

The Fayette County Board of Health met on Tuesday, October 12, 2010, in the Public Meeting Room of the Fayette County Administrative Complex, 140 Stonewall Avenue, Fayetteville, Georgia.

Board of Health Members Present:

Thomas Faulkner, MD
Don Haddix
Fred Oliver
Lynette Peterson
Lyn Redwood
Michael Strain, MD

Staff Members Present:

Glenda Bryant, RN, MN, FNP
Merle Crowe, BA
Rick Fehr, BS

CALL TO ORDER: Dr. Strain called the meeting to order at 7:30 AM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JULY 13, 2010: Ms. Peterson made a motion to approve the minutes as written, seconded by Ms. Redwood. The minutes were approved with no further discussion.

OLD/UNFINISHED BUSINESS / PUBLIC COMMENT:

Board of Health Funding: Ms. Redwood updated the board on her recent meeting with state representatives from the Department of Community Health regarding the board's concern over the continual reduction of Grant-in-Aid (GIA) funding. She has been in contact with both Fayette County Board of Commissioners and Carroll County Board of Health (CCBOH) members. She said that Carroll County Board of Health's cutbacks in funding had been so severe that they had to make stringent changes to their Family Planning program. Another concern expressed in the meeting was that funding was being received by District 4 for the family planning program, but some of that funding was not being realized in the counties, leading to an ongoing investigation in District 4. She mentioned an article in the local Carroll County newspaper, which called for suspension of District 4 CEO Dr. Brackett. CCBOH has also looked at the option of becoming a one-county district, as has happened in other Metro Atlanta counties. She said that at the meeting, both CCBOE and she had voiced concerns that reductions to GIA would lead to cutbacks in programs that provide services.

She mentioned that another issue addressed at the meeting concerned how the GIA formula has remained static since the 1970s. Last year a task force was established to review the formula. The task force has recommended the formula be changed and be calculated based on 40% Population, 40% on Poverty share, and 20% on Poverty rate. Fayette County would be one of 110 Georgia counties whose funding would increase for Fiscal Year 2012 if the revised GIA formula would be implemented, and 49 counties would have funding decreases. Chatham County and other counties which would

experience decreases plan to go to the legislature to request gap funding to make up for funding decreases to maintain current levels of funding.

One attendee of the meeting requested a breakdown of funding for each region of the state: listing number of employees, job titles, and pay rates. That report should be sent within the next two weeks. Ms. Redwood requested a copy of the report. It should provide more transparency as to where funding goes. Another meeting is scheduled, to explore the feasibility of Carroll County becoming a one-county district. She said that there were several Metro Atlanta counties which already are one-county districts. Those counties receive funding directly from the state and she thought that might be an avenue that Fayette County would consider. She said that she had received funding documents from the District Office and had shared them with the Fayette County Commissioners, so that Fayette County Manager Jack Krakeel and county staff versed in accounting could express an opinion. She said Robert Horgan was working with county staff to investigate the feasibility of Fayette County Board of Health following other Metro Atlanta counties in becoming a one-county district. The board thought that the GIA formula should be updated with each new census, and thanked Ms. Redwood for attending the meeting.

Ms. Redwood said that any changes to the GIA formula would not take effect until at least FY 2012. It is believed that the legislature would need to vote on the formula change in order for it to be effective, but the earliest any change would take place would be July 2011 for FY 2012. Ms. Crowe explained that there were two possible factors that could be used in reformulating funding, and that nothing was final at this point. Ms. Redwood thought that it was important to continue to reach out to elected officials to ask that the new formula be implemented. It would be important to remain in contact with legislators, especially at the beginning of next year when the new legislative session begins.

Letter to Fayette County Commissioners and local Representatives: The board expressed approval of the letter it requested staff to compose at the July 2010 meeting (see Attachment #1). Dr. Strain said he thought the letter was excellent. Motion for Dr. Strain to sign the letter was made by Mr. Haddix, seconded by Ms. Redwood. The motion passed unanimously.

There was no more old business.

There was no Public Comment.

NEW BUSINESS:

There was no new business.

Staff Reports:

Ms. Crowe said that Medicaid is an important revenue source for the health department as shown by a handout. Despite three nurse positions that remain unfilled, during FY 2010 the Medicaid claim count was increased by 59%; the Medicaid billed amount was increased by 35%, and the received amount was increased by 45%.

Increases were accounted for in part by several changes managers had made: centralization of WIC freed up clerical time and clerks were assigned to relieve nurses of any clerical tasks possible, since it was felt that nurses should see patients, not be tied up with paperwork; an LPN was hired and now works up clients for RNs; all clients possible are called the day before to remind them of their appointment, especially Nurse Practitioner clients, leading to a much improved kept appointment rate, and finally, M&M software has an Alert feature that allows a popup showing any outstanding balance when a patient's record is accessed so they can be reminded. These are but a few of the changes staff has made to streamline the process. The board complimented staff on becoming more efficient, however eventually the point at which maximum efficiency has been reached will occur, and changes will help no further. Perhaps funding increases for FY 2012 will permit some staff vacancies to be filled and that should help with increasing revenue. Ms. Redwood complimented staff, saying that management responses as listed might be why Fayette was not having to take the steps Carroll County was facing.

Ms. Bryant said staff was seeing about 1800 patients per month, about average for the month. About 20% of patients were Hispanic. Currently the Flu campaign is ongoing, and she thanked the school system for allowing staff in to vaccinate schoolchildren, although the response has not been as robust as last year. One reason might be that local pharmacies were offering flu vaccine for a smaller cost that the HD can offer. She thought that next year business might be reduced even more than this year.

She mentioned that cleanliness of the health department was an outstanding issue. There had been quite a problem with outside roaches coming into the building, which the county had addressed by bug-bombing the entire building one recent weekend, which solved most of that problem.

She said that she realized that Fayette County had economic problems as has all government entities lately; however, one of the cutbacks has been the reduction of cleaning staff. Four or five people clean all the buildings in the county, and there is simply not enough staff-or time--to keep this health care facility as clean as it should be. While cleaning staff does their best, through no fault of theirs, cleanliness of the health department is unacceptable. She listed the few tasks cleaning staff is able to get done, but said much more is absolutely necessary to meet minimal standards. She discussed alternatives she had explored, but to date no ongoing follow up has been found.

The board was dismayed that a health care facility was not being acceptably cleaned on an ongoing basis. They felt that patient care offices should be cleaned to a higher level than other offices, especially due to the volume of traffic through the office each day, and with the potential for disease transmission. They offered suggestions to meet the need. However, no true solution was found. Dr. Strain asked Ms. Bryant to send him a list of needs and said that he would call Fayette County Manager Mr. Krakeel, to discuss the issue and seek a workable solution.

Mr. Fehr said that the major decrease of new construction permit requests between 2009 and 2010 had allowed Environmental Health staff to concentrate on other programs. Environmental Health staff performed the most food service inspections and pool inspections in the District during that time span, and Fayette County was only behind Coweta County in issuance of new housing permits. He said that he appreciated the hard work and dedication of his co-managers during difficult economic times, and he thanked the board of health members for attending meetings.

There were no further staff reports.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Peterson, seconded by Mr. Haddix. The meeting was adjourned at 8:04 AM.

Michael Stain, MD

Health

Merle Crowe, BA, CCFO

Secretary, Fayette County Board of