

**SC DHEC Pee Dee COVID-19 – Regional Community Assessment Review and Equity Panel  
(CARE Panel)  
Initial Virtual Meeting Agenda  
April 23, 2021  
10:00 am – 11:00 am**

**Present:**

Jim Bruckner, SCDHEC-Pee Dee Region Health Director  
Sandra Gilliard, St. James Health & Wellness, CEO  
Greg King, SCDHEC-Pee Dee Region IT  
Ann Lewis, CEO, CareSouth Carolina  
Suzette McClellan, SCDHEC- Pee Dee Region Community Systems Director  
Ruthie Odom, Director of Covid Operations, SCDHEC Pee Dee Region  
Adam Parsons, Executive Director, Access Health Pee Dee  
Madie Robinson, SC Chapter of the NAACP  
Dana Rogers, SCDHEC-Pee Dee Region, Secretary  
Sheila Welch, Director, Vantage Point, SC Department of Aging  
John Williams, SCHA Representative

**Absent:**

Bruce Bailey, Alliance for Healthier SC, President and CEO, Tideland Health  
Tom Crawford, MUSC, Interim CEO of Florence Division  
Katie Dorrell, Williamsburg Rural Health Clinic, Practice Manager  
Tim DuBose, Lee County EMS, Director  
Chris Hardy, Greater Sumter Chamber of Commerce, President and CEO  
Lesli McGee, McLeod Health, Senior VP Care Coord. and Home Care Services  
Dr. Nancy Ofendo Reyes, Nursing Professor, SC Commission for Minority Affairs  
Heather Shelton, MD, SC Medical Association  
Brian Sponseller, MD, CMO, Carolina Pines RMC,

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**1. Welcome**

1. Jim Bruckner, Pee Dee Region Health Director (facilitated on behalf of Brian Sponseller, MD, Volunteer Panel Chairperson)
2. Reminder- Call is recorded and a public line is available for the public to call in on

**2. Data Review:**

1. **Reminder:** Regional Data is available on the SC DHEC Website ... Link: [scdhec.gov/covid19/covid-19-vaccination](https://scdhec.gov/covid19/covid-19-vaccination) and click on – Vaccination Dashboard – It includes: Heat maps; county and zip code level data; and other relevant factors – Requests for additional data can be made through the DHEC Panel Representative

**3. Panel Expectations/Thoughts**

1. Where do you see gaps in vaccination allocation or utilization in the region?
  - a. Counties by priority (lowest vaccinated/%)
    - i. #1- Marlboro - 17.74% fully vaccinated, 9,620 doses administered (all partners)
    - ii. #2- Chesterfield - 19.4% fully vaccinated, 17,217 doses administered 10,000 + still needing vaccines
    - iii. #3- Lee -19.8% fully vaccinated, 7,103 doses administered
    - iv. #4 Sumter- 20.4% 42,633 doses administered, 17,424 fully vaccinated

- v. Marlboro and Lee only counties that do not have hospitals in the region
  - vi. The 4 counties may need to focus on 1st, have information for all counties, will share with panel members before next mtg.
2. Where may resources best be deployed to fill any gaps?
    - a. Jim - Suggestions heard: can go door to door, Ann and team is going to Dollar Generals, open to suggestions/ideas.
    - b. Ann - Have an intense messaging campaign underway. Will give a sample of material. Currently also have 42 community health workers/various workers on staff that are going to literally knock on doors to give out the material and have conversations. We need to be coordinated in this and we want the messaging on the same page. Success story shared of how a community health worker got a group to commit to getting vaccine.
    - c. Jim- We do have a partnership of providers who are ready and willing to provide giving vaccine in the communities. We do coordinate events to keep from overlapping. Some larger agencies that are doing large/mass vaccination sites successfully but are still seeing the #'s go down - do believe it is due to vaccine hesitancy. We are open to ideas/suggestion to better market. Can be a recommendation to DHEC to hire more health care workers.
  3. How might DHEC best engage underserved communities in the region?
    - a. Jim - DHEC media relations is sending information out to all the regions, having trouble getting it broadcasted on the radio, etc.
    - b. Sheila Welch- Scheduling food give away events, to encourage seniors to come in and help get them scheduled for vaccine appt. Also sent out 1600 postcards to individual to encourage vaccination. Hoping our centers will start opening back up to the public to schedule some events.
    - c. Jim- Have used the County Code Red systems, county notification system in event of hurricane/tornado/flooding, still experimenting with that. May be able to use that in certain areas of the county by zip code if available to notify we are giving vaccine in the area.
      - i. Real data of vaccine clinics and appts for current DHEC events shared - very low numbers
    - d. Madie - In conversation with someone in W'burg county, a church there out in one of the rural areas, church had scheduled event, but it was cancelled due to lack of registrations, that is something that needs to be looked at. Is it because of the vaccine storage or are you looking for a certain #? Needs to be looked at or evaluated more.
      - i. Jim - when we make a commitment we need to be out there
      - ii. Ann- had some clinics due to lack of schedule but if would have known didn't have to worry about vaccine wastage, would have had the clinic. Will now be instructing social media staff to post "No appointment needed"
      - iii. Jim- If you can let us know where the church was we can look at maybe getting an event scheduled, initially there were some challenges around vaccine wastage.
    - e. Sandra Gillard- If we could focus on smaller groups of people, we have used churches, but there are many still closed and not getting the messages, if could focus on other small community groups, especially the younger population. Initially the seniors/elderly in and we did a good job but now it's the next level down. Also using community health workers to reach out to the small businesses to track down and serve the population not being served. Have found that at our other sites just rolled out (Choppee/Sampit area) the numbers are down.
      - i. Jim- Can add to our coalition partner call, make sure all partners that have the ability are using that, and can target specific areas, also willing to try to hire community health workers to go in the areas we do not have those workers.

- f. John Williams - Many of the counties discussed has a large Hispanic community. Has anyone reached out to PASOs (conduit between Hispanic communities to government relations) to see if they would get on board to reach that population?
  - i. Ann - We have a relationship with PASO's and Agriculture & Seasonal Farm worker program through Primary Care Association, did around 170 local farm workers in McBee area. If we can get the J+J cleared it will help. Pine straw farmers are ready, Dillon has a few also wanting the J+J so they don't have to worry about 2nd dose.
  - ii. Jim- We have started trying to target the Hispanic churches in the regions through church outreach. DHEC is starting that campaign with hopes to get the word out that way as well.

4. How might DHEC address vaccine hesitation?

- a. Jim - We hit a bump with Janssen need to turn focus to Moderna/Pfizer, need to get some educational campaigns going. Any other ideas besides using Community Health Workers to address vaccine hesitancy. DHEC is doing a media campaign and using billboards.
- b. Ann - The FQHCs were generously funded through the American Rescue Act and we are targeting a lot of that resource for media outreach. Billboards are on radar, would love to hear any ideas or thoughts about good locations. Making a big investment in that. Billboards can be attention getting, even the design ideas are needed.
- c. Ann - we have 8000 Facebook followers, doing less with Instagram / Twitter. 4-5 Facebook postings a day and a live on Friday's, not just on vaccine but a lot of content around that. Could design that to address vaccine hesitancy, they have been effective. Have video vignettes from both staff and patients that are posting "why I got the vaccine and why it's important to me". When people see their family, neighbors, pastors talk about getting vaccine they are more willing to get it as well.
- d. Suzette- Overall statewide, a section on the website with social media templates, print flyers, palm cards, send out a weekly media advisory with vaccine clinics, send out flyers and information to media/community clinics (including partner information/clinics), some reporters are starting to post on their websites as well. Dawn Goodwin and myself are willing to help anyone with marketing.
  - i. Ann- Will be having Amanda reach out for help.

4. **Clarify Panel Recommendations for Submittal to DHEC**

- 1. Focus on / target smaller events out in communities
- 2. Increase outreach efforts targeting smaller communities and use of Community Health Workers/Outreach Workers

5. **Volunteer Co-Chair**

- 1. If anyone is willing or interested in being the Co-Chair, please reach out to Jim

6. **Frozen vaccine where it can be stored – Carolina pines**

- 1. Pfizer vaccine changed rules, did have to be ultra-cold frozen, and expiration dates were 6 mths, now can be stored between (-25) and (-15) degrees for up to 2 weeks. Doesn't have to be ultracold stored. Can be refrigerated up to 5 days once taken out freezer.
- 2. Moderna hasn't changed, still household style freezer
- 3. Janssen is refrigerator vaccine.

7. **Date and Time for Next Meeting**

- 1. Dana will send out a Doodle Poll to gather times.
- 2. Consensus of the group is to focus around Tuesday's or Thursday's
- 3. Will continue to meet weekly until the need changes.

8. **Questions:**

1. Madie Robinson- When looking at infant mortality rates, were able to look at zip codes, now that counties have been identified is there any way you can identify where the vaccines occurred by zip code/census tracks to better identify populations to target?
  - a. Jim -Yes, that information is available on the website, will send the link again for review.
    - i. Shared screen to show data - Marlboro based on zip code - Bennettsville has had the most vaccines administered currently, some zip code areas that are in both regions/Pee Dee & Midlands etc. Easy to navigate can look at race, gender, ethnicity, and average age. Will try to get something together by next meeting around those zip codes for those 4 counties.
    - ii. Next piece is to determine who has the resources to deploy in those areas... Currently in Marlboro Cty there are 7 sites providing vaccine, CareSouth is in the McColl area, CVS/Walmart in Bennettsville, Scotland Health and Marlboro Family Practice.
  - b. Ann- We have Moby's are going into a lot of these pockets, wondering if the Moby schedule is showing up, will look into that.
  - c. Ann- that is valuable information as we were using that info to deploy the Moby's in the underserved zip codes.
2. Madie Robinson - Questioning around the messaging, especially around Janssen, there needs to be an approach around counteracting that. What are we doing to provide and counteract from an educational perspective?
  - a. Ann Lewis - We have an intense "messaging" campaign underway and have used materials developed by the NACHC and The Diversity Project for materials. I can provide that to the Cares Panel if that would be of interest.
3. Madie Robinson - With the Moby's, are they walk-up?
  - a. Ann - Yes, that is how they were planned, now are not as concerned about waste, where in the beginning, we couldn't offer the vaccine without at least 10 people to keep from wasting the vial, and now feel that will help.
  - b. Jim - vaccine availability was the initial issue, but now there is a lot of vaccine out there, many providers with exception of Janssen providers that have a mini stockpile. CDC put something out yesterday about wastage, we are still concerned about wastage, but more concerned about getting vaccine in arms vs. vaccine sitting on shelves. Expectation is shots in arms.
4. Ann - Any word or hint around Janssen vaccine?
  - a. No word yet, waiting on today's decision.

## 9. Adjourn

**Note:** In an effort to practice physical distancing, the proceedings will be available to the **public via audio** using the following call-in information: **1-864-558-7311**, Phone Conference ID: 845 625 091 #