

**QUARTERLY MEETING OF THE
ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF HEALTH**

January 24, 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT

James Zini, D.O., President
Nathaniel Smith, M.D., MPH, Secretary
Phillip Gilmore, Ph.D., President-Elect
Susan Weinstein, DVM
David Kiessling, D.P.M.
Thomas Jones, R.S.
Marsha Boss, Pharm. D.
Greg Bledsoe, M.D.
Terry Yamauchi, M.D.
Perry Amerine, O.D.
Lawrence Braden, M.D.
Alan Fortenberry, P.E.
Glen "Eddie" Bryant, M.D.
Beverly Foster, D.C.
Anthony Hui, M.D.
Catherine Tapp, MPH
Mike Riddell, M.D.
Susan Ward-Jones, M.D.
Vanessa Falwell, APRN
(via phone)

NOT PRESENT:

Miranda Childs-Beebe, D.D.S.

GUESTS PRESENT

Reginald A. Rogers, Deputy General Counsel
Avis D. Scott, Citizen
James Bledsoe, M.D., Medical Dir., EMS/Trauma
Don Adams, Dir., Center for Local Public Health
Rhonda Brown, ADH
Marisha DiCarlo, Ph.D., Dir. Health
Communications
Meg Mirivel, Public Information Specialist
Brandy Sutphin, Senior Epidemiologist
Greg Brown, Branch Chief, Trauma and
Emergency Response Branch
Jerrilyn Jones, ADH
William Greenfield, ADH
Tamara Baker, School Health Services ADH
Kristyn Vang, Cancer Epidemiologist
Shane David, Pharm. D., Dir. Pharmacy Services
Dr. Glen Baker, Dir. Public Health Lab
Shelly Matthews, ADH
Gary Wheeler, Chief Medical Officer, ADH
Micheal Knox, ADH
Namvar Zohoori, M.D., Chief Science Officer
Jo Thompson, ADH
James Joiner, ADH, LGTF
Cristy Sellers, ADH CHA
Haley Ortiz, ADH
Laura Shue, General Counsel
Dr. Dirk Haselow, Deputy Chief Medical Officer
Joy Gray, ADH
Dr. Michelle Smith, ADH
Dr. Appathurai Balamurugan, ADH
Mike Wilson, ADH
Stephanie Williams, Deputy Dir. Public Health
Programs
Connie Melton, Branch Chief, Health Systems
Licensing/Certification Branch
Brooks White, Administrative Law Judge
Abby Holt, Cancer Research Administrator,
CPHP Health Statistics
Renee Mallory, Dir., Center for Health Protection
Jessica Upchurch, Administrative Specialist
Anna Hurst, Legal Services

MEETING OF THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

The quarterly meeting of the Arkansas State Board of Health was held Thursday, January 24, 2019, in the Charles Hughes Board Room of the Freeway Medical Building in Little Rock, Arkansas.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at approximately 10:03 a.m. by President Catherine Tapp, with Ms. Vanessa Falwell participating by teleconference. President Tapp turned over the gavel to Dr. James Zini, the new president.

Dr. Nate Smith requested a roll call of all present and introduced two new staff in the Public Health Preparedness and Emergency Response Branch. Mr. Micheal Knox, DrPH, MPH, as Branch Chief, and Dr. Jerrilyn Jones, MD, MPH, as Medical Director. Dr. Smith also pointed members to the new edition of the guide to programs and services.

Ms. Laura Shue read the minutes from the Nominating Committee meeting held via teleconference on January 16, 2019, when it considered officer nominations. There is a history of rotating nominations for board president between medical and nonmedical members, so the committee considered currently serving, nonmedical members with unexpired terms. Dr. Bryant moved to nominate Dr. Phillip Gilmore as the president-elect nominee for 2020; seconded by Dr. Sue Weinstein. Motion passed.

Ms. Shue presented Dr. Gilmore as the nominee on behalf of the Committee. Dr. Gilmore currently serves as a hospital administrator representative on the Board. His current term expires in 2019, but he may serve as a holdover or be reappointed by the Governor for 2020. He began his career as an orderly and then worked as a clinical microbiologist. He has served in hospital administration in El Dorado, Arkansas and at Children's Hospital with experience in rural areas and teaching hospitals. He currently serves as the CEO of the Ashley County Medical Center. Motion to accept made by Dr. Mike Riddell; seconded by Dr. Yamauchi. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Dr. Sue Weinstein made a motion for approval of the October 25, 2018, Quarterly Minutes. The motion was seconded by Dr. Lawrence. The motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Board Updates

Ms. Shue updated the Board on its membership status. There are four openings on the Board and six holdover members whose terms have expired. The Department is working with the Governor's Office to get the appointments filled quickly. Ms. Shue also requested members serve on Board committees. The bylaws include five committees: Executive Committee, Nominating Committee, Administrative Hearings Committee, Local Grant Trust Fund Committee, and Rural Health Committee. In addition, there are ad hoc committees and currently an Arkansas Cancer Committee.

Ms. Shue requested that those serving on the Administrative Hearings Committee be willing to meet next week due to a proposal regarding handling EMS disciplinary, suspension, and licenses revocation circumstances. She also requested the Legislative Committee be available to meet next week. Dr. Smith asked Ms. Shue to consider reaching out to members who might be a good fit for a particular committee.

Dr. Riddell asked whether there are any subcommittees that might present a conflict of interest for members. Ms. Shue offered to provide further guidance if a member feels he or she might have such a conflict, or in the event that a member has a direct connection to the Arkansas Department of Health (“Department”) and might feel more comfortable serving on another committee. Dr. Perry Amerine asked who constitutes the Executive Committee and if it is open to members at large. Ms. Shue explained that the president, president-elect, and secretary traditionally serve on the committee and that she will follow up regarding members at large.

Dr. Amerine asked about the purpose of filling out a statement of financial interest. Ms. Shue explained that the law requires it for all members of boards and commissions. They must be filed with the Secretary of State’s Office by January 31 each year. Members can file it or have the Department notarize and file it. Dr. Amerine asked if there is any information that would disqualify him from serving on the Board. Ms. Shue explained that there may be matters that come before the Board where a member might have to consider his or her role or connection. If a direct financial interest that may affect the decision exists, then the member should abstain from that matter before the Board. She explained that there is no information on the statement of financial interest that would exclude members from serving generally. Dr. Smith added that the purpose is disclosure not disqualification.

Dr. Amerine stated that he received a letter from Dr. Robbie Thomas-Knight, who resigned in December 2018, and asked whether the concerns of the letter would be addressed to the Board. Ms. Shue explained that the letter was distributed per Dr. Thomas-Knight’s request. Ms. Shue expressed concern about commenting on the letter as portions of it deal with ongoing litigation pending before state and federal courts. Dr. Amerine requested clarification. Dr. Smith explained that a transcript was made of the two sections of the last meeting concerning conflicts of interest and the specific case, and he shared it with Dr. Thomas-Knight. Dr. Smith stated that she attended that meeting via phone, noting that participation in meetings via phone rather than in person presents certain difficulties. Dr. Thomas-Knight could not see the attorney for the plaintiffs in the case in question. When Dr. Smith received her letter, he immediately reached out to talk with her, but she forwarded the letter before the opportunity to meet arose. Upon meeting, Dr. Smith went through the transcript, explaining that the matter was discussed among the attorneys ahead of time and that what happened was really the only way for the plaintiffs to get a legal remedy, which is what they were seeking. She also shared a concern that past members have left the Board with concerns that went unknown. Dr. Smith has spoken with those members. He felt it was important the Board receive that letter, and that members may feel free to reach out to her directly.

Status of Pending Litigation

Ms. Shue reported on the status of several cases pending in state and federal court involving the Department. On Tuesday, she and Mr. Reginald Rogers attended a preliminary hearing before Judge Fox in the Sixth Division of Pulaski County Circuit Court along with attorneys from the Attorney General’s Office regarding the abortion facilities payment delay matter that was

appealed from the October meeting. Judge Fox addressed and ruled on some preliminary motions and found that the order from the Board was sufficient to bring the matter before him. Judge Fox also enjoined the Department from enforcing the payment delay against the facilities. The Attorney General's Office will be addressing the injunction and filing responses; but at this point, the Department is respecting the order and not enforcing the abortion facility payment delay deficiency finding.

The Attorney General's Office also made procedural arguments in the case with Family Planning Services and Planned Parenthood in circuit court. In the meantime, the Attorney General's Office filed a Notice of Filing of Removal from Pulaski County Circuit Court to federal court. Because the issues raised with the delay of payment for the facilities involve federal constitutional claims, the AG's Office felt that it would best to litigate the case in federal court. The notice has been filed in Pulaski County Circuit Court and federal court before Judge Wilson.

Ms. Shue also reported on another federal case that is pending before Judge Moody involving a challenge to a statute regarding abortion facilities. The case is currently in the discovery phase, and documents produced by the facilities staff and the Department's staff are being reviewed. The Attorney General's Office will also be representing the Department and the Board in that case. Ms. Katina Guest and Ms. Keshia Morrison will be meeting with the facilities staff to go over the documentation in the matter.

Dr. Marsha Boss requested the name of the specific act, and Ms. Shue replied that Act 383 of 2017 addresses suspensions and license revocations of facilities and is the statute with the constitutional challenge in federal court currently pending before Judge Moody.

Ms. Shue noted that there is a challenge to the rules and regulations dealing with midwives. It is before Judge Piazza in Pulaski County Circuit Court. There have been various motions and responses, and the matter is still pending. Ms. Shue assured the Board that all current litigation is being followed.

Rules and Regulations Update

Ms. Shue reminded the Board that it previously approved Rules and Regulations for Massage Therapy, which added cupping therapy, and Rules and Regulations Pertaining to Reportable Diseases. The approval allowed those rules to proceed through the rule promulgation process and they are in effect at this time. Ms. Shue explained that traditionally, the Board has provided final approval of rules, but after reviewing the law, that a second round of approval is not required. If there are no changes or public comments, she concluded it would be a more streamlined process to rely on the Board's initial approval of rules.

Ms. Shue reported on three pending rules. Retail Food establishments was approved by the Board in August 2017, and Onsite Wastewater was approved by the Board in October 2017. Public hearings were conducted for these rules in November 2018 and there were no public comments or changes proposed on Retail Food rules. The Board also approved the permanent promulgation of the Controlled Substances List in October 2018, after which a public hearing was held, where no comments were received. The Controlled Substances rule is now going through the remainder of the rule promulgation process and, because of the legislative session, will likely not go into effect until after April 2019. An emergency rule, addressing eight particular substances, expires in May 2019.

NEW BUSINESS

NAACCR Cancer Data Submission

Ms. Kristyn Vang, on behalf of the Arkansas Central Cancer Registry, presented two requests from the North American Association of Central Cancer Registries (NAACCR) to release data for use in data sets. The requests seek to utilize the Registry's data for CiNA Plus in SEER*Stat and for Delay Adjustment. The requests were approved by the Science Advisory Committee, the Board of Health subcommittee, and the Department's Executive Committee. Ms. Vang requested the Board's approval of the requests.

Motion to accept made by Ms. Tapp; seconded by Dr. Gilmore. Motion carried.

County Health Officer Appointment

Dr. Gary Wheeler presented Dr. Kevin Jackson as County Health Officer for Boone County. Dr. Wheeler stated that Dr. Jackson was nominated by Tammy McCutchen, the Boone County Health Unit Administrator, and County Judge Robert Hathaway. The Scientific Advisory Committee reviewed his qualifications. He received his Doctorate of Medicine from UAMS.

Dr. Riddell moved to approve, stating that the Board is very fortunate to have Dr. Jackson to serve in the position; seconded by Dr. Amerine. Motion carried.

Child Health Advisory Committee Recommendations, Tamara Baker

Ms. Tamara Baker presented the 2018 Child Health Advisory Committee ("CHAC") recommendations for coordinated school health to the Board. CHAC was created and authorized to make recommendations under Act 1220 of 2003. Ms. Baker explained the Arkansas Board of Education has already approved the recommendations, and if approved by the Board of Health, CHAC would advocate for schools to incorporate them. There were four categories of recommendations: 1) Engage Leaders to Take Ownership in Promoting Health and Wellness; 2) Improve Student and Staff Access to Healthy Foods; 3) Improve Student Access to Quality Physical Education and Quality Nutrition Education, and; 4) Enhance Awareness of Environmental Factors Among Decision and Policy Makers. The first three categories and a general focus on education have existed since CHAC's formation, but Ms. Baker stated the needle on BMI for students has yet to move. This is the reason for the fourth category, which Ms. Baker said is about connecting early childhood obesity with traumatic experiences for children and adverse childhood experiences ("ACEs").

Dr. Yamauchi spoke to his experiences with CHAC after visiting multiple meetings, and he expressed his support in its association with the Board and encouraged members to attend a meeting. Dr. Riddell requested clarification on the phrase "wellness activity." Ms. Baker explained it varies on community needs and may come in the form of a class or educational activity. Dr. Yamauchi noted the activities often take into account factors like time committed to physical activity. Dr. Riddell asked if it includes any focus on making good choices and consequences in relationships. Ms. Baker clarified it is about relationships within a child's community and developing those relationships.

Dr. Braden inquired whether, as a physician in a rural community, it would be appropriate for someone in his position or other community members to bring CHAC recommendations before schools or school boards. Ms. Baker stated the recommendations are available for anyone to use.

Dr. Amerine asked whether a relationship exists between economic health of a state and the physical health of the citizens. Ms. Baker replied that, while obesity crosses all economic lines, it is more prevalent in lower income communities and CHAC tries to offer more incentives and higher concentrations of work in those areas. Dr. Amerine asked for Dr. Bledsoe's insight on the Governor's awareness of how his efforts to improve economic health impact the health of Arkansans. Dr. Bledsoe stated the Governor is very interested in improving the health of Arkansans and aware of its connection with economic development. Companies looking at relocating in Arkansas take into account the health of the population, because if the population has poor health indicators, that does not bode well for the workforce. As the Governor seeks to encourage companies to relocate to Arkansas, the main feedback he receives pertains to the need for a healthy population, which is why he is focused on efforts to improve healthcare in the state.

Dr. Amerine asked CHAC to gather and report back on statistics for any correlations between economic growth and success in health that could be used to encourage community leaders to focus on economic health to better physical health. Dr. Bledsoe noted that the Healthy, Active Arkansas campaign currently touches on that. Dr. Smith added that each community has its own needle. He explained that the needle not moving as a state is not always an indication of a complete lack of progress.

President Zini asked how the information in question gets promulgated, and Ms. Baker clarified they are simply recommendations that will be distributed by commissioner's memo to the superintendents and in regular CHAC meetings. Dr. Riddell commended Dr. Braden for attending several county health officer meetings, adding that it would be great for county health officers to get involved. Dr. Amerine agreed regarding county health officer involvement. Dr. Smith did as well, requesting the information be distributed to them.

Motion to accept made by Dr. Braden; seconded by Dr. Weinstein. Motion carried. President Zini requested this item come back as an item of old business for reporting at the next meeting.

Midwifery Advisory Board Appointments

Ms. Rhonda Brown requested Board approval for three appointments to the Midwife Advisory Board: Ida Dara (LLM) seeking reappointment; Heather Chowry (LLM) seeking appointment to replace a LLM's seat that is being vacated; and Haley Birchfield (Consumer) new appointment to replace a Consumer seat that is being vacated. The appointments will be in effect beginning March 1, 2019, when the terms expire for the three current members. Members may serve terms of up to 4 years.

Dr. Amerine asked for clarification on the qualifications of the appointees. Ms. Brown explained that Ms. Dara has the highest level of LLM qualifications and Ms. Chowry has her CPM, which is also eligible to be a LLM. Dr. Amerine asked what the highest level of certification is, and Ms. Brown explained it is the Midwifery Bridge Certificate, adding that Ms. Dara has such certification and that Ms. Chowry is a Certified Professional Midwife. Dr. Amerine inquired about the difference in the two. Ms. Shelly Matthews explained that the midwifery bridge

certificate is obtained after an individual obtains a CPM and then earns an additional 50 CEU's. Dr. Foster and Dr. Riddell both personally endorsed Ms. Dara.

Motion to accept made by Dr. Weinstein; seconded by Mr. Fortenberry. Motion carried.

Major Local Grant Trust Fund Recommendation

Mr. James Joiner reported that the trust fund subcommittee met on November 15, 2018 to hear a presentation from Randolph County. The County intends to build a new building and was presenting for additional funding. The committee recommended \$368,650 to supplement the \$400,000. Randolph County has an additional \$200,000 AEDC grant so it feels comfortable going into construction document development.

Motion made to accept the recommendation; Motion seconded. Motion carried.

Travel Stipend and Reimbursement Approval

Ms. Shue reported that state law, specifically Ark. Code Ann. §§ 25-16-902 and 904, requires state boards, including the Board of Health, by a majority vote of the total membership of the Board during its first regularly scheduled meeting of each calendar year, to authorize payment of a stipend and reimbursement. Dr. Yamauchi asked whether the reimbursement amounts are published. Ms. Shue explained it is public information and if the media had a specific question they could inquire and the information would be provided under the Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA").

Motion made to authorize travel, stipend and expense reimbursement made by Dr. Braden; seconded by Mr. Fortenberry. Motion Carried.

OTHER BUSINESS **Concerned Citizen**

Ms. Avis Scott from Conway, Arkansas, presented to the Board her concern about her exposure to mold. She stated she has not received the proper treatment she needs and attended the meeting to seek out help from the Board. Mr. Tom Jones invited Ms. Scott to meet with him and the Department's environmental team, adding that he will make sure the environmental section assists in every way it can. The two agreed to meet the next day, and Mr. Jones provided Ms. Scott with the Department's address, operating hours, and his phone number.

President Zini stated he hoped Ms. Scott felt heard and thanked her for coming before the Board to share her concerns. Dr. Smith also thanked her for bringing her concern before the Board and to the Department. Dr. Smith explained that, in addition to the help that the environmental health specialists will be providing, the Department is also equipped with expertise and other medical aspects, assuring the Board that all the resources would be available to help.

Dr. Bryant commended Mr. Jones and the environmental team on their work on Greers Ferry Lake, specifically the floating units. Mr. Jones stated there would be six remote floaters added this summer.

Administrative Updates

Ms. Shue filled in for Deputy Director Ann Purvis to provide an update on the transformation and several related bills. The Governor has been working toward state government efficiencies and wants to reduce the number of cabinet-level agencies by nearly 65%, from 42 to 15, without sacrificing services. The Governor wants to assign more than 200 boards and commissions to a larger umbrella department. Ms. Shue noted that Ms. Purvis is currently presenting on House Bill 1072, and that copies were available for the Board to review.

Dr. Smith added that the Governor's proposal will need to go through the legislative process, and while some changes are anticipated, he is hopeful the basic structure will remain intact. If so, the Department will have affiliated with it a number of boards and commissions. Dr. Smith reported that he reached out to those on the list to let them know that the Department's goal is to support them in their mission while respecting and preserving their regulatory autonomy. He hopes to be able to present the anticipated structure of the Department at the next meeting.

Legislative Update

Ms. Shue reported on the Department's main goals for the current legislative session. These included bill proposals dealing with maternal mortality review, to set up a confidential committee that would complement perinatal health efforts, and also with infant mortality review. The Department is also looking to raise fees for safe drinking water, pool inspections, and certain health facilities. The Department's legislative team is comprised of Ms. Shue, Ms. Purvis, Mr. Chuck Thompson, and Mr. Matt Gilmore, who oversee health-related bills presented before various committees.

President Zini asked what types of health facilities were included in the bill proposal. Ms. Shue offered to share the draft bill after the meeting and explained that many fees have not been increased in several years, so the goal is to increase them to provide for needed funds.

Public Health Science Program Update

Dr. Zohoori presented three issues to the Board. He informed members of a partnership with the Center for Childhood Obesity at the Children's Hospital to put in an NIH proposal to look at the effect of the community programs and policies that fall under the umbrella of Healthy Active Arkansas, and to look at the collective effect of all those efforts happening in different parts of the state, which will be put to use over a five-year period. Arkansas is fortunate to have the BMI measurements on every student in the state.

Dr. Zohoori updated the Board on the newly formed Office of Performance Management and Quality Improvement and Evaluation. The office was formed to try and increase the Department's accountability in terms of its accreditation, look at the performance of all the programs in different areas in the Department, and also to try and improve and develop a continuous quality improvement process in the Department. Three employees have been hired for the office: a performance manager, a quality improvement manager, and a quality analyst. Dr. Zohoori also introduced Dr. Austin Porter, the Deputy Chief Science Officer.

Dr. Zohoori announced his appointment by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (“HHS”) to the Secretary’s Advisory Committee on National Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Objectives for 2030. The Healthy People Initiative works to develop measurable and science-based health objectives with data available at the national level in order to track progress over a ten-year period, giving the country goals to strive toward that bring it closer to the national prevention agenda. Healthy People also facilitates action at the local level, using partners and program and policy planning in a coordinated manner. The Committee works in concert with the Federal Interagency Workgroup and the public to have its recommendations put into effect in terms of developing the objectives and moving through public comment.

The number of Healthy People objectives has increased from 226 in 1990 to over 1,200 for 2020. Through a vetting process, the Committee has reduced the initial 500 objectives proposed for 2030 to 355, which will likely better focus work at the national level on the highest priority issues while simultaneously engaging stakeholders at all levels. Proposed objectives include core objectives, developmental objectives, and research objectives, with each varying based on issue importance and data needs. Research objectives were newly created for 2030 to engage research and clinical communities as well as universities.

The Committee completed the framework for the national objectives. Objectives are currently being developed, and the last phase will launch in 2020. Dr. Zohoori highlighted Healthy People’s incorporation of “wellbeing,” which recognizes issues beyond health status and that health and wellbeing are achieved not only by medical care but also by daily social, physical, and environmental factors.

Dr. Zohoori noted the need for states to be recognized and assisted in the creation and implementation of objectives because states vary in progress and needs. Arkansas developed state-specific objectives using local data to set reasonable targets for Healthy People 2020. Dr. Zohoori presented Arkansas’ strategy to the Committee and it was well received. He added that states will have a more prominent role in Healthy People as recommendations are developed.

Program Updates

Ms. Stephanie Williams, Deputy Director of Programs, filled in for Ms. Renee Mallory, Director of Center of Health Protection, providing the Board with two Public Health Practice updates. The Arkansas Suicide Prevention Lifeline, which has been operating since December 2017, is the only suicide call center operated by a state health department and it has developed in capacity over the past year. The Lifeline now has a call center manager and five call operators, and it is averaging 1,400 calls per month.

Statistics have been gathered on about 8,000 callers who provided information. Most of the calls received have been from females. The majority of callers are between the ages of 35-44. However, ages have ranged from a nine-year-old caller to a 98-year-old caller. Over 30% of the callers indicated their primary concern is related to abuse and violence that they are trying to cope. Sixteen percent relayed that they were dealing with mental health issues, 18% said they were actively having suicide thoughts, 12% cited substance misuse, 5% cited financial issues, and 1% cited a legal issue causing concern. The general category, with a 15% caller makeup, includes those that are either calling for a friend, family member, or loved one, or simply want information about the services. The lifeline is promoted via advocacy groups in the state and social media. Ms. Williams stated she hopes the program will continue to grow to meet the needs

of Arkansans, and she commended Ms. Haley Ortiz, the program's manager, and her team for the work done so far.

Dr. Yamauchi asked whether the lifeline has any numbers available on persons that committed suicide and had previously contacted the prevention line. Ms. Williams stated she did not believe so. President Zini asked what percentage of callers have been teenagers. Ms. Williams explained she does not have those percentages, but suggested a possible update at the next meeting involving more caller details and demographics as well as the program's educational efforts. Ms. Tapp suggested conducting a death certificate only ("DCO") linkage.

Ms. Williams updated the Board regarding medical marijuana and recent news coverage about card issuing dates. One of the Department's main roles is to receive certifications from physicians for those who are eligible to receive a card. The Department began receiving applications July 1, 2017, and made the decision to not issue cards until product was available for purchase in the state. However, now that dispensaries have been approved, the Department is moving forward and anticipates issuing cards by February 15, 2019. Ms. Connie Melton, Branch Chief for Health Facility Services, oversees the program, and the annual report for it is now available. There are currently 6,845 individuals eligible to receive their cards.

President Zini asked what type of product Arkansas will have, and Ms. Williams responded that it will be medical cannabis. The Department sets the standard of what is acceptable and the requirements for the laboratories that test. Dr. Smith noted that there are extensive parameters for the cultivators and distributors, but exact products are unknown and up to distributors.

Dr. Bryant asked whether the testing and costs involved might make the product so expensive that a black market develops. Dr. Smith explained that is also unknown, but that it is a concern in other states, especially those that have legalized recreational marijuana, where it seems that illicit product continues to be sold. Dr. Bledsoe spoke with a number of Arkansans on the issue, and reported that many felt like legalizing marijuana, and then heavily taxing it, would result in good state funding for other matters. That method, he explained, is problematic because heavily taxing the product often results consumers going elsewhere. Other states have had such an issue, and it is one of the concerns of law enforcement and others attempting to regulate.

Ms. Tapp asked what, on eligible cardholders, the stratification was of what was allocated as their medical need. Ms. Williams said the breakdown is detailed in the annual report. Dr. Riddell asked whether medical marijuana is still illegal federally, and Ms. Williams responded that it is. Dr. Riddell inquired about the possibility of legal issues. Dr. Smith explained that it does present complicated issues that could be better addressed at the next meeting.

Dr. Michelle Smith, Director of the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities updated the Board about an upcoming program, "Cut and Counsel," taking place Monday, January 28, 2019, at the Department from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. She explained her office is tasked with providing leadership and improving health outcomes by advocating for health equity. The Office partnered with the Centers for Health Advancement and Health Protection to develop "Cut and Counsel" to train African American and Latino Cosmetologists to perform blood pressure screenings and provide accurate information to customers that may have various health issues.

Topics for discussion include breastfeeding, breast and prostate cancer, domestic violence, flu vaccines, high blood pressure, HIV/AIDs, and other sexually transmitted diseases. Salons that

send participants will receive a blood pressure machine and scale. Each participant will be trained to accurately perform blood pressure checks using the machines and will be given a protocol sheet with instructions on how to make a referral if needed. A total of 129 people have RSVP'd to date. A pre- and post- test survey will be administered during the training to determine if there is an increase in knowledge based on the Office's intervention. Throughout the year, referrals made to the Office for hypertension will be tracked and based on the results the Office will determine whether to provide additional trainings.

Dr. Braden asked whether there is any emphasis on creating partnerships with the physicians in communities. Dr. Smith stated that partnerships are always welcome, noting some physicians have been invited to witness the training. She added that during the yearly Barber/Beauty Shop Initiative, when the Office provides health screenings at various shops, a physician is always in attendance to speak with people there.

President Zini offered Dr. Bledsoe an opportunity to share with the Board any matters taking place during the legislative session. Dr. Bledsoe stated the session has been busy, with several healthcare related bills thus far, and listed some that might be of interest to the Board. He also encouraged members who have any concerns about any bills to stay abreast of those bills and to contact him if they have any questions.

Dr. Smith requested to postpone any other program updates until the next meeting for time purposes.

President's Report

President Zini expressed his desire and appreciation for the help of members in the upcoming year, promising his undivided, full effort.

Director's Report

Dr. Smith reported on his recent opportunity to go before the Public Health Committees and share about the Department and some of its legislative priorities. He expressed a commitment to work with them during the session and help address any health concerns as the health of Arkansans is and should be a high priority for legislators. His priorities throughout the session include supporting the legislature in its efforts and the Governor in his priorities.

Dr. Smith noted last year's celebration of Dr. José R. Romero, MD, FAAP, Chair of the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices ("ACIP"). He noted that he also served on ACIP as a liaison member and that he plans to attend the February meeting. He informed the Board that, if there are any relevant, significant changes, he will return with a report at the next Board meeting. Dr. Smith added that he serves as president-elect for the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials ("ASTHO") and he plans to attend the March board meeting in Washington, D.C. Dr. Smith informed the Board that when he goes, he will work with the Governor's office to set up meetings with each Arkansas member of the U.S. House and Senate and their staff to discuss important health issues in Arkansas, hear any concerns or questions they have, and learn what their priorities are for the state's health. He will report on the matter at the next Board meeting.

Dr. Zohoori reminded Board members and speakers of the lunch and educational session to follow.

President Zini requested the Board's permission to ask staff about rescheduling the July Board meeting, which coincides precisely with the American Osteopathic Association ("AOA") Board of Trustees and House of Delegates meeting. Recommendation to move the date made by Dr. Amerine; seconded by Mr. Jones. Possible dates, July 18, 2019, or August 1, 2019, will be considered for the Board of Health meeting this summer. The next Board of Health meeting will be held on April 25, 2019.

Vote to adjourn, motion made, seconded. Meeting adjourned

The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Nathaniel Smith, M.D., MPH
Director and State Health Officer
April 25, 2019