



COVID-19 VACCINE TASK FORCE

COVID-19 Vaccine Task Force Meeting #14

August 25, 2021

10:30AM – 11:30AM

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 - *Absent*

Jose Guzman

Pharmacies

(Maronee Hollister, PharmD)

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*

Terri Howell, CenCal

Nicole Bennet, CenCal

Gaby Labraña, CenCal

Education

Dr. James Brescia, County Office of Education

Courtney Kienow, Cal Poly-Higher Education

Child Care

Raechelle Bowlay, CCRC

Corrections

Christy Mulkerin, MD, Jail CMO

Religious Leaders

Pastor Tim Thuele

Rabbi Janice Mehring

Monsignor Ed Callahan - *Absent*

Organizations serving racial and ethnic groups

Erica Ruvalcaba-Heredia, Latinx

Cheryl Vines, 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

Lynn Enns, 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

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)

COVID-19 Status in SLO County as of 8/25/21

Dr. Borenstein reported that the County is experiencing a surge in COVID-19 cases, with case and hospitalization numbers similar to the peak of the pandemic in January 2021. The current rate of increase is higher than the winter surge. Over the past two weeks, 1,662 people were diagnosed with COVID, up from ~150 people in the entire month of June. The County is close to experiencing an all-time high for hospitalizations with 58 people hospitalized, 16 of which are in the ICU and 10 on ventilators. To date, 281 individuals have died due to COVID-19 and 4 are pending finalized death certificates.

Breakthrough cases

Breakthrough cases, COVID-19 in fully vaccinated individuals, do occur but much less frequently than in those who are unvaccinated. For the week of August 9-15, the average daily COVID-19 case rate among unvaccinated Californians was 51 per 100,000 and the average daily COVID-19 case rate among fully vaccinated Californians was 7.6 per 100,000.

Moreover, those breakthrough cases are more likely to have either mild or no symptoms, and are much less likely to be hospitalized from the virus. See more at the CA Department of Public [Health's Post-Vaccine COVID-19 Cases page](#).

Locally, the rate of post-vaccine cases is similar to the state's breakthrough rate. The County will report on local breakthrough cases monthly, beginning in September. The mathematical theorem here takes into account the more people who get vaccinated, plus the more widespread the transmission, the

greater the increase in the proportion of vaccinated individuals being affected by the Delta variant. However, as seen above, the risk of getting infected is much lower when vaccinated.

At a community level, the only way to lower case numbers is to stop transmission, regardless of who is getting infected. The best way to do that is through vaccination. Absent high vaccination rates, masking is the next best layer of protection. On 8/18/21, Health Officer, Dr. Penny Borenstein strongly urged all individuals, regardless of vaccination status, wear masks in indoor public places to further limit spread of the Delta variant.

8.18.21 [COVID-19 News Briefing](#) recommending indoor masking

Vaccination Rates by Age in SLO County

The numbers below indicate the percent of people fully or partially vaccinated on 8/23/21.

75+: 80%
65-74: 86%
50-64: 75%
40-49: 72%
30-39: 47%
18-29: 61%
16-17: 58%
12-15: 53%

Total SLO County Vaccination Rate (fully + partially vaccinated) = 68.5% compared to CA at 76.5%. The gap between SLO County's vaccination rate and that of the state continues to widen as SLO County is more stagnant. Over 79,000 SLO County residents have not yet been vaccinated.

Vaccination Rates by Race/Ethnicity in SLO County

The numbers below indicate the percent of people fully or partially vaccinated on 8/23/21. Rates are based on Department of Finance (DoF) Population estimates (2021). Race/ethnicity is self-reported.

American Indian/Alaskan Native: 46% vaccinated
Asian: 61% vaccinated
African American/Black: 26% vaccinated
Hispanic/Latinx: 53% vaccinated
Mixed/Multi-race: 48% vaccinated
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 133% vaccinated*
White: 55% vaccinated
Unknown: 20,747**
Other: 13,429**

*More people self-identified as Pacific Islander than are included in DoF Population estimates

**Large number of people who selected "other" or "unknown" can skew data

Vaccination rates by age, race/ethnicity, and overall vaccination rates in the County and in the State of CA can be found on the [interactive maps on the CDPH website](#)

Vaccination Rates by City

The list below includes the percent of individuals either fully or partially vaccinated on 8/23/21. Population data is based on DoF Population estimates.

SLO (93405): 37% *
San Miguel: 43%
Creston: 43%

Shandon: 45%
San Simeon: 47%
Atascadero: 49%
Paso Robles: 50%
Santa Margarita: 52%
Grover Beach: 53%
Oceano: 54%
Los Osos: 58%
Arroyo Grande: 59%
Templeton: 59%
Nipomo: 63%
Cayucos: 63%
Morro Bay: 65%
Pismo Beach: 64%
Cambria: 70%
SLO (93401): 72%
Avila Beach: 110% **

*Many people who live in this part of SLO are Cal Poly students who are counted in the population data, yet it is suspected that vaccination records indicate a home address outside of SLO County.

**More people listed Avila Beach as their city of residence than are listed in the DoF population estimate.

Federal Changes on Vaccine Status

On August 23, the [FDA approved the first COVID-19 vaccine](#), Pfizer, for individuals over age 16. With the removal of Emergency Use Authorization status, some federal agencies are beginning to mandate vaccines for employees, including the military.

EUA approval for Pfizer age 5-12 is projected for approval in January 2022.

Third doses of the COVID-19 vaccine are available for severely immune compromised individuals. New data shows a third dose of mRNA vaccines helps increase vaccine effectiveness for those who have [these conditions](#). Third doses are for people who are much less likely to mount an immune response to the 2-dose series. They are intended for people who never achieved effective immunity.

Boosters are intended for people who *did* have an effective immune response, but immunity may be waning. SLO County awaits guidance from CDC and CDPH about administering booster doses.

Monoclonal Antibody Therapy

Medical providers are encouraged to provide this medication to improve patient outcomes and protect healthcare system capacity. Monoclonal antibody therapy is used as both a treatment for mild to moderate cases of COVID-19 and a preventative measure for certain non-hospitalized, high-risk persons who have been exposed.

Childcare, K-12 and Higher Education Update

Childcare settings are seeing challenges with COVID-19 exposures leading to temporary program closures, particularly in centers with multiple age groups. Dr. Brescia reported that all schools have returned to in-person learning. Students have a high compliance rate with safety protocols. About 90% of K-12 employees are vaccinated. Surveillance protocols for the remaining 10% will be challenging. Childcare centers with a footprint on K-12 campuses are required to follow K-12

regulations. Contact tracing close contacts, investigating exposures and higher numbers of cases in athletics programs continue to pose the greatest challenges.

The SLO County Office of Education in partnership with Public Health held an online forum: [Teens, Tweens and COVID-19 Vaccines](#) on August 11. Four doctors responded to parents' and caregivers' questions about vaccines for young people.

Cal Poly is planning to hold about 85% of classes in person. This percentage is subject to change. CSU policy requires all students, staff and faculty be vaccinated or have a medical or religious exemption. So far 85% of students are fully vaccinated and 90% of students are partially, or plan to be, vaccinated. Masks are mandatory indoors on campus. All students, regardless of vaccination status must present a negative test upon arrival for fall semester. Cal Poly students will not be able to move in, attend classes, or have access to the portal without proof of vaccination or a medical or religious exemption. Cuesta College is not requiring proof of vaccination status at this time; however, they are giving \$250 gift cards to fully vaccinated Cuesta students as an incentive. The Cuesta board may be considering mandatory vaccinations in the future.

Healthcare Provider Updates

Long term care facilities are not seeing the dramatic impact of outbreaks like the winter surge, but there are still a handful of outbreaks with the current surge. Implementation of third doses and boosters could pose a challenge.

CHC provided an update about when and where people can receive rapid and PCR tests as well as vaccines. Jose Guzman from CHC took the following questions and notified the group that he will share responses once available –

- A list of locations, services (rapid, PRC, vaccine brand), hours, fees for service, and whether clinics are for CHC patients only or open as walk-in to the general public.
- What is the cost of rapid tests for non-CHC patients?
- What type/kind of Rapid Test is performed?
- Does CHC provide counseling to go along with the answer to the COVID-19 test?
- Are patients who are there for another visit able to be vaccinated in the exam room? Or are vaccine sites separate from patient care?

CenCal Health is creating a Vaccine Response Plan to develop strategies and objectives to help support vaccine uptake in both SLO and Santa Barbara counties. Several strategies are being explored, one of which is to send postcards promoting Public Health's mobile vaccine clinics to CenCal Health members who live nearby the clinic site. SLO County is also providing 400 "Talk to me about COVID-19 vaccines" buttons that CenCal will share with all providers. CenCal would also like to explore how to support getting more youth vaccinated.

Provider update: most private pediatric practices are now offering in-office vaccines. Once CHC is offering Pfizer, 80-90% of pediatricians will have vaccines available for their eligible patients. Adult health care provider practices are moving more slowly.

Door to Door Canvassing and Outreach

The COVID-19 Vaccine Street Team has been canvassing 5 to 6 days per week throughout the month of August. Volunteer canvassers are providing neighbors with information about when and where to find the vaccine nearby. Under-resourced neighborhoods were prioritized for both door-to-door outreach and mobile clinics.

Promotores have been instrumental in conducting hyper-local, multi-lingual outreach prior to events and securing taco trucks and raffles. TMHA has been administering vaccines in encampments and at

homeless shelters. The County launched an incentive campaign for the month of August. \$25 gift cards are being offered at Public Health clinics in Grover Beach, Paso Robles, San Luis Obispo and at select mobile clinics, while supplies last.

Vaccine Outreach and PSA Campaigns

- RACE Matters: [Why I Got the Vax](#) | [Get the Facts](#)
- Vax4Us Central Coast (coming soon)
- Dr. Stainslaus, OB/GYN message for women who are pregnant or may want to become pregnant in the future (coming soon)
- Patrick Laird, local athlete, and NFL player (coming soon)

State Health Officer Orders

1. State Public Health Officer Order of August 11, 2021: [Vaccine Verification for Workers in Schools](#)
2. State Public Health Officer Order of August 5, 2021: [Health Care Worker Vaccine Requirement](#)
3. State Public Health Officer Order of August 5, 2021: [Requirements for Visitors in Acute Health Care and Long-Term Care Settings](#)
4. State Public Health Officer Order of July 26, 2021: [Health Care Worker Protections in High-Risk Settings](#)
 - On August 23, [healthcare sector employees are required to show proof of vaccination or test once or twice per week](#), depending on setting.
 - On September 30, the Health Officer Order above will change to [require all healthcare sector employees be fully vaccinated](#). Testing will no longer be offered as an alternative to vaccination, unless the employee meets exemption status.
 - By mid-October, personnel in [high-risk settings \(corrections\) will be required to show proof of vaccination or adhere to testing requirement](#).
 - By mid-October, [workers in schools, including visitors and staff are required to show proof of vaccination or adhere to testing mandate](#).

Expansion of Vaccine Task Force

The Vaccine Task Force was originally established to act as an advisory body as decisions were being made about vaccine eligibility. Over time the need has shifted to be more collaborative in nature. With the need for more vaccine outreach, the Public Health team looks to expand the Vaccine Task Force to increase reach, amplify messages, add more spokespersons and activate more networks. The current membership of the Vaccine Task Force was in support of broadening the group of partners to be more inclusive of other organizations.

Vaccine FAQs and Resources:

- COVID-19 information for SLO County: <https://www.emergencyslo.org/en/covid19.aspx>
- Local FAQ, RecoverSLO: <https://www.recoverslo.org/en/vaccine-faqs.aspx>
- Testing information: <https://www.emergencyslo.org/en/should-i-be-tested.aspx>
- Third Dose information: <https://www.recoverslo.org/en/third-dose-of-the-covid-19-vaccine.aspx>
- Tough FAQs: <https://publichealthcollaborative.org/faq/>

Reliable materials addressing prevalent vaccine concerns:

- [Fertility and the COVID-19 Vaccine](#)
- [Adolescents and the COVID-19 Vaccine](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine & Myocarditis](#)
- [Getting the Vaccine Even if You've Had COVID-19](#)
- [What are mRNA Vaccines?](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine & Preventing Virus Mutations](#)

Future Meetings

4th Weds of each month is being held for updates and input, with the option of cancelling meetings if determined unnecessary.

Next meeting: September 22, 2021 10:30AM – 11:30AM

Meeting notes, and slides available at:

<https://www.recover slo.org/en/slo-county-vaccine-taskforce.aspx>

Adjourned at 11:45am.