

Flu Advisory Board Meeting – August 4, 2005

Present: Jan Arsenault, Wayne County Department of Public Health; Denise Chrysler, MDCH; Talat Danish, Wayne County Department of Public Health; Teri Lee Dyke, MDCH; Joanne Eakins, Nurse Administrators' Forum; Judy Ferguson, Sanilac County Health Department/MALPH; Rosemary Franklin, MDCH; Liz Harton, MDCH; Jose Guzman, Chiron; Teresa Holtrop, Michigan Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics; Gary M. Kirk, MDCH; Cara Knapp, Kent County Health Department; Jan Koopman, MDCH; Pat Krehn, Nurse Administrators' Forum; Sonya Lebreque, sanofi pasteur; Carol Legwand, Alliance for Immunization in Michigan (AIM); Kevin Lokar, Macomb County Health Department; Joy Maloney, Ingham County Health Department; Dianne McCagg, MPRO; Mark Mlynarczyk, MedImmune; Jennifer Mogyoros, MSMS; Karen Ngowe, MDCH/OPHP; Stacy Nunziato, sanofi pasteur; Roberta Peacock, Kent County Health Department; Beverly Piskorski, Greater Oakland VNA; Rachel Potter, MDCH; Sue Schryber, Ottawa County Health Department; Ann Shelton, MedImmune; Bob Swanson, MDCH; Cora Urquhart, MDCH/BHS/NHM; Lisa VanRaemdonck, Michigan Visiting Nurses; Pat Vranesich, MDCH; Howard Weinblatt, MSMS; Pat White, Oakland County Health Department; Darcy Wildt, MDCH; Barbara Wolicki, MDCH; JoEllen Wolicki, MDCH.

Conference Call-In: Patsy Bourgeois, Monroe County Health Department; TJ Bucholz, MDCH; Doug Cornelius, Kroger Pharmacy; Terrisca DesJardins, SE MI Partners Project; Melinda Dixon, Detroit Department of Health & Wellness; Bernie Gonik, ACOG; Sharon Karber, MDCH; Maryann Kujava, Visiting Nurse Services; Donna Nussdorfer, Washtenaw County Health Department; Linda O'Leary, St. John Health; Kay Renny, VNA of Southeast Michigan; Kathy Webster, Washtenaw County Health Department

Gary Kirk called the meeting to order at 12:37 pm. Introductions were made.

Old Business/Standing Reports

1. Deployment – Gary Kirk – This subcommittee did not meet.
2. Communication – Pat Vranesich – Subcommittee met via conference call on July 31. Reviewed methods of communication.
 - a. Websites – Rachel Potter updating the flu website to make it more user friendly.
 - b. Updating all contact lists. Determined that newsletters are not timely enough. The web and e-mail listserves are the quickest way to get information out. Database of BCBS providers can reach 20,000 healthcare providers, MSMS can reach 15,000 and 4,500 can be reached through webDennis.
 - c. Formulating plan to have a Speakers Bureau to respond to the media.
 - d. “Flu Gossip” included in all agendas – would be information that could be readily shared between member agencies.

- e. Other methods of communication discussed were distribution of educational products such as flu pocket guides.
3. Leadership – Bob Swanson – Met via conference call.
 - a. Last year a rapid response team was formed, which was a group of individuals representing state and local health departments and MACI. This team met as often as needed to respond to what was happening during the flu season and to disseminate information out to other groups. The Leadership committee will take on this role this year.
 - b. Web-based survey tools will be used this year to obtain information from healthcare providers if needed (Survey Monkey, Health Watch, Zoomerang).
 - c. Defining priority groups within priority groups set by ACIP is an on-going process. A draft is circulating through group.
 4. Education – Liz Harton – Combined the flu education workgroup (FEW) call with this new E-FAB workgroup call. Communication subcommittee’s job is to get the messages out and the Education subcommittee’s job is to decide what those messages will be. Some thoughts the group discussed are:
 - a. Messages must be consistent and positive to public eye.
 - b. Use CDC and other established resources and refine them to Michigan.
 - c. In order to keep the message consistent throughout the state, develop weekly emails to LHDs and other external partners every Thursday with updates (“Flu Gossip”), surveillance trends, talking points, and public messages that can be given to the local media. This weekly email will start in the next couple of weeks.
 5. Progress on Specific Activities:

Creation of a press release – TJ Bucholtz advised the group that getting a press release issued was a simple process and one that worked well last year. Gary would inform TJ what was needed and TJ would craft a release. The Communication group will work on putting together what they would like in a press release that would inform the public of the creation of the flu advisory board (FAB). The group as a whole recommended that this first message be attached to another flu message and that all subsequent flu messages be attributed to FAB. Stephanie Mercer reminded the group that it was important, with any messages being disseminated, to get that information to the local health departments before it is released to the press so that the LHDs are informed and have time to prepare a response to public inquiries. TJ’s media fax list will be reviewed. The more channels we utilize the better off we will be. Messages need to be as simplistic as possible.

Development of vaccine flu finder – Rachel Potter and Karen Ngowe presented IVEN, the Influenza Vaccine Exchange Network discussion board and walked the group through how a healthcare provider with excess vaccine could sign up and how a provider looking for vaccine could find it. IVEN was

created through MI-TRAIN. Anyone who has excess vaccine can post. Warnings and guidelines will be added regarding price gouging and Vaccines for Children (VFC) vaccine. Stephanie Mercer mentioned that some providers would not be comfortable selling vaccine in this manner. Joy Maloney added that Ingham County Health Department had sold some flu vaccine last year to a provider and just got paid this summer for vaccine they sold last October. Pat White stated that Oakland County Health Department got the money up front before shipping the vaccine. Cara Knapp remarked that Kent County Health Department had them pick up vaccine rather than ship, due to shipping liabilities. The group was in consensus that the positive aspects of something like the IVEN outweigh the negative.

6. Discussion regarding possible flu vaccine shortage and need for a Public Health Order – Gary Kirk – No way to know whether there will be a need for a Public Health Order this year. We don't want to repeat the same mistakes as last year and would need larger evidence that providers weren't complying with current guidelines (three known cases last year). There is probably less of a need to issue one this year simply because we issued one last year. FAB is an advisory body and will give input to Janet Olszewski, if necessary. Howard Weinblatt stated that physicians giving out vaccine indiscriminately and the public who were requesting it indiscriminately were two groups that needed the type of direction enforced by the Public Health Order last year. Therese Holtrop remarked that some providers were upset by the Order and may have gotten out of the business of giving flu vaccine because of it. There needs to be a happy medium between what happened last year and what might happen this year if there is a shortage.
7. New/additional business – Gary Kirk
 - a. Gary advised the group of his assignment as Acting Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Director, filling in for Doug Paterson, who will be out on medical leave. This assignment is in addition to his duties as Division Director of Immunization.
 - b. The Deployment and Communication subcommittees have a great deal of overlap and the group was asked if the two should be combined into one subcommittee (Communication). The group agreed.

The meeting adjourned at 2:35 pm.

The next meeting of FAB will be a conference call on September 29, 2005, from 9 – 10:30 am.