



COVID-19 VACCINE TASK FORCE

COVID-19 Vaccine Task Force Meeting #10

April 28, 2021

10:30AM – 12:00PM

Meeting Minutes

Task Force Committee Members Attendees

Emergency Services

Vince Pierucci, EMS

Chief Jonathan Stornetta, Fire

Sheriff Ian Parkinson, Law Enforcement

Bioethicist

Luis Ochoa, MD - *Absent*

Community Health Centers

Stephen Clarke, MD

Pharmacies

Maronee Hollister, PharmD - *Absent*

Long Term Care

Karen Jones, Ombudsman, SLO County - *Absent*

Business Community

Kristen Yetter, Promega Biosciences

Occupational Health

Brian Roberts, MD, MedStop

Hospitals

Mark Lisa, Tenet - *Absent*

Health Insurers

Paul Jaconette, CenCal - *Absent*

Education

Dr. James Brescia, County Office of Education

Courtney Kienow, Cal Poly-Higher Education (Cynthia Lambert, Cal Poly, in for Courtney Kienow)

Child Care

Raechelle Bowlay, CCRC

Corrections

Christy Mulkerin, MD, Jail CMO

Religious Leaders

Pastor Tim Thuele - *Absent*

Rabbi Janice Mehring

Monsignor Ed Callahan - *Absent*

Organizations serving racial and ethnic groups

Erica Ruvalcaba-Heredia, Latinx

Veronica Avery, NAACP

Organizations serving people with disabilities

Diva Johnson, Tri-Counties Regional Center

Organizations serving people with limited English proficiency

Irebid Gilbert, Herencia Indigena

Community Representatives

Mary Jean Sage, Health Commission

Betsy Whitaker, Med Anthropologist

Hospice

Kim Chartrand, ASPC

Homeless Serving Organizations

Janna Nichols

Voluntary Organizations

Rick London, United Way - *Absent*

Behavioral Health

Jill Bolster-White, Transitions Mental Health Association - *Absent*

Utilities

Samantha Caldwell, PG&E Diablo Canyon, Energy - *Absent*

Bill Robeson, City of Arroyo Grande Water/Wastewater/Trash - *Absent*

Agriculture

Brent Burchett, Farm Bureau

Transportation

Geoff Straw, SLORTA

(Tania Arnold, SLORTA)

Welcome and Public Comment Review

Jen Miller welcomed Task Force members. She reported that Dr. Bravo is interested in joining the Task Force but was unable to attend today. She re-emphasized the shifting and critical role of the Task Force to address vaccine hesitancy. The Task Force, as leaders in the communities they serve, can provide insight about groups' motivators, reasons for hesitancy, effective ways of reaching people, who is best suited to reach them, and how the County can support these efforts. People have legitimate concerns and need good answers from trusted people.

COVID-19 Status in SLO County as of 4/26/21

Dr. Borenstein reported that although the County moved into the Orange Tier this morning, case counts are slightly increasing though hospitalizations and deaths remain low. Inclusion of Cal Poly's testing number helped the County qualify for the Orange Tier. The number and type of variants found in SLO County are increasing and pose a considerable threat to progress. The first case of the South African variant was detected in SLO County yesterday. Although scientists do not yet know how effective the vaccines are against new variants, it is known that all vaccines are nearly 100% effective in preventing death from COVID-19.

Demand for vaccines is slowing. The County's mass vaccination clinics will be open four days next week (Tuesday through Friday) due to lower demand. Dr. Borenstein reported on the vaccination rates by age, race/ethnicity, and overall vaccination rates in the County. In order to get closer to herd immunity, efforts need to target the approximately 72,000 people (1/3) who remain in the hesitant group.

As of Monday, more than 204,000 doses have been administered in SLO County, with nearly 50% of the population fully or partially vaccinated. In order to reach herd immunity, it is estimated that upwards of 80% of the community needs to be vaccinated.

The Janssen vaccine is once again available for use. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices determined the vaccine benefits outweigh known and potential risks. The County will provide a Johnson & Johnson informational fact sheet from CDPH to all patients offered the vaccine.

The County has “retired” its vaccine registry and has now fully transitioned to MyTurn, the State vaccine appointment registration system. Individuals can select date, time and location. They can also search for appointments by vaccine brand. Now is the most convenient time to get the vaccine. Most County vaccine clinics can accommodate walk in appointments, as supply allows. MyTurn does not list all pharmacies and other vaccine providers, but www.vaccinefinder.org and VaccinateCA.com have a more comprehensive list.

GIS Heat Mapping

Jen demonstrated a Beta version of a GIS tool which maps vaccine data by census tracts. The GIS maps are designed to be an internal planning tool that uses census data to layer neighborhood, age, race/ethnicity, income, HPI indicators and other data to understand vaccination rates by communities. Current data is imperfect; the IT team is adding and cleaning datasets to ensure usability. The tool has the potential to help drive decisions and prioritize vaccine strategies. At a minimum, screen shots will be available to partners who wish to use the tool.

Moving Forward

The County is emphasizing three areas of strategy:

1. Present more options for those seeking vaccines (walk-in appointments, mobile clinics, coordination with pediatricians and family practitioners).
2. Increase outreach to diverse communities, including partnerships, support services, and community involvement.
3. Gather more data to identify the highest rates of COVID and the lowest rates of vaccine uptake, including identifying barriers to inform effective messaging.

Mobile vaccine clinics are continuing through CHC, and the County is scaling up mobile options. It appears that some pharmacies may also be offering mobile options soon. The County will soon invite organizations and businesses to apply for a mobile clinic that can provide up to 200 vaccines. The applicant will host the site and:

- Identify individuals who want to receive the vaccine (age 18+)
- Guarantee 25-200 appointments
- Distribute consent forms and assign appointment times
- Provide space for the clinic
- Provide shade and an observation area

COVID-19 Communication Goals

Tara Kennon presented the communication goals of the County: 1) Increase vaccination; 2) Connect the vulnerable populations to vaccine options; 3) Promote the health and economic benefits of getting vaccinated. The County has researched target audiences that are most hesitant about vaccine. The strategy for each group follows the following process:

Step 1 – Build confidence

- Expand the #VaccineChampion campaign that builds upon the existing local #SLOtheSpread campaign.

- Engage trusted messengers within local communities to be spokespeople

Step 2 – Motivate people to act.

- Activate trusted messengers; turn it into a movement.
- Proactively communicate when, where people can get vaccinated.
- Clear calls to action for each audience.

The County is currently deploying new vaccine web pages, call center support, communications toolkits, social media toolkits, recruiting Vaccine Champions, PSAs, social media highlights, eblast highlights, targeted outreach to hard-to-reach groups, presentations to community groups, and information sharing via news media.

Up next for the PIO team: onboarding additional Vaccine Champions, identifying influencers in vaccine-hesitant communities, facebook profile frame for vaccine champions, additional media buys, ongoing collaboration with community partners to host mobile and pop-up clinics, with pre-education sessions when possible, collaboration with churches and religious groups, expanding Vaccine Champion materials and exhibits at County clinics, PSAs invoking local pride that would particularly appeal to communities with higher levels of vaccine hesitancy.

The Task Force members are invited to become Vaccine Champions and to help recruit others to do the same. Jen will be reaching out to each Task Force member to strategize the best way to reach into individual communities and support vaccine efforts tailored to individual Task Force members' insights.

Upcoming Events

Veronica Avery, shared an upcoming virtual forum co-sponsored by NAACP and Race Matters SLO to be held via Zoom on May 12 at 6:00pm. Questions about vaccines will be collected in advance of the forum and a diverse panel of speakers will be available to address questions and concerns. The County is assisting and supporting these efforts by developing marketing materials for this event.

Jen shared the Public Information team activities, including ongoing Rotary Club presentations, plans for a Community Health Worker training, and a strategy session with women's health care providers. The County would like to have more medical field representation on the Task Force and is inviting medical communities to help bring vaccine conversations to medical offices.

Discussion followed with members offering suggestions and services, creative ideas, and specific approaches to these issues. Cynthia Lambert, Cal Poly (sitting in for Courtney Kienow), reported on Cal Poly's plans to promote vaccinations and safe behaviors for students. They are reaching out to campus clubs and organizations, encouraging people to get involved.

Task Force members brainstormed the following:

Janna Nichols: Would a volunteer squad of phone callers be helpful to reach out to confirm vaccination? We have several volunteers looking for a task.

Janna Nichols: Perhaps do a local artist campaign to do something like this in response to "vaccine excuses" <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/national-parks-subpar-parks-travel-posters-1908910>

Kris Yetter: Please send the flyer about Mobile vaccines so we can share with our constituents

Janna Nichols: If we have individuals who have agreed to have their photo taken during one of our pop-ups, how do we add them to the vaccine champions campaign?

Janna Nichols: With campgrounds re-opening, like Lopez and Santa Margarita - have we considered mobile clinics on the weekends in the campgrounds? I realize some will be from out-of-county, but perhaps might catch people on their own time when not rushing to and from work.

Janna Nichols: Who would be some youth folks that would have more sway? Student presidents from Cuesta, Cal Poly, local high schools? fraternity champions? Look to Pride event coming up on May 16-23. It will be virtual, but GALA might be a resource/message partner.

Janice Mehring: Let me know if I can help with an interfaith clergy group to sponsor a mobile clinic or do a PSA etc. We can wear our clergy garb to show the diversity.

Kris Yetter: Perhaps a mobile clinic at local schools, Elementary and Jr. High to capture parents who are hesitant. Make it easy when they drop or pick up kids

James Brescia: We can air the PSAs on the two public access stations that our office maintains on Charter. Also, I can have any information posted on the Latino Outreach Council site.

Janna Nichols: Campaign from orange to yellow - "they call me mellow yellow..."

Elizabeth (Betsy) Whitaker: Right, and the EU just announced that they'll take vaccinated Americans this summer - that was in reference to Dr. Roberts on travel as an incentive

Janna Nichols: Summer food programs for those whose children participate through the summer school lunch programs

Kris Yetter: Set up a mobile clinic at churches on Sunday to make it easy for the parish members to get vaccinated

Janna Nichols: Suggest a PSA with all student body presidents together? Week of welcome campaign?

Erica Ruvalcaba-Heredia: multiple factors

Janna Nichols: Concert with a popular Mexican band, with free admission with vaccination? At the Mid-State fairgrounds? I can think about some sponsors that would underwrite

Vaccine FAQs and Resources:

<https://www.recoverslo.org/en/vaccine-faqs.aspx>

<https://publichealthcollaborative.org/faq/>

Dr. Borenstein and Jen reiterated the gratitude for the Task Force members' continued commitment and dedication to the vaccine effort.

Meetings will transition to once a month, on the fourth Wednesday, beginning in May.

Closing and Upcoming Events

Next meetings - 4th Wednesdays of the month

- May 26, 2021 10:30AM – 12:00PM
- June 23, 2021 10:30AM – 12:00PM

Future meetings TBD.

Meeting notes, slides, and public comment form available at
<https://www.recover slo.org/en/slo-county-vaccine-taskforce.aspx>

Adjourned at 11:55am.