

Curtis State Office Building
1000 SW Jackson St., Suite 540
Topeka, KS 66612-1367



Phone: 785-296-0461
Fax: 785-368-6388
www.kdheks.gov

Robert Moser, MD, Secretary

Department of Health & Environment

Sam Brownback, Governor

KDHE Public Health Call Meeting Minutes, January 22, 2013

Miranda Steele, KDHE Communications Director, welcomed everyone to the first Public Health Call of 2013 and announced the agenda items: Secretary/State Health Officer's update, Epidemiology update, Local Health Program update, and a final item regarding the new format for these calls starting in February.

Dr. Robert Moser kicked off the State Health Officer/Secretary briefing with an update on Healthy Kansans 2020 and said that the priority categories are being finalized, with the HK2020 Steering Committee developing key points and action items. A public announcement will be made in a couple months, and KDHE will be using the work of HK2020 to develop the state health improvement plan and to carry out its agency accreditation activities.

Dr. Moser then reported on those 2013 Legislative initiatives pertinent to local public health agencies and organizations. He said, for KDHE, the first couple weeks of this session have centered on agency overview briefings and successful outcomes from 2012, including several updates on KanCare. He said KDHE is excited about moving forward with the renaming of our Division of Health to the Division of Public Health. Additionally, he said under KSA 75 5603, the director of the Division of Health shall to be a licensed physician, but the statute does not address the position of State Health Officer, and adding SHO to the position title will be part of this legislative initiative. Changing the name of the Division will not change the meaning of public health, but it will give a more accurate label to the mission of the division and its work within the agency to tie the other divisions into the public health system. Dr. Moser mentioned that KDHE is aware of the potential for the introduction of legislation concerning "expedited partner therapy" in which the provider, after having diagnosed someone with chlamydia, would be able to prescribe antibiotic medications to that patient's partner without an examination; we'll continue to monitor this one and provide updates if it's introduced in the legislature.

Dr. Moser mentioned that our local public health partners are aware of the ongoing prioritization of lab testing, and he announced that representatives from KDHE's Office of Local Health and the KDHE Labs will be meeting with stakeholders at the upcoming round of regional public health meetings.

He noted that there has been legislation introduced that would provide an Oversight committee for KanCare. He said KDHE and KDADS welcome and support the legislative oversight, as it provides a formal avenue for input and carries on the commitment to transparency. Dr. Moser

recommended to providers on the call that a good outlet for getting questions about KanCare answered quickly by the health plans' CEOs would be the daily rapid response calls. Look on the KanCare website for the call-in details, but the calls are each morning at 9:00. The issues from that daily call are logged on the website in a document titled "Issues Log".

Today Dr Moser will be at a meeting of the Kansas Hospital Association to provide a KDHE overview, but with a focus on integrating primary care & public health. This integration of systems will result in improved population health management and help break down siloes. Dr Moser has met with ASTHO and IOM to look at examples of where it's being done and will share those success stories with local communities. There are already examples of this taking place in Kansas.

Charlie Hunt, State Epidemiologist, described the current state of influenza activity. He said last week Kansas, through ILINet, reported widespread activity for the third week in a row, but that the overall rate of flu was down last week. The week of Jan. 5 the ILI was 6.4%, and it's now down to 4.5%. We're still seeing lots of activity. With regard to Lab testing, most specimens are AH3, with few B. There have been more than 500 deaths related to flu and/or pneumonia this season in Kansas (since last Sept.), per the death certificates recorded in Vital Stats. The CDC issued an alert over the Health Alert Network regarding the treatment of flu, and we followed thru with KS-HAN.

Charlie Hunt then provided an update on pertussis cases. He said some labs are reporting negative pertussis to us. Through mid December, 1,800 tests were reported, and half were negative. 70% never met the confirmed or probable case definition. He said the PCR test is fairly sensitive, so it's likely that most with a negative do not have pertussis. To reduce the burden and better manage resources, he requested that providers stop entering negative PCR testing into EpiTrax, and he recommended that LHDs not investigate unless the case is associated with an outbreak. He asked callers to refer to the latest EpiUpdates newsletter for more details.

Charlie Hunt also announced that his bureau has a new staff member – We welcome Lindsey Webb as KDHE's new foodborne disease epidemiologist.

Jane Shirley with the Office of Local Public Health announced that Aid-to-Local grant package materials are on the KDHE-OLH website. She said that if callers had any questions about the grant process, to please contact Pat Behnke in her office or contact program points of contact listed on the materials. Applications are due March 15. She mentioned that formula funding was restored fully in the Governor's budget.

The Governor's Public Health Conference is scheduled for the end of April in Wichita – We anticipate registration opening February 1 and registration will again go through KS-TRAIN. Jane Shirley said we're excited about bringing together Public Health topics that are general in nature and revisiting the Maternal & Child Health and Family Planning components, even looking at disparities.

The Manhattan Rural Health Symposium is scheduled for Feb 19 & 20. Check the website.

Miranda announced that, starting in February, these statewide Public Health Calls will end with the monthly Preparedness discussion by KDHE's Bureau of Community Health Systems. Essentially, we are merging this statewide call with the Preparedness call that also takes place each month with the Preparedness Regions. Preparedness topics will be last on the agenda..so, if someone only needs to be part of the Preparedness discussion, they can call in to the Statewide call about 15 minutes late, and if they only want to hear the updates that we regularly provide on the fourth Tuesday of each month, that time will not change. There will be a NEW call-in number, so look for that being emailed to you. Additionally, these calls will now be operator-assisted, allowing everyone to have LIVE Q & A instead of sending questions via email. And, there will be a transcript of the call, instead of these minutes being typed and posted several days after the meeting.

Miranda thanked everyone for calling and adjourned the call.

The next Public Health Call will be Feb. 26.