measures and provide assistance for practices who are encountering difficulties in receiving payments from various health plans.

Each practice is to complete various activities to reach a total of 100 points. At this point we have 95 points. Once CCPN releases its 3rd quarter “Educational Event” and Ms. Mitchell completes it we will cross the 100-point threshold. The number of points directly affects our financial reimbursement. 100 points earned= 100% of our allotted payment. 75-99 points earned = 90% allotted payment. 50-74 points earned =80% of our allotted payment. 49 or less points = 70% of our allotted payment. \$474,154.42 in financial reimbursement was received in the FY 2021-2022. \$521793.97 thus far for FY 2022-2023 (Still awaiting final payments for 3rd Quarter 2023).

Environmental Health

Ms. DeEtt Taylor, Environmental Health Supervisor, has hired a new Onsite Wastewater Environmental Health Staff employee Ryan Mills. There are two vacancies. Environmental Health Specialist and Food and Lodging Program Specialist. New rules will be implemented January 1st, 2024. The Environmental Health Staff will be visiting Pitt County for upcoming training. The State has new mandated minimum

requirements regarding private options. Fees allowed vary from 100% current fee up to 40% of current fee, and up to \$35. (a2) I \$350.00 (a2) CA \$140.00 (a2) IP/CA \$140.00 AOWE 35.00 EOP \$35.00. (See Attachment for new fees).

WIC Director

Ms. Tomi Meachum the new WIC Program Director introduced herself to the Board of Health. There have been many new changes to the Wilson County WIC program. The WIC program serves families providing healthy food, nutrition education, breast feeding support, and other needed services, or support such as Social Workers, Food Banks, Mental Healthcare, Primary Care providers, and Immunizations. The WIC department wing has been fully renovated at the Health Department for WIC services designed to be centered around the patient. In person WIC services restarted in person appointments at the Health Department post Covid. Appointments are available both in person and remote.

Fruit and Vegetable amounts have increased which will start in October. \$26 for children, \$47 for pregnant women, \$52 for fully breast-feeding mother and up to \$78 dollars for fully breastfeeding multiples. Fruit and Vegetables amounts include fresh, frozen, can, products. Starting in October the WIC formula contract will change from Gerber products to four Similac product options. Starting September 11th 2023, the WIC program will now be using a combined system with SNAP benefits on the ebtEdge app. Processing Assistant III position has been filled and a part-time Breast-Feeding Peer Counselor position has been posted in order to support breast feeding mothers.

The WIC program is partnering with the Health Education team to provide Breastfeeding Rooms/Lactation spaces. The Health Department would like to start with the Wilson County Library. Federal Law requires all workspaces to have a lactation space and time for pumping under the Pump ACT effective December 2022. The grace period for the Pump Act ended April 28, 2023. Utilizing a bathroom for lactation and pumping is not permitted. The WIC program has brought in two million dollars to Wilson County. The poverty level for children in the United States has doubled.

Health Education

Ms. Celita Graham, Communications Manager and Health Education Supervisor applied to become a designated site for the National Health Service Corps program in June. If awarded the Health Department would become a Federal designated program dedicated to offering healthcare access to underserved individuals. Through this program various professional individuals will be recruited to work in rural and low-income areas. Once accepted, professionals can apply for scholarships, loan forgiveness, and fellowships. The process is tedious, and Ms. Graham developed a great working relationship with the NC State Office of Rural Health. The Federal level depends on the State office to provide reports that are considered in the application. If the Health Department applied without a State contact, the NHSC application would've had a slim chance of approval.

The Wilson County Health Department was awarded as a designated site in August and is truly honored. The award will help with recruitment, and retention allowing placement in underserved areas especially in rural and remote regions that struggle to retain and attract Health Care providers. The funding should attract Professionals including Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Dentists, Behavioral Health Providers, and a Dental Hygienist. Providers that apply for the program and qualify are required to work for two years or until their loan is forgiven. Two current Health Department Employees can currently apply for the program. The recruitment and retention of providers is very important to keep up with community needs.

Naloxone has been approved by the FDA for sale over the counter. Naloxone was made available for purchase over the counter in August 2023. The Health Department currently still provides Naloxone free of charge for patients which is shipped from by the state. Ms. Melissa Haynes, the Health Educator at the Health Department has been very active providing Naloxone training in the community and at schools.

The Health Department is proud that Wilson County Schools have developed a Naloxone policy for the district and the Health Department will continue to provide Naloxone to schools. The shelf life of Naloxone is 2- 3 years. The retail cost of Naloxone is around \$40 dollars and comes with two doses.

Each year Eastpointe provides funding to each of their counties centered around Opioid use and whole person care. Last month the Wilson County Health Department applied under whole- person care to cover a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) In our school-based health centers. Over time and especially since the pandemic there has been a rise in mental health issues and disorders in the youth community due to the limited resources available.

Each year Eastpointe releases grant funding to each of their counties centered around opioid programs and whole person care. In the past Wilson County has used the funding to help with different opioid programs. This year The Health Department asked county managers if the funding can be utilized this year for our school-based health centers. The Health Department applied under the whole- person care component to cover a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) at our school-based health centers. Over time and especially during the pandemic, we have seen a rise in mental health issues and disorders in our youth. Adding an LCSW will alleviate the load on the one school social worker in each of the schools that can oversee 1,200 students. The Eastpointe grant is \$60,000 dollars. We also have funding through a DSS affiliated HRSA grant to provide an LCSW in the schools as well which is limited to 20 hours per week. Currently we have four WASH programs at the schools with an additional Wash Clinic to be added at the beginning of next year. It is the goal of the Health Department to use the grant funding to hire an LCSW that will be able to bill for their services. The return on investment we receive from the billing will help sustain the program.

Health Director's Report

Ms. Cinnamon Narron, Health Director reported Billing and Registration staff are making appointments, and verifying eligibility. The Health Department is building its patient caseload back up after the challenges of being short staffed of primary care providers. Dr. Michalak, FNP Lisa Blevins, and FNP Rebecca Hunt Hawley are helping and seeing patients. The Health Department is hoping to hire a Full time Provider within the next month. \$460,408 dollars has been added to the fund balance as of the end this month. Managed Care has been doing well. \$521,793.97 dollars for 2022-2023 FY the Health Department is still awaiting payments for the 2023 3rd quarter. School has started and WASH clinics are open. The Health Department and the Health Care Foundation have a goal to open a new school-based WASH clinic by January at Darden Middle School. The Dental program is open and saw patients during the summer and at schools last week. The first school is Gardeners Elementary. Last year the dental program treated 3 students. 25 patients have been treated at Gardeners Elementary so far this year. There is a need for youth Dental care in the Wilson County and the Health Department is working on helping parents enroll into the Dental program.

Old Business

None

New Business

Member Comments

None

Chairperson's Report

Public Comments

None

Adjournment- Meeting was adjourned at 6:49 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Cinnamon Narron, Secretary
Wilson County Board of Health

CN/JC