

**COVID-19 Coordination Meeting  
February 17, 2023**

**Notes**

1) Welcome (Andrea Skewes)

2) Situational overview (Abi Collingwood)

- Averaging about 1200 tests a day
- Cases are not our most informative trend
- Over the past month we have seen a gradual increase
- Over the past two weeks we have seen people going to the hospital for COVID or being hospitalized due to COVID
- Not seeing this trends nationally
- Wastewater
  - Elevated level of SARS Covid 2 with 70% of our sites
  - Seeing this more in Wasatch Front, Davis, Weber and Morgan counties
  - Not seeing the same increases in cases vs wastewater
  - Long term goal is to be able to use them for forecasting
- Vaccine uptick
  - Bivalent boost trends
    - 65+ - 44% have received this booster
    - 88% are fully vaccinated in this age group
  - By race/ethnicity
    - Hispanic 8%
    - Pacific Islander .6%
  - Higher in our lower HII and not higher in the HII groups
  - Unvaccinated populations
    - 14x risk of dying than bivalent boosted
  - PHE ending
    - Surveillance is collected independently
    - COVID will remain a reported disease
    - Hospitalizations
    - Deaths Syndromic surveillance
    - Wastewater
    - Unable to track hospitalization beds due to COVID
  - Flu is at its seasonal low
  - RSV report is updated weekly through electronic lab data
    - RSV Net Data collected by Salt Lake county
- Questions:
  - Dr Sheffield: Where can we get the RSV data? Bureau of Epi Data page
    - Our RSV report is updated weekly here, under the "Utah Surveillance Data" bullet
    - <https://epi.health.utah.gov/respiratory-syncytial-virus/>
  - Michelle: Hospital COVID-19 reporting will continue to April 2024 though the cadence will likely decrease

### 3) Variant landscape (Kelly Oakeson)

- Over the past weeks, we are seeing the trend of xbb.1.5 to increase across the US
  - Keeping an eye on CHW.1.1 and bn.1
  - Across the US, the xbb variants have taken over
  - Towards the West, more of a viral diversity
- Wastewater
  - Predominantly xbb and bq variants coming in second
  - In Utah, bq.1 and bq.1.1 is the most dominant
  - If the trend continues, it is likely that ch.1 and ch.1.1 will become more prevalent here
  - Most recent data are 5 samples. Xbb, ch and bq variant
- From the beginning of these meetings until now
  - Yellow, green, purple and dark purple are omicron variants
  - Will continue monitoring sequencing data in wastewater
- Questions:
  - How many viruses have been sequenced? Over 2000

### 4a) Long COVID - Overview (Rachel Kubiak)

- Syndrome that can follow an acute COVID 19 infection
  - Symptoms have to last 4 weeks
  - Can impact multiple bodily systems
  - Severity ranges from mild to severe
  - Recovery over months to years
  - ADA protected disability
- Getting diagnosed and finding treatment can be challenging
  - More common among people that are unvaccinated compared to vaccinated people
  - People with severe disease
  - More prevalent in Utah versus other states
    - Utah ranks 4th in the world
- Goals:
  - Characterize the burden of long COVID in Utah
  - Identify gaps
  - Provide data to advocate for funding
- Surveillance:
  - Different data streams
  - Different overlapping populations
  - Different related definitions
- Data Streams:
  - ICD 10 Code
  - Clinical care
  - Survey options nationally-2 survey questions
  - Patient surveys-confident estimate of the prevalence
  - Needs assessments for LHDs, Tribes, I/T/U facilities
  - Long COVID Surveillance work group
- Outreach: Presentations and written descriptions for:
  - Various healthcare providers including medical associations, rural clinics, tribes and I/T/U, and LHDs
    - Compiling list of local resources and information for patients, providers, LHDs, I/T/Us
    - Contact: dcpdcrcfrwk@utah.gov

#### 4b) Long COVID - Patient perspective (Lisa O'Brien)

- Long Haulers: [utahlonghaulers@gmail.com](mailto:utahlonghaulers@gmail.com)
  - Provide support for over 4500 members
  - Motivate the establishment of post covid clinics
- 36+ million Americans impacted
- Identified 203 symptoms
- Cognitive dysfunction
  - Challenges:
    - Ongoing symptoms
    - Lack of education/awareness
    - Access to care
    - Financial
    - Socioeconomic
    - Mental health
- Workforce:
  - 71% unable to work for 6+ months or needed continuous medical treatment
  - 18% did not return to work
  - 75% are under the age of 60
  - 83% listed as essential workers
  - (Established claims)
- Legislation
  - ADA
  - RECOVER initiative
  - COVID Long Haulers Act & CARE for Long Covid Act
- What can be done to those with Long Covid?:
  - Information and Awareness Campaigns
  - Treatment and Support Programs
  - Data Collection and Research
  - Financial Assistance
  - Collaboration with Employers
    - UofU
    - Bateman Horne Center
    - IHC Navigation System
    - Caring Connections-weekly support meeting
    - Northern Utah Rehabilitation Center
- Questions:
  - Dr. Pavia-We also need to prevent anyone else from going through this by continuing to emphasize vaccination which, while not perfect, substantially reduces the risk of developing long covid

#### 5) Impact of public health emergency ending (Kendra Babitz)

- Ends 3/11/2023
- Implications:
  - Testing: EUA for test kits are not connected to the federal PHE and will still be in tact
    - Ongoing supply may be impacted due to congressional budget
  - Surveillance: Largely unaffected
  - Treatment: EUAs for current therapeutics will remain in place
  - Vaccine: Does not affect the EUA for COVID 19 immunization and will remain available with no out of pocket expense
    - Allows for vaccines to be provided for the VFC program

- RISE: No impacts
  - Anticipating an increase in Care Navigation
- LTCF: May become more difficult if they decide to no longer provide tests
- Health Systems
  - Facility requirements and care location exemptions
  - Flexibilities to reduce administrative burden on hospitals will end with federal PHE
- Medicaid
  - 3/1/23 will begin reviewing of eligible medicaid recipients and will continue until December 2023 since congress uncoupled this
  - Ends uninsured COVID 19 testing, treatment and vaccines
- Finance
  - RFP to reimburse providers who are willing to continue to provide testing, treatment and vaccination
  - FEMA may not be available

#### 6) Questions/Comments (Open)