

Flu on a lot of minds, vaccine trickling in slowly

Written by Chris Lee

With the flu on a lot of minds and moving from house to house, East Phillips County Hospital District board members were updated on the status of flu vaccinations at their meeting on Tuesday, Oct. 27.

Board members questioned Administrator John Ayoub, Clinic Manager Melissa Mayden and Director of Nursing Claudia Powell about flu vaccinations.

The hospital must abide by the CDC rules when administering the H1N1 vaccine. Only those who fall within the targeted or priority groups may receive the vaccine. As for the seasonal flu vaccine, MMH is slowly receiving its doses. Ayoub said the doses have been trickling in over the past few weeks.

Ayoub said he doesn't want to advertise a vaccine clinic until they have enough doses to administer to everyone. Ayoub said he has received phone calls from people who state they feel they need the vaccine.

Board member Sheryl Farnsworth said she has received some questions from people asking "How come some people have gone to Nebraska and have gotten vaccinated?"

Ayoub said it differs from area to area. Some areas asked for earlier delivery dates. He also said the vaccine only works for a certain period of time. So receiving the vaccine earlier means it won't last throughout the flu season. Ayoub said they have always done their clinics in late September or early October and that is when MMH requested they receive the doses. But when that time came the suppliers realized they didn't have enough to cover everyone.

CFO Greg Was presented the financial condition and activities and reported the hospital had a good month. He said they saw an increase in the number of patients the hospital saw which helped.

Was also presented board members with a preliminary budget and said work is still being done on it.

Committee reports

Steve Young gave the Melissa Memorial Hospital Foundation report and said plans for a new clock tower have been approved. He also mentioned materials for the donor wall have been ordered.

The balanced scorecard third quarter review was given by Erica Brady. She reported the hospital is moving in the right direction in most areas and board members agreed.

Farnsworth reported the community linkages committee was in contact with Holyoke's Hispanic community. Farnsworth said they are learning and discussing new ways to reach out to the community.

Dennis Jelden, M.D. gave the report for the Chief of the Medical Staff. Dr. Jelden said there has been a positive response to Dr. Danielle McClellan and said she is a good fit within the hospital. He said the staff and patients appreciate the work she has done.

Jelden also said there haven't been any big issues brought to his attention or any other problems within the hospital and medical staff.

Farnsworth asked whether or not there is need for another physician. Jelden said they have been really busy and saw a lot of patients last month. His opinion is it would've been nice to have another doctor on hand during that time and feels if there was another full time doctor on staff, business would grow.

Administrator reports activity

Ayoub reported a community newsletter is in the works in which MMH will be able to let people know the happenings in and around the hospital.

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MMH was awarded an \$81,628 grant from The Colorado Health Foundation. The grant was applied for to supplement the electronic medical records in the clinic as well as some training money and money for new equipment.

Ayoub also mentioned all of the records available to be shredded at the old building have been and the remaining records have been categorized and stored away. He gave thanks to all the people involved with the project.

Debbie Allen was hired as the Environmental Services Supervisor, Ayoub said.

Board members entered into executive session for 20 minutes and discussed strategy for negotiations.

The next hospital board meeting will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 24.