



# State of Louisiana

## Louisiana Department of Health Office of Public Health

Louisiana Birth Defects Advisory Board Meeting Minutes  
October 15, 2021  
1:00-3:00pm

Meeting link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88495728576>  
Join by phone: 602 333 0032 Conference code: 530169

- I. Welcome & Introductions
  - a. Members present: Dr. Floyd Buras, Pediatrician, Chair, Dr. Meredith Allain, Geneticist Ochsner New Orleans; Dr. Lyn Kieltyka, State MCH Epidemiologist
  - b. Stakeholders & Partners present: Dr. Gina Lagarde, Pediatrician/Office of Public Health Region 9 Medical Director; Kathleen Aubin and Kate Friedman, OPH Section of Environmental Epidemiology and Toxicology, Environmental Public Health Tracking Network; Dr. Patti Barovechio, BFH Nurse Consultant; Colleen Clark, BFH Genetic Diseases Newborn Screening Program,
  - c. Staff present: Jane Herwehe, BFH Data to Action Team (DAT) Lead; Julie Johnston, LBDMN Program Manager; Dr. Tri Tran, BFH Senior Epidemiologist supporting LBDMN and Early Hearing Detection & Intervention; Christy Patton, Region 7 Data Collection Specialist (DCS); Curitessia Criff, Regions 6 & 8 DCS; Tracy Zehner, Regions 4&5 DCS, Jasmine Luter, Region 1 DCS, Rachelle Boudreaux, BFH Boards & Commissions Liaison
  
- II. Updates
  - a. LBDMN\Family Resource Center Referral Pilot – Introductory postcard was tested with families, revised, approved by BMAC and the Secretary’s office, and is with State Printing. From January-September 2021, we have identified 618 children with birth defects to connect to resources who were born in 2018-2021. We will pilot our process with 250 of these.
  - b. The annual report to the legislature is with the Secretary’s Office moving through the process to be posted to the legislative site.
  - c. Dr. Lyn Kieltyka requested birth defects data to include in her presentation of the State of the State of health indicators to the Perinatal Commission in January 2022.

- III. Prevention Case Review Pilot Update - LBDMN is developing a case review process for birth defects prevention. The board affirmed our project purpose statement, reviewed and provided input for needs, preferences, and next steps to develop the case review model. We developing the process using our 2018 orofacial cleft data.
- a. Purpose Statement: The purpose of the case review is to move our data to action by identifying preventable birth defects to make evidence-based recommendations for systems level changes to improve primary prevention and intervention efforts in Louisiana’s maternal health system.
  - b. Literature Review of Orofacial Cleft Risk Factors- Dr. Tri Tran, epidemiologist presented the initial results of the literature review of risk factors and evidence-based recommendations for interventions. He requested recommendations from the board about additional journal access to make the literature review more robust.
  - c. 2018 State of the State and Orofacial Cleft Data Presentation- In addition to 2018 cleft data from birth defects data, to develop a picture of the maternal landscape in Louisiana, we looked at health indicators and relevant variables from Vital Records 2018 birth certificate data, 2018 Louisiana Bias or Racism & Social Determinants of Health (LABoRS) Tool, 2018 Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) and Environmental Public Health Tracking data. These datasets were analyzed for known risk factors for birth defects in general and clefts specifically. Findings: In 2018, there were 105 cases of orofacial clefts in Louisiana. The prevalence is consistent with the US average. The prevalence is higher in mothers 35-39 years old than in other groups. Prevalence is higher also in babies with Very Low Birth Weight and Low Birth Weight. A larger data sample size is needed to establish reliability and for additional analysis. The team will use 2015-2019 cleft data for adjusted model analysis to be presented at the January 2022 meeting.
  - d. Kate Friedman demonstrated the potential of the Environmental Public Health Tracking data portal [Health Data Portal \(la.gov\)](https://healthdata.la.gov) to explore health outcomes and indicators mapped with a variety of environmental quality data such as water, air, and heat. We can add an environmental equity indicator to the State of the State maternal health presentation.
  - e. Case Review Approach & Case Selection Criteria – While there is no national model for birth defects prevention review or algorithm for case selection, the BFH Data to Action team is drawing heavily from experiences of managing mortality reviews such as Pregnancy Associated Mortality Review (PAMR), Fetal Infant Mortality Review (FIMR) and Child Death Review (CDR). Next Steps to crafting a case review approach include defining parameters for review and prioritizing case selection.

The board felt it was premature to establish any type of case eliminations until more robust data analysis is presented.

- f. Case Review Tools- The board reviewed and made editing suggestions for two documents-
  - i. The Case Summary Form – this form will be used in the review meeting to present de-identified data on each case selected for review; to make determinations on preventability; to make evidence-based recommendations for prevention of future similar cases; to identify partners for strategy facilitation.
  - ii. Considerations for Case Review Tool - includes risk factors specific to clefts and general birth defects prevention as well as examples of types of prevention strategy recommendations for primary prevention and systems level improvements.

- IV. Discussion & Public Comment – Next steps include:
  - a. Broaden journal access for the literature review
  - b. Provide more detailed maternal exposure data including timing and length of exposures, mapping environmental exposures, occupational info and location. Add chromosome/genetics report section to each form.
  - c. Expand data sample size to include 2015-2019 cleft data
  - d. Conduct further analysis/associations using adjusted models, exploring multiple/compounded risk factors, and co-occurring birth defects
  - e. Provide data to Kate Friedman for mapping environmental exposures
  - f. Develop suggestions for case review approach and selection criteria
- V. Adjournment- Next meeting is January 21, 2022 1-3 pm. Adjourned at 3:02pm  
Minutes respectfully submitted by Julie Johnston.