



Minutes of the Governor's Interagency Council on Health Disparities September 25, 2008

Great Wolf Lodge, 20500 Old Highway 99 SW, Grand Mound

Council members present:

Vickie Ybarra, Chair
Emma Medicine White Crow, Vice Chair
Ellen Abellera
Sofia Aragon
Annie Conant
Nancy Fisher
Eric Hurlburt

MaryAnne Lindeblad
Frankie T. Manning
Martin Mueller
Millie Piazza
Lourdes Portillo Salazar
Gwendolyn Shepherd
Felicia Waddleton-Willis

Council members absent:

Winona Hollins Hauge
Danno Ives

Madeleine Thompson

Council Staff present:

Heather Boe, Communications Consultant
Tamara Fulwyler, Outreach Coordinator
Christy Hoff, Health Policy Analyst

Wendy Malkin, Health Policy Analyst
Craig McLaughlin, Executive Director
Desiree Robinson, Executive Assistant

Guests and Other Participants:

Lynn Abegglen, Cross Cultural Collaborative
Chris Alejano, Governor's Executive Policy Office
Jan Crayk, Department of Health
Bill Daley, Washington Community Action Network
Maria Gardipee, Department of Health
Gillian Dutton, Washington State Coalition for Language Access
Eliana Lobo, Harborview Medical Center
Rose Long, Cross Cultural Healthcare Program

Sheryl Lowe, American Indian Health Commission
Laurie McCubbin, Washington State University
Brown McDonald, Department of Health
Patty Rathbun, Department of Health
Cindy Roat, Consultant
Dan Rubin, Choice Regional Health Network
Jason Sievers, Washington State University
Laura Splawn, SeaMar Community Health Centers

Vickie Ybarra, Council Chair, called the public meeting to order at 10:07 a.m. and read from a prepared statement (on file).

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Approve September 25, 2008 agenda

Motion/Second: Ellen Abellera/Emma Medicine White Crow. Approved unanimously

2. ADOPTION OF MAY 29, 2008 & SEPTEMBER 10, 2008 MEETING MINUTES

Motion: Approve May 29, 2008 and September 10, 2008 minutes

Motion/Second: MaryAnne Lindeblad/Nancy Fisher. Approved unanimously

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COUNCIL BUSINESS

Christy Curwick Hoff, Council Staff, announced that Jill Morgan, senior secretary to the Council, left the Board and Council at the end of July and a hiring freeze came into effect during the hiring search. Heather Boe and Desiree Robinson have taken over the majority of the administrative support for the Council. Staff submitted an exception request letter to the Department of Personnel. She said the continuation application for the Council's State Partnership Grant from the U.S. Office of Minority Health was funded for the second year of the three-year project. This grant supports the Council's outreach activities, including funding the Outreach Coordinator.

4. UPDATE ON COMMUNITY OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Tamara Fulwyler, Council Staff, said outreach has primarily focused on education about health disparities and current policy work. Information boards and posters were created and have been used at events, including the Hispanic festival in Centralia, the International District summer fair, the Nisqually Tribe's health fair, and the Shoalwater Bay Tribe's health fair. Ms. Fulwyler has linked community members to multi-lingual materials. For example, she paired her Council outreach activities with the Washington Poison Center, which has materials in Spanish, Chinese, and Russian. She takes Washington Poison Center materials to communities and disseminates them through established channels. For example, she gave poison prevention information to a tribal WIC coordinator who can provide the information to clients. Ms. Fulwyler also introduces individuals in communities to individuals in state government to increase communication. For example, she linked an individual who works on grant contracts for a tribe to an individual in the Department of Health, which resulted in the tribe learning about available money. She had a lot of contact with agencies and communities as she worked to disseminate the survey. Work has started on the multicultural communications directory. The directory workgroup met in August to begin assets mapping. The workgroup will meet again in February to review a draft of the directory. Ms. Fulwyler's community contacts are contributing to the work of the directory.

5. PROPOSED 2009 MEETING DATES

Desiree Day Robinson, Council Staff, presented a memo on factors used to choose meeting locations and a document (memo and documents on file) with the proposed meeting dates and locations. Chair Ybarra said that in the past year the Council alternated meeting locations between Olympia and SeaTac and asked about doing the same for the coming year. Ms. Robinson suggested that the Council consider scheduling meetings near Olympia this year given the Governor's restrictions on travel. Chair Ybarra asked Council members if they would experience problems with the travel restrictions if they need to travel to meetings in the SeaTac area. No problems were presented by the Council members. She requested that meetings continue to alternate between Olympia and SeaTac for the coming year. Chair Ybarra inquired about the meeting scheduled for Kitsap County. Ms. Robinson responded that Gwendolyn Shepherd, Council Member, requested a meeting in that area. Chair Ybarra asked members if meeting in Kitsap is problematic given the travel restrictions. No problems were presented by Council members. Member Shepherd said that she would work with Ms. Robinson to find a meeting location. Ms. Robinson asked if the Council would like a phone conference for the February meeting. Chair Ybarra said that we should wait to see what items would be on the February agenda before we decide if the meeting should be held by phone. Ms. Robinson said she would look at locations for the February meeting.

***Motion:** Approve proposed meeting schedule as presented.*

***Motion/Second:** Nancy Fisher/ Ellen Abellera. Approved unanimously*

6. UPDATE ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT GAP STUDIES

Chair Ybarra introduced the topic and said the Council first received an update on this work at its May meeting. Chris Alejano, Office of Financial Management, Executive Policy Office, introduced himself and gave his presentation (on file). Martin Mueller, Council Member, asked for clarification on the reporting dates. Mr. Alejano said that all the studies have the same December deadline. Ellen Abellera, Council Member, said that she met with the members of the Asian Pacific Islander think tank and the researchers and they plan to include information on the linkage between education and health in their reports. They will report the dropout data for API youth and will include the role of community-based organizations in supporting families and youth. They also plan to survey teachers to learn about their experiences in schools. They are waiting for data from the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

Chair Ybarra asked about opportunities for collaboration among the studies and plans for collaboration when crafting the recommendations. Mr. Alejano said he convened a meeting between the researchers to discuss collaboration. He said all the researchers felt the urgency to get started and committed to meet again to discuss the results, recommendations and areas of commonalities and to craft a cross-cutting list of recommendations to leverage resources. He also said researchers have been in communication with each other in an informal way and had ideas for collaboration.

Laurie McCubbin and Jason SeEVERS, researchers from Washington State University, passed out some materials related to the academic achievement gap study for Native American students. Ms. McCubbin explained that they were having problems accessing needed data, which was making it difficult to quantify the achievement gap. She described research she is working on in collaboration with the Department of Health in Hawaii. Emma Medicine White Crow, Council Vice Chair, asked for clarification about the size of the Native American student population and the percentage that is dropping out. Ms. McCubbin said that they need access to disaggregated data on drop-out rates and those data are not currently available. Vice Chair Medicine White Crow asked if the research would explore the diversity of the teachers. Ms. McCubbin said that data on teachers' race/ethnicity is not available at the district level but they are trying to work with OSPI to get that data.

Nancy Fisher, Council Member, said some large companies will pay for employees to go back to school and get a degree and she wondered whether any companies offer similar benefits for literacy classes.

7. PANEL DISCUSSION ON LANGUAGE ACCESS

Chair Ybarra introduced the agenda item and panelists introduced themselves and gave their presentations (presentations and handout materials on file). Cindy Roat, Language Access Consultant, provided a framework on language access. Jill Dutton, Washington State Coalition for Language Access, provided information on the Coalition and recommendations for the Council to consider. Dan Rubin, CHOICE Regional Health Network, provided information on CHOICE and its project to develop quality assurance recommendations for interpretive services and recommendations for the Council. Rose Long, Cross Cultural Health Care Program, gave an overview of the *Bridging the Gap* medical interpreting training program. Jan Crayk, Department of Health, provided an overview of the Department of Health translations workgroup recommendations for improving translations and interpretive services. Elena Safariants, Department of Social and Health Services, reviewed handout materials on the Department of Social and Health Services interpreter brokerage program. Bill Daley, Washington Community Action Network, gave an overview on the Washington Community Action Network and discussed data on the need for

improved interpreter services. He directed Council members to two handouts (on file). One handout provided estimates of the number of residents with limited English proficiency by insurance status.

Annie Conant, Council Member, asked for clarification on the savings made when the brokerage system went into place. Ms. Safariants said DSHS saves \$1 million per month since the brokerage system went into effect. Ms. Roat asked for clarification if some of the savings resulted from dissatisfied providers who decided not to use the service anymore. Ms. Safariants said that there has been an increase in the number of encounters, yet the overall costs have been reduced. Member Fisher asked for clarification on whether providers were being reimbursed from the Basic Health system for interpretive services that are provided to their patients. Mr. Daley said Basic Health providers are providing interpreter services but are not being reimbursed for those services. Member Abellera asked Ms. Long to clarify the difference between cultural competency and cultural saliency. Ms. Long provided a definition of cultural competency. Sofia Aragon, Council Member, asked for examples of how to measure quality of translations and interpretive services. Ms. Crayk said one way would be to go back to the community and ask for feedback on the effectiveness of messages. Ms. Crayk said some programs contract with a separate agency to check the work of a vendor. Ms. Dutton added that the courts recently developed a protocol for competence on translations (available on the WASCLA web site). Parts of the standard included back-translations. Ms. Roat mentioned that the Hablamos Juntos program is coming out with a toolkit to assess translation quality. MaryAnne Lindeblad, Council Member, thanked the panelists for the information they provided and said additional funding for programs may not be a reality, and therefore was wondering about other practices that agencies should consider. Ms. Dutton said Harborview is a good example of an organization that has been able to cut costs associated with medical interpreting. Ms. Dutton also suggested that an interagency collaboration is a good way for information sharing. Eleana Lobos, supervisor for Harborview interpreter services, said that it has more than 50 interpreters on site that cover more than 80 languages and there are still many language gaps. She discussed a pilot program for video remote interpreting and said Harborview hoping to expand the technology.

The Council recessed for lunch at 12:20 p.m. and reconvened at 1:22 p.m.

8. UPDATES ON HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE DEMOGRAPHICS SURVEY AND MULTICULTURAL HEALTH TRAINING FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Chair Ybarra introduced the topic, noting that the Department of Health was authorized to work on these two issues by the Legislature in the same set of bills that created the Council. Patti Rathbun, Department of Health, explained that she would be presenting on both the health care workforce demographics survey and the multicultural health training on behalf of Lisa Salmi and Kristin Reichl. She first provided an update on the workforce survey. Ms. Rathbun described the Department's methodology for using paper and on-line surveys and provided a handout of the results to date. She described challenges in obtaining a high response rate, having inadequate resources to analyze the data, and controlling data usage and interpretation. Future activities include completing the survey cycle in 2008 and reporting to the legislature in July 2009. Chair Ybarra asked whether it was possible to connect the survey with licensure, particularly via online renewal of licensing. Ms. Rathbun said that she did not know if the Department was considering connecting the survey with licensure, but that this could be considered when the state moves to online license renewal. Frankie Manning, Council Member, asked if there were efforts in the Department to seek additional funding for this project. She emphasized the need for the data. Ms. Rathbun said that Lisa Salmi is the lead contact for this project and that additional questions could be directed to Ms. Salmi.

Ms. Rathbun provided an update on the Department's ongoing multicultural education and awareness program for healthcare professionals. She said a draft document has been created and Department staff is currently working with Dr. Maxine Hayes, Washington State Medical Officer to make changes to the draft. After it undergoes internal review, it will be available for review by boards, commissions, and this Council. They are hopeful that they will be able to move on to the external review stage before the 2009 Legislative session. Chair Ybarra asked for clarification about whether the training program that the Department created is a document and Ms. Rathbun answered that she believed it was a written document. Chair Ybarra said that the federal HRSA office has put out a high quality, on-line multicultural education and health literacy course with free continuing education credits for doctors and nurses.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Hoff directed Council members' attention to written public testimony provided in the packets. Additionally, she indicated written testimony was received from the Governor's Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS that parallels written testimony already submitted from the Lifelong AIDS Alliance and noted that an estimated 75 individual emails were sent to the Council requesting HIV/AIDS be selected as a priority health topic.

10. DISCUSS CRITERIA AND SCORING PROCESS TO SELECT PRIORITY HEALTH TOPICS FOR THE STATE ACTION PLAN

Chair Ybarra said the Council's selection of five priority health topics and the creation of policy recommendations is a key function of the Council. She reviewed the process the Council underwent to select the five priority health topics. She said the Council decided to select the top two health conditions and the top two social determinants of health and to leave the selection of the fifth priority up to discussion following the results of the scoring.

Ms. Hoff reviewed the scoring results (on file). She said the two tables included in the memo provided the ranked listings of health conditions and social determinants of health as well as the total scores, average scores, and some measures of variance. She said that for health conditions, diabetes received the highest score followed by overweight/obesity and then heart disease and stroke, HIV/AIDS and chronic kidney disease. She said that for the social determinants of health, education received the highest score followed very closely by health insurance coverage and then healthcare workforce diversity, substance abuse, health literacy, environmental exposures and smoking rates.

Chair Ybarra said the Council tried to create a process that was as objective as possible and based on the intent of the legislation. She thanked Council members and staff for their work. Chair Ybarra read an email she received from Winona Hollins-Hauge, Council Member, who was not able to attend the meeting. Her email said the Commission on African American Affairs recommends that the Council select the top four health conditions and the top two social determinants and that these be ranked again as a group or that the Council take all five health conditions. The email from Member Hollins-Hauge also said education and health insurance are key determinants and violence is another key issue for the African American community.

Chair Ybarra asked whether members were comfortable moving forward with the top two from each list and Council members concurred. She asked Council members to discuss the fifth priority, indicating that workforce diversity received the next highest score. Member Fisher said she would choose health workforce diversity since there is already a lot of state and federal activity around heart disease and stroke. Member Abellera said health workforce diversity is a priority issue for the

Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs and agreed with Member Fisher's assessment that national efforts around heart disease and stroke are already strong.

Chair Ybarra said the Council had wide discretion in choosing the fifth priority and noted that input from community members indicated they wanted the Council to prioritize diseases. Member Fisher described the overlap between many of the health topics under consideration and noted that by addressing the determinants on the list, such as education and health workforce diversity, the Council would also be addressing the infectious diseases and chronic conditions on the list. Member Manning said that the community's definition of diversity may be limited to ethnicity, and not all the differences in cultures and backgrounds. Member Mueller agreed that workforce diversity may have a broad impact on all of the issues. Member Lindeblad recommended including an access component into the definition of workforce diversity.

***Motion:** The Council approves the prioritized lists of health conditions and social determinants of health as submitted on September 25, 2008 and selects the following five priorities for the first version of the action plan to include Diabetes, Obesity and Overweight, Education, Health Insurance Coverage and Health Workforce Diversity.*

***Motion/Second:** Frankie Manning/ Ellen Abellera. Approved unanimously*

11. DISCUSSION OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHARTER

Chair Ybarra said that in order to guide the development of policy recommendations for the first five priorities, the Council would be establishing advisory committees. The participants on those groups would include members of other state agencies and local communities and reflect diversity in race, ethnicity, and gender as described in the charter. This agenda item was carried over from the Council's May meeting.

Ms. Hoff reviewed the draft charter for the advisory committees (on file), noting that individual committees may adapt certain aspects, such as the guiding principles for assessing and selecting policy recommendations, to fit their respective needs. Chair Ybarra added that such a level of flexibility could be useful as long as each group stays within the general guidelines set out by the Council. Ms. Hoff said there is no money in the Council's budget to reimburse participants for meeting travel expenses. Staff will try to identify options to provide limited travel expense reimbursement for community members. She said that the advisory committees would convene this fall (2008) and finish their work by summer of 2009.

Chair Ybarra noted that the charter gives the advisory committees structure and a common framework, while allowing for flexibility within the parameters set out by the Council. Member Manning asked the group to consider including members of communities that may not traditionally be involved, e.g., the deaf community. Member Fisher said the committees should include men as well as women.

Chair Ybarra said the Council needed a process for choosing members and asked for input (e.g., an application process). Members agreed that participants should be invited to volunteer as it is often difficult to get enough applications. Member Mueller said these groups seemed to function more as workgroups than advisory committees and suggested including a section on individual roles and responsibilities. Vice-Chair Medicine White Crow said that a level of expertise should be added to the qualifications and expectations for committee members. She asked if she and Member Shepherd would be included in the committees. Ms. Hoff clarified that the intent is for all Council members to be able to participate. Felicia Waddleton-Willis, Council Member, suggested including representation from both Eastern and Western Washington. Chair Ybarra concurred that it is important to build

geographic diversity into the charter and members agreed. She summarized that the Council could ask for volunteers, could invite agency representatives, and could post a notice on the Web site. Ms Hoff added that staff could contact groups that the Council has developed linkages with, could use the distribution list, and could disseminate via Council members.

Chair Ybarra said that the Council should consider appointing members in order to clearly define committee membership. The group agreed to change the language in the charter to reflect that members would be identified, invited, and appointed. Chair Ybarra said that we could include members' appointments as a part of Council meetings and could use a provisional process to allow members to participate prior to their formal appointment. Chair Ybarra asked whether the meetings would be governed by the open public meetings act and Ms. Hoff said that they would not. Member Lindeblad urged the Council to get the committees set up quickly and to include ongoing communication about provisional committee members with Council members via email.

***Motion:** The Council adopts the Advisory Committee Charter as submitted and amended on September 25, 2008.*

***Motion/Second:** Maryanne Lindeblad/ Gwendolyn Shepherd. Approved unanimously*

12. REVIEW AND DISCUSS DRAFT PROGRESS REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

Chair Ybarra reviewed the Council's requirement for reporting to the Legislature and noted the importance of keeping interested parties informed of the Council's work. She asked members to review the proposed progress report. Ms. Hoff reviewed the draft report and noted areas where text would be updated to reflect key decisions made during the meeting. Chair Ybarra said the progress report also serves as a tool for other states that are doing similar work. Ms. Hoff said the report would be completed and disseminated by January 15, 2009. Member Lindeblad asked to have a bullet added to the report about the health navigator pilot project.

***Motion:** The Council approves in concept the draft text of the 2009 Progress Report as submitted, directs staff to incorporate suggestions from today's discussion as necessary, and authorizes the Chair to approve a final document for submission to the Governor and Legislature by January 2009.*

***Motion/Second:** Emma Medicine White Crow/ Maryanne Lindeblad. Approved unanimously*

13. COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS AND UPDATES

Member Lindeblad shared a press release about the navigator project, which had identified three contractors: Colville Confederated Tribes, Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic, and Children's Hospital. She said clients would be matched with navigators to help them through the various health care system components. She added that DSHS recently received a grant to launch four pilots in Pasco, Renton, Spokane, and Bellingham to reduce emergency room usage and help patients obtain more appropriate health care. Navigators will also be used in that project. Member Lindeblad discussed the statewide media campaign called "Apple Health for Kids." The campaign bus visited 14 communities. This year kids living at 250% of poverty are eligible for health care insurance coverage. Next year, the eligibility level will rise to 300% of the federal poverty level. There has been a targeted focus on Hispanic communities.

Member Fisher provided information about the Office of Financial Management strategic health planning technical advisory committee, which has been charged with providing guidance for a state health plan. She said that there has not been a plan since the mid 1980s. She added that the group is quite diverse. Member Fisher clarified that this work came out of the certificate for need process and so in the past, the plan focused on facility need. She invited Council input that she would take to the advisory committee when they meet again in January.

Millie Piazza, Council Member, described her participation in an interagency workgroup addressing a recent consultation report by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, which focused on the elevated health risks in South Seattle, where many people of color live and many residents are low income. She said the Department of Ecology is accepting applications for public participation grants to fund nonprofit organizations to provide education on environmental issues. She will disseminate more information through Council staff.

Member Shepherd provided updates on the activities of the NAACP regional health committee. She noted that she is getting a lot of calls and requests to serve on various committees. Her local group applied for a small amount of money from the Office of Minority Health, which it received. She attended the National Partnership for Action meeting in Arizona, which resulted in her connecting with two folks from Alaska who became resources for her local efforts to address capacity building for NAACP local chapters. The faith-based community in Bremerton (10 churches) is expressing an interest in getting involved with work on health disparities. She discussed a grant that was recently awarded to enable public housing to expand their technology infrastructure.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Ybarra adjourned the meeting at 3:00 p.m.

GOVERNOR'S INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HEALTH DISPARITES

Vickie D. Ybarra, R.N., M.P.H., Chair