



Meeting Notes - COVID-19 Regional Response Team (RRT) Call #9

Thursday, May 14th 2020

3:00-4:00 pm

Facilitated by:

Jason Purnell, Washington University in St. Louis

Rebecca Bennett, Emerging Wisdom LLC

WELCOME – JASON PURNELL

Jason thanked everyone for being on the call and wished all the mothers and those who stand in the place of mothers a belated Happy Mother's Day.

CAMPAIGN UPDATES

1. Unhoused – Grace Kyung and Monique Thomas

- Through funding from Incarnate Word Foundation, we were able to buy fourteen tablets for the hotels, motels, and other shelters operated by the city. We are looking to establish protocols for their use.
- Another tablet is coming in partnership with the Missouri Institute of Mental Health. With MIMH, they are coordinating some substance abuse and behavioral health support systems in relation to the use of these tablets with providers.

2. Food Insecurity – Doneisha Bohannon

- \$2.6 million of the St. Louis County CARES **funding for food insecurity** in the county has been awarded to Operation Food Search, the St. Louis Food bank, the Urban League, Link Market and Potzbangerz. The press release about this is linked on C19RRT.org under News.
- We have developed **family meal distribution** in select school food distribution points. Operation Food Search and the St. Louis Area Food Bank will partner with a selection of school districts and county libraries to serve family meals over the summer.
 - The school district selection is based on the federal poverty level free and reduced lunch and community COVID-19 risk. We are working to identify additional community sites to service.
 - In total, this work would result in 1.6 million additional meals being distributed throughout the county during the summer on top of what the OFS and food bank are already doing.
 - We will be partnering with Prepare STL to distribute PPE directly to families at these distribution points.

3. PPE Campaign – Rebecca Bennett and Cristina Garmendia

- Survey: Last week we went over the survey that was to be sent out to providers about PPE needs; <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RRTPPESurvey>. You may still share this survey. Ideally, one person per organization completes the tool.
We went over the results that we have received since the survey was sent a week prior.
 - 222 responses were received since Friday. Well-represented areas were those pertaining to senior services, basic needs, childcare, and food insecurity. Some with less representation were the unhoused and homelessness prevention and justice/legal.
 - From the chat box: Bethany Johnson-Javois recommended engaging Mikel Whitter to increase the justice response.
 - From the chat box: Tammy Laws said she sent the PPE survey out to all of the St. Louis City Continuum of Care partners serving the unhoused.
 - Geography: Most organizations were from the City of St. Louis and St. Louis County. St. Charles represented about 1/3 of the organizations. St. Clair and Madison Counties were 25% each of the total surveyed, so more representation is needed from the IL side.
 - Risk profile: 36 organizations fall into the highest priority with contact with clients for more than an hour. Childcare providers make up a good portion of this group. There were also those who reported to never have direct contact, like food pantries.
 - Funding: Most places do have funds for PPE. However, there was a small amount that reported having no dedicated funds for PPE.
 - Current PPE provided: reported were gloves, cloth masks, surgical masks, n95s, face shields, gloves, and eye protection. 88% of organizations said they know what kind of PPE they need. The highest priority PPE are N95 masks followed by surgical and cloth masks. Most have PPE but will run out within two weeks. 117 organizations are rationing PPE and the majority are reusing them and limiting the amount given. Some are getting their PPE from the private market. Others have no means of procuring PPE.
 - Some wrote a note that they can't get hand sanitizer (which was not on the survey). Burgandy Fitzhenry from the Regional Business Council asked for a list of those organizations, as they have 5-10K containers coming that they can get to those groups.
 - PPE has been sourced from the government or a community based donor. Levels of confidence are very low in supply chain. Only 14% are confident they can get more from their private suppliers.
 - The majority of participants are willing to take more surveys every two weeks.
 - We want to get to organizations that need to be centered from an equity point of mind.
 - Rick Skinner would like the list as well to prepopulate the Need Feed online exchange resource.
- There were questions during the call last week about prioritization. Jason explained that we're prioritizing based on three areas: geography, risk, and access. (The geographies that have been hardest hit with the highest-risk populations, and high-risk groups among the

populations served, like the service providers. Also, people who won't have access to PPE and don't have the funds to cover them.)

- We have received a large disposable surgical mask donation from St. Louis County— 100K. A small portion will be set aside for the campaigns we are actively running, but most will be made available to the organizations in this network and those that have gone through the survey.
- Elizabeth George announced that the COVID-19 Regional Response Fund will be providing funding for the 100K cloth masks with filters that Prepare STL is going to purchase and give to those who can't afford them.
- Rebecca noted again that handouts for proper mask use and other educational info are on our website. In addition, with support from Dr. Punch and others, a one page guide was created that will be helpful with reopening and risk factors. Kelly Ferrara shared the document with the group, called, "How to Protect Yourself and Others." It is also on C19RRT.org/Resources.
- There was a question last week about good sources to buy PPE. That list is being compiled, led by Grace and informed by a number of places who have good intel and reliable sources. Hopefully there will be more progress on that next week.

Dr. Steve Lawrence – Infectious Disease Specialist at Washington University School of Medicine

talked about reopening, the steps that businesses should be taking, and the precautions recommended.

- Physical distancing: The single most important thing is keeping people physically separated. As businesses are allowed to open, they should start very slowly, only bringing back as few employees as possible to begin with, which gives people the opportunity to get used to it and figure out this new normal to model the behavior for future returning employees. People who are productive and able to work from home should continue to do so. There will need to be engineering controls to figure out how people flow through the space—how to have work stations 6 feet apart, how to minimize congregation at a single point, for example. There will be restrictions of people in an enclosed place for meetings (10).
- PPE: Some might need to wear masks all day long, especially for customer/employee situations, like a nail technician. The idea of universal masking is important. It won't replace the first priority of keeping people 6 feet or more apart, but it does give an extra layer to reduce the risk of a person who might be infected spreading to someone else.
- Everything that we try to put into place are layers that alone won't eliminate transmission, but together you incrementally reduce that risk of transmission.

Q: Is there any accountability to businesses who don't protect their employees?

A: Dr. Lawrence said he doesn't have that information - that will have to come from the county and city.

Q: Can you speak to emerging data around children - risk of infection and vector of spreading the disease? I think a lot of families will be increasing to some degree the amount of contact with others their children have over the summer and there is very little good guidance available. Any tips?

A: Children can and do get the virus though not quite as likely as those 60+. They do not get infected as much as adults which is unusual for viruses. Very rarely, they can have severe disease. Very severe cases have come up in the last week – but the big picture is that many kids get infected and it is very rare for severe illness to occur in children. The biggest risk right now related to children is about the Fall and how we can reopen schools safely. It isn't just what's safe for kids, but how to keep them from passing sickness on to family members who would be at higher risk.

Other Updates:

- Rick Skinner: We are almost at the testing phase of Need Feed and would like to prepopulate it. He asked folks to fill out the provided excel spreadsheet by close of business the next day. Thanks again to SLALOM for providing this pro bono.
- Barbara Fraser announced that as of tomorrow, St. Louis County Department of Public Health will be providing masks for school district personnel who are distributing food.
 - Part of the Prepare STL work will be giving masks to the families receiving the food.
- Deborah Patterson said that Spring Schmidt at the County is talking about giving childcare centers PPE.
 - Prepare STL will be canvassing early childhood centers next week with PPE plus a reopening guide that they've copied for each of them. Non-working childcare providers will be doing that canvassing within their geographic footprint. They will get a small stipend of support. There will likely be more that will be opening and there will be a gap, so that extra support from the County would be needed.
 - Deborah said to circle back with Spring on that when more PPE is needed for ECCs.

CARES Act in St. Louis City: Matt Moak, Executive Director, Community Development Administration

Matt told the group about an RFP that has gone out to St. Louis City for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) emergency funds. It is on the Community Development Administration website (<https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/cda/>). They would like new service providers to apply for this. The areas they're interested in are food distribution, elderly services (including sanitary needs of the elderly), and building healthcare capacity, particularly in lower-access areas. They want to get the money out as soon as possible, so the RFP has an end date of May 29.

A question was asked if there is community oversight in the selection process (i.e. citizen participation). Matt answered that yes, all of their RFPs have a citizen participation plan attached to them by virtue of federal requirements.

The link to CDA RFP is <https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/community-development/rfp-cdbg-corona-virus.cfm>.

CONCLUSION – JASON PURNELL

Jason thanked everyone and said how we are all happy to hear about progress, though we still face significant challenges. It is gratifying that over 80 people across five counties are here to help the most vulnerable.

ADJOURN