

## BOARD OF HEALTH

Tony J. Van Goor, MD, President  
Janna West Kowalski, MS, Vice President  
Bernard Birnbaum, MD  
Brian DelGrosso  
Christy Bush, MHS

## **Mission:**

Working to provide everyone in Larimer County the opportunity for a healthy life.

## **Vision:**

Larimer County is a thriving, health-aware community where everyone has access to healthy choices and a healthy environment.

## **LARIMER COUNTY Board of Health – September 15, 2022**

The Larimer County Board of Health (BoH) convened their regular meeting at 6:00 p.m., in-person, at 1525 Blue Spruce Drive, Fort Collins, CO, 80524, and virtually through the Zoom platform.

**Members Present:** Dr. Tony J. Van Goor  
Janna West Kowalski  
Christy Bush  
Dr. Bernard Birnbaum

**Executive Secretary:** Tom Gonzales

**Absent:** Brian DelGrosso

**County Staff:** Commissioner John Kefalas (virtually), Andrea Clement-Johnson, Laurie Stolen, Kori Wilford, John Voss, Kelsey Lyon, Chris Manley, Erika Cathey, Liv Kraus, Dr. Jared Olson (virtually), Dr. Paul Mayer, Frank Haug, Tanya Jolly (virtually), Will Finical, Bron MacGregor, Laura Walker

**Guest Presenter:** Dr. Lesley Brooks (Chief Medical Officer, SummitStone Health Partners)

**CSU Academic Staff:** Dr. Molly Gutilla, Dr. Tracy Nelson

**Call to Order** - Dr. Tony J. Van Goor, Board President, called the regular BoH meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

**Public Comment** - No Public Comment was made.

## **Approval of August 18, 2022 Minutes**

**Action** - Dr Bernie Birnbaum moved to approve the minutes. Janna West Kowalski seconded the motion.



***Motion was unanimously approved.***

## **Financial Report**

John Voss presented an updated financial report through August, 2022.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Behavioral Health Services Update**

Tom Gonzales introduced Laurie Stolen, Behavioral Health Services Director at Larimer County. Ms. Stolen shared that construction of the new acute care facility on Trilby Road is 50% complete and will be on a 40 acre campus called Longview. The anticipated opening date is planned for November 1, 2023. It will be a state-of-the-art building, with lots of space and natural light, fitness and wellness rooms, group therapy and family therapy rooms, outdoor facilities, and a full food service kitchen. Meeting spaces are available (with a total capacity of 100). Ms. Stolen extended an invitation to host a future Board of Health meeting there. The project team has worked closely with the local community and law enforcement / first responders during the design process to make spaces available and appealing for all. The focus will be on healing and caring. There will be 64 beds available in the 64,000 foot facility.

Dr. Lesley Brooks, Chief Medical Officer for SummitStone, will be the Medical Director of the new facility. Dr. Brooks said SummitStone Health Partners is a Community Mental Health Center serving Larimer County, providing care for patients in crisis (including adults, youths and families) on both an inpatient and outpatient basis. Garcia House is the newest facility and is a crisis stabilization 16-bed residential treatment program, designed for people with recurring co-occurring Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders (SUD). Garcia House is a Circle Program, meaning it serves adults with co-occurring mental health and substance-abuse diagnosis, and also a population that have Criminal Justice involvement. SummitStone offers different levels of services, including Behavioral Health Urgent Care, 24/7 Walk-in Care, Withdrawal Management, often referred to as detox. There is discussion regarding a potential pivot to also include children and adolescents at a later date. The new facility will be able to offer fully comprehensive services for all primary care needs and will reach out to hospitals for specialized services, once stabilized, then the facility can take them back onsite, according to Dr. Brooks. Dr. Birnbaum agreed that many people who present at hospitals during detoxification do not need a bed.

No one will be excluded from receiving care so the facility will need 100 staff members. National consultants have been contracted to recruit 100+ diverse staff from outside of Colorado. The bridging services will expand on existing services which are paid for with tax dollars. In response to Dr. Van Goor's question about where patients will go after acute care, Dr. Brooks said they will work with community partners and a variety of different facilities. It is important for the community and partners to understand that this is an Acute Stabilization Unit, not a residential hospital. The facility will be paid for by the 20 year sales tax initiative and there is discussion regarding future prospects, including an adolescent facility. Ms. West Kowalski asked a question regarding upstream prevention efforts that will be enacted. Ms. Stolen emphasized their intent to get involved in early prevention methods with the use of additional grant dollars. Mr. Gonzales said prevention has been discussed further at the Regional Opioid Abatement Council meetings. Reducing stigmatization is a community-wide goal, and Dr. Brooks agreed there is more that could and should be done regarding prevention efforts. Dr. Birnbaum shared that the public voted for this to be an Acute Stabilization Unit, specifically, so upstream prevention is not primarily the goal of the project. Dr. Birnbaum asked how bridge and withdrawal services would work, to which Dr. Brooks said that their national recruitment process will assist with these efforts. Christy Bush asked what ideas the Behavioral Health team may have about transportation and they stated that this facility will have 24/7 dedicated transportation services. Ms. West Kowalski asked if there would be potential job opportunities for longer-term patients, and she inquired as to how the public would find crisis services as an option for care. Dr. Brooks agreed that it is a challenge to communicate this effectively, and that a robust marketing plan is in place for the opening of this facility. Colorado Opioid Synergy Larimer and Weld (CO-SLAW) is a network of treatment providers and community coordinators, connected by an 0800 crisis line to help direct people to where they can get help. Commissioner Kefalas recently went to the facility site with partners and commended Dr. Brooks and Ms. Stolen for their work.

### **Joint Suicide Prevention Awareness Month Proclamation**

- **Action** - Dr. Van Goor moved to approve the proclamation designating September 2022 as Suicide Prevention Awareness Month in Larimer County along with the Board of County Commissioners.

Ms. West Kowalski seconded the motion.

***Motion was unanimously approved.***

### **Academic Health Department Presentations**

Mr. Gonzales gave an overview of the partnership with the Colorado School of Public Health (CSPH) and the College of Environmental Health at Colorado State University on a paid summer internship program, funded by CDC workforce development dollars. Erika Cathey, Communicable Disease and Emergency Preparedness and Response Manager, introduced intern Tanya Jolly who presented her work on Foodborne Illness (FBI) complaints. Ms. Jolly completed a comprehensive analysis and shared about the design of a scoring matrix which has been incorporated into Larimer County's HealthSpace database that will be used to determine when an on-site investigation is warranted. Dr. Van Goor asked how points were established and Ms. Jolly explained the process. Ms. Jolly also presented her project at the Colorado Environmental Health Association (CEHA) conference this week.

Chris Manley, Environmental Health Director, presented on behalf of intern Alyssa Hlava, and explained that the basis of her project was evaluating the presence of lead in drinking water at childcare facilities. Home based child care facilities were prioritized for testing as the highest risk population is age 6 and under, and these facilities have not previously had sampling offered to them through similar programs. 50 facilities signed up for the pilot program. A new state law requires all facilities to be tested by next summer and participation in this project counts toward that requirement, so the project is ongoing. Funding is available for re-testing and replacement of faucets. Dr. Birnbaum commented that pediatric healthcare professionals believe patients are low-risk in our area so very few children are tested.

Dr. Jared Olson introduced intern Will Finical, who has been working on our Health and Wellbeing Dashboard, specifically regarding air quality. Ozone is a key pollutant in Larimer County and exacerbates existing lung conditions. Additionally, the number of high heat days of 90 degrees and higher are increasing in frequency. Ms. West Kowalski questioned if the data could be applied at the zip code level. Dr. Olson said we don't have enough comprehensive data regarding zip codes at this time because some health systems in the county have only recently enrolled their Emergency Departments, but we are collecting more comprehensive data now for analysis in the future. Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) do not have emergency departments and are not participants in this CDC-led data collection program. Commissioner Kefalas asked if this data can be cross-referenced with gender, age and ethnicity to assess impact. Dr. Olson indicated we do not have evidence of significant racial or ethnic disparities at this time. We have seen some evidence of increased respiratory illness in local emergency departments, and recent wildfires, COVID-19, and air quality all contribute to this county's health burden.

Dr. Birnbaum said the partnership with CSU is an exciting move towards our Strategic Plan goals. Dr. Molly Gutilla, Assistant Professor Colorado School of Public Health, shared that nurturing and training are both so important for students. Enrollment is down among some CSPH programming, but this internship project has been enormously beneficial and will encourage participation for future programs. Funded internships are more equitable and attractive for students and CSPH is hoping to expand collaboration with LCDHE in the coming years.

## **UPDATES**

### **Director's Update**

Mr. Gonzales shared that the All-Staff Development Day at the Lincoln Center (Aug 3rd) was very successful. The morning's focus was on Trauma-Informed Care for staff. There was an update regarding our Mission, Vision and Values, and staff were also given a Strategic Plan update. There was an opportunity to contribute to the COVID-19 After Action Report, and all staff received Narcan training, as well.

Andrea Clement-Johnson, Deputy Public Health Director, shared about the federally-funded WIC vouchers for farmers markets project that provides participants \$30 vouchers to use on fresh fruits and vegetables in addition to their existing WIC benefits. This program will run at our participating farmers market through October 31, 2022. The project is both beneficial to farmers and families.

September is National Emergency Preparedness Month. Larimer County experiences the highest number of emergencies (floods, fires, etc.) in all of Colorado, so it's very important for people to be trained and equipped. LCDHE staff will have the opportunity to attend activities throughout the month to learn more about emergency preparedness.

Laura Walker, Human and Economic Health Director for Larimer County, shared that Mr. Gonzales was recently recognized for his investment and dedication by the HR department. Within the Innovation Awards Program, LCDHE came in 2nd for the most volume of innovation awards, per employee. Ms. Walker presented Mr Gonzales with a small gift in recognition of the work in this area.

Dr. Van Goor asked for an update regarding the Resurrection Christian School Lawsuit update - Frank Haug, County Attorney, stated that the lawsuit has been dismissed.

### **Board Member Updates**

Dr. Van Goor provided an update regarding the Climate Smart and Future Ready Program, with the Strategies for Sustainable Larimer County. Dr. Van Goor spoke with Heidi Pruess, the Program Manager, about the five priority workgroups which include a Public Education and Outreach program focused on proactivity around climate change. Commissioner Kefalas noted that Health Department staff have been involved in the focus groups and action planning. Mr. Gonzales is on the Executive Committee, so he will share the information with the other Board members.

Ms. West Kowalski reminded the Board and staff that the Advanced Leadership Training Program through the Regional Institute for Health and Environmental Leadership (RIHEL) applications are open and staff are encouraged to apply.

Commissioner Kefalas announced that the Larimer County Office of Aging is conducting a survey, asking for input in their next 4-year Strategic Plan. Mr. Gonzales confirmed that the Community Wellbeing Dashboard will be presented at the BoH meeting in November, in response to the Commissioner's inquiry.

### **Adjourn Meeting**

Dr. Birnbaum moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. West Kowalski seconded the motion.

**The meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.**