



## **Mayors and Managers Meeting Notes from 8.24.2020**

**Municipalities Participating:** Addison, Bartlett, Bensenville, Bloomingdale, Burr Ridge, Carol Stream, Clarendon Hills, Darien, Elmhurst, Hanover Park, Itasca, Lisle, Naperville, Oakbrook, Oakbrook Terrace, Warrenville, West Chicago, Westmont, Wheaton, Willowbrook, S. Quintell – DuPage Mayors and Managers

**DuPage County Representatives Participants:** Sheryl Markay, Chief Policy & Program Officer

**DuPage County Health Department Participants** Karen Ayala, Executive Director; Rashmi Chugh, Medical Officer; Dennis Brennan, Legislative Manager; Chris Hoff, Director of Community Health Resources; Penny Chanez, Executive Asst.

***Purpose of the call today with Mayors and Managers is to address updated case counts, Community and business updates and guidance.*** DuPage County Health Department Deputy Incident Commander, Chris Hoff facilitated the meeting.

Executive Director, Karen Ayala welcomed everyone, and shared the following:  
DuPage County was in the news this weekend.

- WBBM held a discussion between DuPage County (County Board Finance Chair, Robert Larsen) the Health Department (Executive Director, Karen Ayala) and Choose DuPage (Executive Director, Greg Bedalov) on DuPage County's approach and partnership to address COVID-19.
- An article also appeared in the *Chicago Tribune* on the increase in hospitalizations in DuPage County

Information will be shared with today's participants on how to address Public Health protocols and associated challenges in the workplace and in governmental settings.

### **COVID-19 UPDATE ON ILLINOIS AND DUPAGE COUNTY CASES**

The Health Department's Medical Officer, Dr. Chugh provided the following case updates and remarks.

Case Counts continues to rise nationally.

- Nationally
  - Confirmed cases: 5,706,449
  - Deaths: 176,819
- State of Illinois
  - confirmed cases: 220,178
  - deaths: 7,880
  - Recovery rate of 95%

- DuPage County
  - confirmed cases: 13,765
  - deaths: 529
  - Recovery rate of 94.6%

### **Data/DuPage County Health Department COVID-19 Dashboard Review**

Dr. Chugh and Mr. Hoff provided the following updates and current data trends:

- Continuing to see concerning trend in recent weeks of increased community spread and case activity. Dr. Chugh emphasized the importance of the need to reverse the curve in the number of positive case counts
  - 7-day rolling average on 6/23/2020, before Phase 4 and July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday: 35.1 cases per day
  - 7-day rolling average on 8/22/2020 is 122.4 cases per day
  - Increase of approximately 248% over past 8 weeks
- Dr. Chugh shared the Illinois Dept. of Public Health is experiencing technical issues with positivity rate, data reporting; the closest real-time data is from DuPage County's test site data and the IDPH county-level metrics.
- DuPage County continues to remain under 5% positivity rate, but both County level data and Regional data has a one week reporting lag.
- Recent hospitalization data indicates an increase for those under the age of 50.
- Trends per reports from local hospital indicate hospitalization length of stay has decreased.
- Mr. Hoff reminded participants of the ability to now search on the COVID-19 dashboard by city and date for positive case activity and death counts by community.
- DuPage County remains in the warning level for case activity.
- 20 counties in the State of Illinois are in the warning level.

Dr. Chugh and Director Ayala addressed the concerns expressed by Mayor Grasso of Burr Ridge on the confusion and reliability surrounding testing results as recently shown in the case of the Chicago Bears' players who tested positive one day and negative the next day and the more measured and cautious messaging provided by the Health Department given the lower positivity rates/hospitalizations and deaths.

- The Health Department continues to be cautious on the approach and messaging in addressing COVID -19 and seeks to find balance between the recent improvements in lower positivity rates/hospitalizations and deaths with the recent increase in case counts and the lack of experience dealing with the virus. There is only a six-month history of COVID-19 activity to study when making complex decisions for the well-being and safety for the residents of DuPage County.
- Antigen testing, as possibly used by the Chicago Bears, is complex and currently there is no succinct summary of what test to use and with whom.
- Dr. Chugh expressed that PCR diagnostic testing with < 48 hour turnaround time is still the best form of testing to invest resources that produce a higher rate of reliability and accuracy.

Dr. Chugh and Director Ayala addressed President Lalmalani's concern of self-isolation requirements for asymptomatic individuals in clinical settings. Dr. Lalmalani also shared that he is treating far fewer

numbers of COVID-19 patients who are experiencing adverse effects and he is seeing fewer hospitalizations and of those admitted, needing the use of a ventilator.

- All individuals who test positive and are infected or considered infectious are advised to self-isolate for 10 days and those in direct contact are to self-quarantine for 14 days from last exposure to a case. This is essential in limiting the spread which can result in more at-risk populations to have severe outcomes should they come in contact with an asymptomatic individual and they themselves become infected.
- There are no FDA-approved effective treatments for COVID-19; all current therapies are experimental.
- The goal is to reach zero cases, hospitalizations and deaths which will in turn allow Public Health workers to address isolated clusters and cases, in turn limiting the spread at a wide-scale level which will result in more individuals with adverse effects.
- True herd immunity while minimizing severe health impact can only be achieved with broad availability and uptake of a safe and effective vaccine.

### **TESTING UPDATES**

Mr. Hoff provided an update on the DuPage County Community Testing site in Wheaton. Effective August 31, 2020 the new hours at the site will be Monday – Friday 7:00AM -12:00Noon.

Chat box question: Itasca

Why are you eliminating weekend testing?

Response: Our testing site has been busiest early in the week following the weekend. We want to ensure access is available throughout the week and provide an option for additional testing for schools and other environments where people are going back to work.

### **MISC UPDATES**

- The Health Department created two new resources to share with communities. The fact sheet flyers on universal masking for businesses and schools can be found here:  
<https://www.dupagehealth.org/596/Education-and-Outreach-Materials>
  - Business “Wear a Mask” fact sheet:  
<https://www.dupagehealth.org/DocumentCenter/View/3509/COVID-19-Protect-Yourself-and-Co-workers-8-18>
  - School “Wear a Mask” fact sheet:  
<https://www.dupagehealth.org/DocumentCenter/View/3508/COVID-19-Protect-Yourself-and-Students-8-18>
- Director Ayala shared that the Health Department is working on plans with local and state planners on safe mass vaccination when a vaccine against COVID-19 becomes available. Vaccines would require 2 dosages and distribution of limited supplies will be handled with a tiered approach for priority groups based on severity and exposure risks.
- The Health Department is working closely with school superintendents and the Regional Office of Education on school reopenings to address challenges and the various learning models which are unique to each school setting and based on levels of community transmission.

- The Health Department will continue to monitor school absenteeism rates for any concerning trends or spikes in school absenteeism.

Chat box question from Itasca

Per this document, is it DCHD opinion that no district should have full in-person learning at this time?

Response: Director Ayala responded that the Health Department's recommendation is for in person learning, provided that all students are in static cohort setting. This setting is far more achievable in an elementary school vs. a high school setting. The Health Department acknowledges that education is considered essential, but given the unique circumstances surrounding educational settings, it is important that communications between Public Health and schools remain an open dialogue for the well-being and safety of students and staff. The decision to open/close schools is at a Superintendent level; the Health Department has no statutory authority.

- Director Ayala reminded participants of the upcoming Labor Day weekend and the concerns of increased social activities similar to those witnessed over previous holidays. Director Ayala asked for local leader's support of public health guidelines and providing messaging to their constituents to follow and employ public health strategies to eliminate the spread of the virus.

There was no further discussion. Participants were encouraged to reach out with any other concerns or questions. Director Ayala concluded the call at 11:00AM with no further discussion.