

From: Heidi Beidinger <hbeiding@nd.edu>
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2020 9:10 AM
To: Robert M. Einterz
Cc: Jason & Kirsten Marker; John Linn; Emily Dean; ilanakirsch@gmail.com; Michelle Migliore, DO; Mark Fox
Subject: Re: A question about masks
Attachments: 2020-11-12-Report-Lead-Poisoning-in-Indiana US Human Rights Commission.pdf

Good morning all. Jason, thanks for starting this email thread. Given the absence of the usual participants during the public comment section, I wonder if fatigue is setting in on this topic. There was a nuance to Ms. Drake's comments last night that I don't think I heard before. In the past, she has focused on the efficacy of masks but tonight she seemed to focus on the efficacy of a 'mask mandate'. Already for the points Jason documented and the resources Bob has pointed us to, we likely have what we need in the event we need to point folks to the science and research. Thankfully, the mask mandate is here via the Governor and the mask fine ordinance is here via the Commissioners. I welcome the opportunity to move on from this particular debate so that we may focus on upcoming challenges ie., continued COVID surge and vaccine distribution.

As a recap from last night's meeting, we had a few items to follow up on:

1. Share the Human Rights Commission report (attached)
2. Mark reported new guidelines for schools and businesses were released yesterday. Bob, could the board receive a copy of the new guidelines?
3. Smoke Free Air Ordinance Exemption - Latorya Greene spoke during public comment and asked the Board to consider supporting their position. Robin Vida emailed me to let me know she was meeting with Ms. Greene and will follow up with me for more details. So stay tuned.
4. Open board position - Board members have nominated possible candidates; have reviewed the resumes of said candidates who met the criteria for the position and have provided feedback. I will work with Jennifer Parcell to forward the recommendation to the County Commissioners.

Was there anything else from last night's meeting that required timely follow-up?

Heidi

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On Wed, Nov 18, 2020 at 10:34 PM Robert M. Einterz <reinterz@sjcindiana.com> wrote:

Jason,

The evidence in support of using face coverings has been accumulating progressively over the last several months. The October 6 review article in nature and the current CDC web page have ample references demonstrating the effectiveness of face coverings. I have looked at many studies that examine the physiology and the basic science of viral

transmission. These studies also support the epidemiological evidence showing face masks reduce transmission of the virus. Unfortunately, the Amy Drake's of the world really have no interest in reading this science. They are driven by other motivations. It is true that there have been, to my knowledge, no randomized controlled double-blind studies of face coverings. I think all of us would agree that that would be the highest quality evidence along with a meta-analysis of multiple such studies. However such a study now would likely be deemed unethical given the preponderance of evidence in support of face coverings. Furthermore I can't imagine a study design that would be blinded. So, the best one could hope for would be a randomized control trial. Apologies for Miss Spelling's, this is a dictated note.
Bob

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S7, an AT&T 4G LTE smartphone

----- Original message -----

From: Jason & Kirsten Marker <jkmarker5@gmail.com>

Date: 11/18/20 7:02 PM (GMT-05:00)

To: John Linn <jlinn@abonmarche.com>, hbeiding@nd.edu, Emily Dean <emily.k.holloway@gmail.com>, ilanakirsch@gmail.com, "Michelle Migliore, DO" <mmigliore@michianafamilymedicine.com>, "Robert M. Einterz" <reinterz@sjcindiana.com>, Mark Fox <markfox@iu.edu>, Jason & Kirsten Marker <jkmarker5@gmail.com>

Subject: A question about masks

All,

I have been unwilling to engage in debate about mask wearing in the faith that what our local, state and national public health experts is accurate and reliable.

That said, we hear over and over the line that "the science doesn't support face coverings as an effective mitigation measure." Let me list my set of assumptions about masks that I think some are either ignoring, willfully ignorant of, or misunderstanding:

- 1) Masks are not 100% effective in protecting people, but they are effective enough to be worth something.
- 2) Not all masks are created equal, but everyone wearing some face coving is better than none of us wearing any face covering.
- 3) An improperly taken care of mask MAY be worse than nothing and proper mask hygiene is important.
- 4) If I get a big enough exposure while wearing my mask, I will probably get COVID - but that shouldn't dissuade me from wearing it because it's bigger impact is in protecting others if I am beginning to shed the virus from an as-yet asymptomatic infection.
- 5) Wearing a face covering AND physically distancing (plus other interventions) is best...we wear face coverings partly so that we don't have to all be in total isolation in order to slow the pandemic.
- 6) An alternative to mask wearing is a total national lock-down (and the economic fall-out that would come from that) and since that scenario would be worse on many levels, the masks (even if they are fooling us) are preventing political and health policy leaders from feeling like they need to lock us down.
- 7) As quickly as new cases are developing, they would be developing even FASTER without masks. The argument that masks don't work because we can see cases still going up fast seems to fall apart on this argument. There is always a "faster spread" scenario.
- 8) We are working to slow down the virus, not stop it. A controlled prolonged spread will avoid overwhelming the health care system so fewer people (but still lots of people) will die. Talk of "stopping the virus" is a) futile, and b) not the goal, here.

9) Though lots of people will die from this virus (and many more will have long-term sequelae), mask wearing is ONLY related to this fact in that it will slow down the development of these cases to a controlled pace. Why is that a bad thing?

10) Depression, suicide, substance use, domestic violence, lack of attention to one's medical care, stunted educational development, exacerbations of all of the social determinants of health, and worsening of issues related to health equity are major problems that will define a generation of medical care going forward. None of these will change if we stop wearing masks, and, in fact, an argument could be made that slowing the virus to await a vaccine could actually make these problems "less bad" in the next decade.

11) Mask wearing doesn't negatively affect the US economy (around which some amount of dysfunctional public policy has been developed). Like it or not, our U.S. right to vote (afforded to most) has put persons in power who have prioritized economics over health care. Voting and civic engagement is our only way to change that, but for now, it is what it is. Masks (and other mandated public health interventions) are part of the very few levers we have to protect public health and these mandates are forced to push against political and economic pressures.

12) The experience of other countries is similar to the US experience EXCEPT in countries that have chosen even more stringent mandates and lock-downs. Other countries with "lesser problems with COVID right now" that are currently more permissive about mask wearing are MORE restrictive in other areas (i.e. Australia had a several month total lock-down which is why their cases are so low and mask wearing is less necessary).

Please tell me if you think I am wrong in any of these assumptions! I long to respond to Amy Drake (and others of her ilk), but know that to do so responsibly, I need to have my facts straight. Please add to this list if you think there are other "truths" about mask wearing that I am missing or if you have read something here that you feel is factually incorrect (or even CLOSE to being factually incorrect). If you have a high-quality report, study, or article that you feel really supports Amy's case, let's talk about it. If you know of an article that succinctly makes my points, let's put it on the table for our internal discussion so that at upcoming public forums we can be prepared to speak more strongly (with evidence close at hand).

Bob and Mark, what are the key scientific articles YOU are holding on to, what non-controversial websites do you find most compelling in the data they present?

Let's try hard to find high-quality evidence that supports the alternative arguments, so that it is easier to defend our position or concede like graceful scientists.

Looking forward to your input...

Jason