

Mar 12, 2021

Testimony from:
Frank A Laubhan

Senator Hilderbrand:

I am a board of director member for the Wamego City Hospital. Wamego City Hospital is a member of Ascension group of hospitals. Wamego is located in Pottawatomie County Kansas with a population of 24,000 +/- . We have an excellent County Health Department that has diligently worked, studied and applied many health and administrative techniques to help administer the Covid vaccine this year. Wamego is located twelve miles from Manhattan. Due to the close geographic location and the fact that many people work in and around Manhattan, Riley County, Wamego, Jefferies Energy Center and Pottawatomie County, citizens of both counties observe and participate in the activities of both areas freely and frequently.

Recently, I heard that Riley County was planning to move to phase 3 in the Covid vaccination process. “ How fabulous” was my comment to my wife. I remember telling her that is so refreshing to see a county health department being organized and progressive enough to be able to move into another phase and help protect more people sooner. Of course, I understand that any county can only administer vaccine that has been allotted to it. Realizing this fact, I wondered how could Riley County be so far ahead?

Probably one factor that no one in State can evaluate is “who is registered to receive a vaccination in what city, county, cities or counties and even States?” An example of this, is my own case. I have a doctor in Manhattan. She is a member of the Cotton O’Neal group affiliated with Stormont Vail in Topeka. This group has an elaborate patient notification system called “My Chart”. I signed up for the vaccine as soon as I knew there was such a process and that this process would be a controlling method of distribution methodology. I signed up with Pottawatomie County Health and with my local Wamego Drug Store. Shortly thereafter, I received notification on My Chart that due to my age, I was eligible to receive a vaccination through Stormont Vail in Topeka! Fabulous! I signed up. After my first shot, I called the health department and drug store to notify them I had received my first dose. The next day, I got a call from the VA notifying me I was eligible for a vaccination through the VA. I informed them of my status. While this is a rather long story, the point I am making is that while I live in Pottawatomie County, I received my shot in Shawnee County. There is no reasonable way the State of Kansas can know of my situation and who and where I got my vaccination. Furthermore, there is no reasonable way Pottawatomie County can or should have known where and when I got my vaccination, other than my notification to them. Will everyone call all the locations they signed up for and tell them they have received the vaccine? My bet is no, once they have their shot, they have a peace of mind and maybe even forgot all the places they signed up. Next I went to a drug store and I asked if they cared if someone who was not a client of theirs could sign up on their list? No requirement at all, sure

sign up, was the reply, we even have people who live out of state who have signed up on our list. We will accept anyone who wants to sign up.

Now, let's get to the question how groups who are charged with the responsibility of administering vaccinations are going to go about doing this? So these groups have no idea how many doses they are going to receive or when except by notification from the State on a weekly basis. So, if a 'few' doses are allocated to Riley County a few phone calls to set appointments is not too bad. However, when a large number of doses are allocated, a large number of calls must be made. Now, remember my previous comments about who can sign up where, when and how? If these groups have difficulty filling their slots and we have a vaccine that has limited life, what kind of problems do we have coming down the road as more and more people receive the vaccine and more doses come out? There is absolutely no way the State can know what is happening in Riley County when Riley County cannot know how accurate their list is! Compound Riley County situation with a college group of students the questions become even greater. If Riley County had the option of moving to the next phase when their prior phases have been exhausted, doesn't that make sense? I think it does. Apparently the State doesn't because they denied Riley County's request to move to phase 3! Why because some counties haven't gotten that far in their vaccination process. My question to you is, "How do they know where they are at?"

There comes a time when the State needs to control the things it can.....the vaccine doses... and get out of the way of the administration process of the counties who are doing an excellent job without the help or maybe the interference of the State! The goal is to vaccinate everyone that wants a vaccination, isn't it??

Respectfully submitted,

Frank A Laubhan
2814 Cedarsprings Lane
Wamego, KS 66547
620-770-0191