

TETON COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, September 17, 2025

Present: Barb Shaffer, Carmen Staigmiller, Lora Wier, Gary Dale, and Melissa Moyer

Absent: Ken Bassmann, Sam Carlson, Randy Morris

Guests: Dr. Jeffrey McEwen (BTMC), Katie Adams (TCHD), and Melody Martinsen (Choteau Acantha)

The meeting was called to order by Melissa Moyer at 8:00 AM in the Teton County Courthouse Annex Conference Room. The meeting was recorded as required.

Public Comment: No members of the public offered comments.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the June Board of Health meeting were reviewed. **Motion:** Gary made a motion to approve the June minutes. **Second:** The motion was seconded by Lora.

Vote: All in favor, none opposed. **Outcome:** Minutes approved.

Old Business: None.

New Business

A. Board Business: No specific Board Business was discussed.

B. Health Department Updates

1. Communicable Disease and Immunization Updates (Presenter: Melissa Moyer)

a. ACIP/FDA/Federal Changes and Guidance

- **Flu:** Shots remain recommended for everyone **6 months and older** (business as usual). The department purchased approximately **900 doses**.
- **COVID-19:**
 - The FDA removed EUAs and approved specific vaccines only for individuals **over 65** and those with an **underlying health condition**.
 - The **ACIP** meeting over the next two days will provide final guidance on recommendations.
 - **Challenges:** Off-label use for healthy individuals under 65 creates issues with **insurance coverage** and **provider liability**. A **standing order** for those with underlying conditions was proposed but would require individual documentation, which is procedurally challenging for the Health Department.

b. Flu and COVID Vaccination Clinics

- 300 adult COVID doses were purchased.
- Flu and COVID vaccines will be offered at drive-through community clinics for individuals over 65.
- Only flu vaccine will be offered in schools.
- The detailed schedule includes long-term care facilities, Bynum/Rockport/New Rockport/Miller Colonies, Fairfield School, Choteau, Greenfield, Power, Dutton/Brady, and the Sunshine Trail Lodge, beginning October 1st.
- Dr. McEwen (BTMC) and Carmen Staigmiller offered to write orders for eligible patients under 65 to receive vaccines at the Health Department, if necessary.

c. Measles

- There are 31 measles cases across six jurisdictions in the state.
- No cases in Teton County. Preparations are underway, including working with schools to review vaccination rates and developing protocols for potential exposures.

2. Immunization Billing/EHR Update

- Billing decreased from \$93,000 in 2024 to \$66,000 in 2025, returning to 2023 levels, indicating lower vaccination rates.
- The department bills insurance and partners with Blue Cross Blue Shield CareVan to cover vaccinations for uninsured or underinsured individuals.
- The end of annual school reports and hospital birth reports makes tracking community-wide vaccination rates difficult. The department noted a trend of selective or alternative vaccination schedules.
- The department mentioned that Hep B vaccinations for infants will soon be pulled.

3. PHEP

- An inventory of emergency plans showed that most are held by DES, and some haven't been reviewed since 2018.
- Suggested an approach to review plans annually with partners.

4. Health Department Strategic Plan

- The plan focuses on building trust, increasing capacity, and integrating data.
- The department is participating in a Pathways Recognition cohort to improve organizational standards.

5. Behavioral Health/Crisis Diversion

- Near-Term Initiative Grant: The \$250,000 "Future Generations" grant focuses on behavioral health, supporting the sustainability of a behavioral health program coordinator and the local CARES Coalition.
- CARES Coalition Priorities: Community connection, crisis response, and access to services.
- The behavioral health coordinator focuses on coordinating and facilitating partnerships (e.g., RBHI screenings in schools, first responder training, and community programs like "Get Your Kicks at 6") rather than providing direct services. Carmen requested inclusion in first responder training.
- The need to clearly communicate specific program details to stakeholders was noted.

C. Sanitarian Updates

- **Staffing Change:** The sanitarian position (Austin) departed at the end of August.
- The county plans to hire a contract sanitarian while seeking a permanent replacement (\$55,000–\$60,000 salary range).
- The Health Department will temporarily take over animal bite cases and providing water sample cups. The contract sanitarian will manage licensing, inspections, and septic systems.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:13 AM by Melissa Moyer. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be December 17, 2025 at 8am.

Ken Bassmann, Chairman

Lora Wier, Secretary