

**MEETING MINUTES OF THE  
ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH (ADPH)  
ALABAMA MEDICAL DIRECTORS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Miramar Beach, FL  
JULY 22, 2021**

**ALMDA Board of Directors Present**

Sally Ebaugh, M.D., Board Chairman  
Charles Nevels, M.D., President-Elect  
David Rhyne, M.D., Secretary-Treasurer

**ALMDA Board Members Present**

Jerry Harrison, M.D.  
James Yates, M.D.  
Bernita Mims, M.D.  
George Sutton, M.D.  
Charlotte Wynn, M.D.  
William Lee, M.D.  
George Smith, M.D.

**Staff Present**

Mary McIntyre, M.D., M.P.H., Chief Medical Officer  
Denise Milledge, Acting Bureau Director, BHPS  
Lisa Pezent, State Program Director, BHPS  
Diane Mann, Training Unit Director, BHPS

**Guests Present**

Brandon Farmer, Alabama Nursing Home Association (ANHA)  
Katrina Magdon, ANHA  
John Matson, ANHA  
Angie Smith, ANHA  
SalLee Sasser-Williams, ANHA  
Richard Brockman, JD, ANHA  
Tom Geary, M.D.  
Meghan Martin, ALMDA

## **CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES OF JULY 23, 2020**

The Committee recommended approval of the minutes of July 23, 2020, as distributed.

### **COVID-19 UPDATE – WHERE ARE WE?**

Dr. Mary McIntyre provided a detailed update on the COVID-19 pandemic in Alabama. She informed everyone that 70-80 percent of current COVID cases are due to the Delta variant. Dr. McIntyre shared that there has been a lot of push back about kids having to wear masks while attending school. Even though children under age twelve are not eligible for the vaccine, most parents are against mandating masks for school age children. The state as a whole is not doing well as far as the number of vaccinated residents. She reminded everyone that it was essential to continue to wear face coverings, practice social distancing, keep hands off face, wash and sanitize hands frequently, and to stay away from crowds. She stated that the positive rate is around 12 percent statewide and more than 20 percent in some counties. Dr. McIntyre stated that there are currently 600 hospitalizations as of July 21, compared to a high of greater than 1,000 in February of 2021. She indicated that she sends COVID-19 HAN Alerts to the Alabama Nursing Home Association (ANHA) and hopes they are shared.

### **VACCINATIONS & INCENTIVES**

Dr. McIntyre stated that citizens are so focused on the vaccine and its possible side effects that they are not thinking about the known complications from the actual virus (COVID-19). There are a lot of questions in regard to whether someone who is vaccinated is able to pass the virus on to someone else. Dr. McIntyre states that there is information to show that a vaccinated person can in fact infect someone else with the virus if they themselves become infected. She stated that if you catch the virus after being vaccinated, you are normally not as symptomatic. There is currently no guidance on the booster shots for the vaccine. There are also no reports on long-term complications and only rare reports of deaths due to the vaccines.

Dr. McIntyre suggested that when offering incentives for being “fully-vaccinated,” it needs to be made clear what “fully vaccinated” means. Meaning you must receive both doses if you are receiving the Moderna or Pfizer vaccine or one dose of the J&J vaccine. She indicated there had been some confusion where some employees, upon realizing they needed two doses of the mRNA vaccines, wanted to receive the J&J vaccine also so that they did not have to wait to take the second dose to receive the incentive. This practice needs to be discouraged.

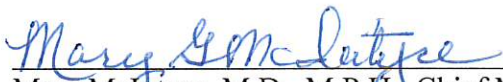
Providers are being encouraged to see patients that are high-risk with symptoms right away instead of waiting until their condition worsens. Monoclonal antibody infusions should be available upon request by providers as outpatient treatments. The HAN Alert that is being drafted will address the monoclonal antibodies shortage.

## **ABUSE & PAST NON-COMPLIANCE**

Dr. McIntyre explained that she and Dr. Harris discussed the issue of abuse and past non-compliance with the health department's legal counsel. The legal department will be reaching out to CMS for guidance on how they want state agencies to proceed. Lisa Pezent stated the enforcement of this regulation stems from the Office of Inspector General. CMS wants abuse documented, if found to have occurred. Dr. McIntyre stated that as soon as CMS responds the information will be shared.

## **NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next meeting of the Committee will be the ALMDA Mid-winter Conference which is scheduled for January 29, 2022, at the Marriott Birmingham, 3590 Grandview Parkway, Birmingham, Alabama 35243.



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Mary McIntyre, M.D., M.P.H., Chief Medical Officer  
Alabama Department of Public Health



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Jacqueline D. Milledge, Acting Director  
Bureau of Health Provider Standards