

Tuesday, January 14, 2020

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Grand Forks Public Health Conference Room 2

Members Present: Haley Thorson (GFPH), Kailee Dvorak (GFPH), Sarah Odegard (GFPH), Sarah Shimek (GFPS), Richard Erdman (GFAFB), Andrea Anthony (NEHSC), and Angela Bahl (Spectra), Michelle Earl (Altru) (via call-in), and Keith Westerfield (GFPH).

I. Welcome and Introductions

Haley welcomed everyone and introductions were made.

II. Vaping Related Illness Update

Haley handed out packages on vaping updates, and discussed statistics from the NDDoH Vaping Dashboard located at their www.ndhealth.gov/vaping website, where they have the most current E-Cigarette or Vaping Associated Lung Injury (EVALI) information. There have been over 2,600 vaping-related illnesses, from all states; with 57 deaths in 27 states. This 'outbreak' started in June. It's not definitely tied to just one product; however, vitamin E acetate seems to be associated with EVALI. In GF, these vaping products are considered tobacco products. GFPH is working to stop the vaping epidemic through education and awareness as well as good policy such as flavor restrictions and T21. The President signed a Federal law on December 20th to raise the minimum sales age to purchase tobacco products to 21.

III. Federal T21 Law

Although the passing of T21 law was sudden, we want to make sure there are no provisions in the law that would support the tobacco industry. Officially, the new law is in effect, but it could be awhile before the FDA (who is in charge of implementing it) puts out guidelines (they have 270 days). The new law can be enforced locally, but if minors are cited, it would go to federal court. There are no exemptions for military members under 21. Richard stated that tobacco products are no longer sold on the GFAFB. This is tied into their 'Health Readiness'.

IV. FDA Guidance on Flavored Cartridge-Based ENDS

The new tobacco age law does not address flavor restrictions. However, on January 2nd of this year, the FDA now prohibits the sale of most flavored cartridge pods for e-cigs, except for menthol and tobacco flavor. The use of fruit flavors by high schoolers fell 66% in 2019, since they prefer mint and menthol flavors. It is a step in the right direction, but does not comprehensively address the youth epidemic. All new tobacco products (including remaining e-cigarette products) must submit marketing applications to the FDA by May 2020 (instead of 2022), which can take them up to a year to process. The tobacco industry will likely find a way around these restrictions.

V. Interim Tax Committee Meeting Details

The committee will be meeting again to discuss how to tax electronic products in ND. The meeting is scheduled for the afternoon of January 29th. Sarah (GFPH) is considering travelling to Bismarck for the hearing. If you are interested in travelling with her, contact her via email.

VI. Member sharing

Michelle – In April there will be a State Respiratory Convention in Bismarck. Also on April 26th, they will be participating in the hands-on learning fair, and will have a tobacco-cessation/RT booth set up since they have had increase in calls regarding vaping/pods.

Sarah O. – Working with Thompson SADD chapter regarding this year's Kick Butts Day (March 18th). They would like to raise awareness on the harms of vaping for the Thompson School District, with possible theme being 'Kick Juul'.

Kailee– highlighted an article in local media from a parent on vaping illness. Their student teen was hospitalized in serious condition as a result of vaping and wanted to bring attention to the issue. There have been at least three cases of vaping illness in GF County.

Richard – Expressed appreciation for all the information from GFPH regarding vaping since he has been getting questions from personnel on base.

Sarah S. – Just received back the Youth Risk Behavioral Survey which continues to show an increase in tobacco use among youth. They will use this to adjust their presentation to the school board, and other community groups that they have been partnering with. Through drug-free community grants, they are checking into getting vaping detectors that Central High School asked for to place in their restrooms. They are also partnering with Juvenile Court, they have implemented evidence-based curriculum called 'Third Millennium'. These are online modules to educate high school students that have received citations for vaping (75 students so far that have been caught this school year). Valley Middle School will be having a parent event at the end of March on vaping, called 'Hide In Plain Sight,' regarding places their kids could hide vape devices and substances in their bedrooms.

Next Meeting 2.11.2020

Upcoming Events

TFND Annual Meeting and Banquet - Bismarck 1/28

Interim Tax Committee Meeting- Bismarck 1/29

Kick Butts Day- 3/18

The Grand Forks Tobacco Free Coalition is a group of citizens working together to create and promote a healthier, tobacco-free community through education, legislation, and enforcement of policies.