



**Draft Minutes of the Governor's Interagency Council on Health Disparities**

**May 15, 2014**

**MLK F.A.M.E Community Center  
3201 East Republican Street, Seattle, WA 98112**

**HDC members present:**

Sofia Aragon  
Marietta Bobba  
Gail Brandt  
Vazaskia Caldwell  
Nora Coronado  
Kim Eads  
Nova Gattman

Jonathan Green  
Diane Klontz  
Frankie Manning  
Emma Medicine White Crow  
Millie Piazza  
Gwendolyn Shepherd  
Greg Williamson

**HDC members absent:**

Kameka Brown  
Willie Frank

Steve Kutz

**HDC Staff present:**

Timothy Grisham, Communications Consultant  
Christy Hoff, Health Policy Advisor

Yris Lance, CLAS Project Manager  
Sierra Rotakhina, Health Policy Analyst

**Guests and Other Participants:**

Kathy Adams, ACEs Public-Private Initiative and Community Public Health and Safety Networks  
Michelle Bogart, Department of Social and Health Services  
Michelle Davis, State Board of Health  
Meghan Donohue, Qualis Health  
Marilyn Gisser, Department of Health  
Erinn Havig, Department of Early Learning  
Tory Henderson, Department of Health  
Rebecca Lee, Cross Cultural Health Care Program  
Audrey Levine, Midwives' Association of Washington State  
Mikaela Louie, Cross Cultural Health Care Program  
Mike McNickel, State Board of Health  
Jean Mendoza, Friends of Toppenish Creek  
Suzanne Pak, Cornerstone Medical Services  
Jeffrey Perkins, member of the public

Lauren Platt, Nurse-Family Partnership  
Joana Ramos, Washington State Coalition for Language Access  
Jesus Reyna, Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Minority Health  
Michelle Sarju, Open Arms  
Valerie Sasson, Midwives' Association of Washington State  
Jonté Sulton, Department of Transportation  
Leah Tanner, Native American Women's Dialogue on Infant Mortality, Equal Start Community Coalition, and Seattle Children's  
Crystal Tetrick, Public Health—Seattle & King County  
Alula Vimenez Torres, National Asian Pacific Center on Aging  
Diane Whitmire, Public Member  
Dennis Worsham, Department of Health  
Wendy Zheng, American Heart Association

Emma Medicine White Crow, Council Chair, called the public meeting to order at 9:50 a.m. and read from a prepared statement (on file).

#### **1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

*Motion: Approve May 15, 2014 agenda*

*Motion/Second: Frankie Manning/Marietta Bobba. Approved unanimously.*

#### **2. ADOPTION OF FEBRUARY 12, 2014 MEETING MINUTES**

*Motion: Approve February 12, 2014 minutes*

*Motion/Second: Vazaskia Caldwell/Greg Williamson. Approved unanimously.*

#### **3. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COUNCIL BUSINESS**

Christy Hoff, Council Staff, said the Council provided three letters of support since the last meeting (on file behind Tab 3). She shared that Melanie Hisaw is the Board of Health's new Executive Assistant and Mike McNickle will be serving as the Board's new Health Policy Advisor for Environmental Health issues.

#### **4. UPDATE—CLAS PROJECT**

Yris Lance, Council Staff, provided an update on the Council's grant project to promote adoption of the National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS Standards). She shared progress toward implementing the standards at the Health Care Authority, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the Department of Social and Health Services. She said she has also contacted health care associations and organizations as well as community-based organizations to share information on CLAS. She attended the Rural Health Conference with Don Martin, Department of Health, to present on CLAS. She is currently working with the Interagency Committee of State Employed Women to include CLAS information at its upcoming conference.

Kim Eads, Council Member, said the Washington State Department of Agriculture is interested in receiving additional information on CLAS and they have scheduled a meeting with Ms. Lance. Gail Brandt, Council Member, said the Department of Health is actively working on developing an agency-wide CLAS policy. Greg Williamson, Council Member, said each section of the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction is following up on CLAS. He added that as the agency revises its strategic plan it serves as an opportunity to incorporate health, health equity, and CLAS. Vazaskia Caldwell, Council Member, said the Health Care Authority is also incorporating CLAS into its strategic plan.

#### **5. BRIEFING—HEALTH IMPACT REVIEWS**

Sierra Rotakhina, Council Staff, provided a presentation on the health impact reviews completed during the 2014 legislative session (presentation on file behind Tab 5). She gave an overview of health impact reviews and shared information on the Council's outreach strategy to raise awareness of health impact reviews. She also provided an overview of the process staff uses to conduct the analyses. Member Caldwell asked for more information on how strength of evidence is defined and Ms. Rotakhina shared the Board's criteria. Marietta Bobba, Council Member, asked how staff would approach a review on a topic that has not been well researched. Ms. Rotakhina said that in addition to reviewing the scientific literature she would also conduct interviews with experts in the field. Member Williamson said that awareness of the connection between educational interventions and health equity is increasing. He asked whether staff had come across evidence to demonstrate whether interventions to promote health equity had a positive impact on educational outcomes. In response, Frankie Manning, Council Vice Chair, mentioned the Each Student Successful Summit,

which was held several years ago to explore health interventions as a way of improving student educational outcomes. Council Members discussed the need for linking health and education data.

## **6. BRIEFING—DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH'S HEALTH EQUITY WORKGROUP**

Gail Brandt, Council Member, introduced Dennis Worsham, Deputy Secretary for Public Health Operations at the Department of Health. Mr. Worsham shared information about his personal and public health background. He said the Department of Health has recently created several agency-wide workgroups and he serves as the Chief of Health Equity, leading up the agency's Health Equity Workgroup. The workgroup has recently developed its charter and is currently developing a work plan. He said they intended to solicit input from the Council as they move forward. In addition, they have scheduled meetings with the racial/ethnic commissions to discuss partnerships and to obtain input on the work plan and charter.

Chair Medicine White Crow thanked Mr. Worsham for attending the meeting and offered the Council as a partner. She thanked Member Brandt for her work and contributions to the Council. Vice Chair Manning said she was pleased to see him working at the state level and acknowledged some of his past work in King County. Member Williamson said that high school seniors have a service requirement and suggested possible partnerships to work on health equity issues. Jonathan Green, Council Member, similar encouraged partnership between the Health Equity Workgroup and the Department of Early Learning. Gwendolyn Shepherd, Council Member, encouraged collaboration with the University of Washington's Institute of Translational Health Sciences. Member Bobba asked about the Department of Health's succession planning efforts (one of the other cross agency workgroups is focused on succession planning) and suggested that toolkits to assist community-based organizations could be useful.

## **7. BRIEFING—WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION'S CIVIL RIGHTS PROGRAMS**

Chair Medicine White Crow introduced Jonté Sulton, Title VI Coordinator for the Washington State Department of Transportation's Equal Opportunity Office. Ms. Sulton provided a briefing on the Department of Transportation's civil rights activities (presentation on file under Tab 7). She said her role is to ensure that the agency and all of their partner organizations comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and to ensure that the agencies consider limited English proficient (LEP) populations and environmental justice during transportation planning processes. She said WSDOT developed a Title VI plan as well as an LEP plan and update both plans regularly. She outlined the mission of Title VI and emphasized that any agency that is receiving federal assistance should be in compliance. She highlighted concrete examples of work the agency has done in order to ensure they are meeting the needs of all individuals who access transportation services. Ms. Sulton also highlighted the environmental justice work that WSDOT is conducting to identify, address, and mitigate negative impacts on low-income and communities of color.

Member Brandt asked about the process WSDOT uses to gather community input during planning. Ms. Sulton said they have a public outreach meeting for every community project. They work with community leaders to ensure communities are aware of the meetings. Sofia Aragon, Council Member, asked if the agency conducts environmental justice analyses when service are cut (as opposed to when new projects are being planned). She also asked whether WSDOT uses statewide outreach or only engages the local community. Ms. Sulton confirmed that the agency does hold public meetings to hear from the community when services are proposed to be cut. She said, community outreach for any given project is typically to the locally affected community, not statewide. Millie Piazza, Council Member, said that WSDOT is serving as a great model for other

agencies and commented on the important connections between transportation and health. Vice Chair Manning said one of the challenges she has witnessed is the high levels of dust and pollutants that road construction workers are exposed to and suggested that WSDOT might want to explore that potential hazard. Member Williamson brought up the recent Supreme Court decision relating to former railroad right-of-ways and bike paths. The court order indicated that those property rights should have gone back to the property owners rather than allowing the former railroad lines to be turned into bike paths. Ms. Hoff encouraged Council members to look at the information on environmental justice, Title VI, and language access posted on the WSDOT Web site.

*The Council recessed for lunch at 12:00 p.m. and reconvened at 1:09 p.m.*

## **8. BRIEFING—STATEWIDE ACES INITIATIVES**

Chair Medicine White Crow referred Council members to the memo behind Tab 8. Kathy Adams, ACEs Public-Private Initiative and Community Public Health and Safety Networks, introduced herself and the other presenters. She provided a brief overview of the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study and shared an overview of the ACEs Public-Private Initiative (APPI). She said one of the APPI priorities is an evaluation of five community-based initiatives to reduce ACEs and limit their effects. Ms. Adams said APPI maintains a stakeholder list and will be sending out the evaluation report soon. Ms. Adams' presentation and those of the other presenters are on file under Tab 8. Tory Henderson, ACEs Public-Private Initiative and Department of Health, provided information on local health department efforts to address ACEs and shared information on the Frontiers of Innovation project. Erinn Havig, ACEs Public-Private Initiative and Department of Early Learning, provided an overview of the Strengthening Families Washington Project, which focuses on building protective factors for children and their families. Member Green said that the Department of Early Learning is only able to serve a percentage of eligible children through the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP), so the agency uses a number of different factors, including ACEs to prioritize. Marilyn Gisser, Department of Health, shared information about the Essentials for Childhood program, which uses a collective impact approach. She said they have a steering committee, which is working to develop a common agenda and to identify strategies and metrics to collectively address ACEs, and they are still looking for more members to serve on the committee. She said they are working on their formal communications plan and are interested in suggestions to obtain input from community groups.

Chair Medicine White Crow offered the Council to assist with connection to community. Member Aragon said she recently attended a conference for the School Nurse Organization of Washington where a school principal shared the outcomes of work in his school to address ACEs. She suggested that they incorporate some of the real life stories from the community into their communications plan. Member Williamson said that the Comprehensive Health Education Foundation is also working on ACEs—he said he would share additional information with staff.

## **9. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Jeffrey Perkins, member of the public, said he was concerned about medical providers not adequately serving people of color. He said people of color are gaining more access to health services through the Affordable Care Act and suggested that the race/ethnicity of doctors should be available so patients can find a provider from their own racial/ethnic background. He suggested that the Council look at best practices in other states. As an example, he mentioned a Minority Men's Health program that is doing some promising work and suggested that the Council focus on

programs to address childhood hunger, adding that hungry kids cannot learn well. He also shared a book called “Little Ethiopia of the Pacific Northwest”, which is about how Africans and Ethiopians came to Seattle, their health concerns, and other information on the community.

Valerie Sasson, Midwives Association of Washington, thanked the Council for prioritizing the reduction of adverse birth outcomes as a priority. She highlighted statistics of poor birth outcomes in the nation, as well as health disparities, and said our system of power is the root cause. Increasing access to midwifery care in all settings is one part of the solution. Midwifery is associated with positive birth outcomes, reducing disparities, and lower costs. She referred Council members to a brochure that the association developed. She asked that a representative from the Association be able to participate on the Council’s advisory committee, as well as Mary Lou Kopas with the American College of Nurse-Midwives.

Gene Mendoza, Yakima County community member, provided information on health disparities issues in Yakima County. She said that Yakima County is a productive agricultural county, the most intensely irrigated county, and a poor county that has seen an increase in population and has grown more diverse. She provided a few examples of health challenges in the county including schools built on agricultural land that has DDT in the soil and air and water quality problems associated with high concentration of dairy cows.

Joana Ramos, Washington State Coalition for Language Access, shared information on the Tools for Health project, which provides information on language access rights and language services in healthcare to consumers and providers. She said WASCLA hears stories about children serving as interpreters during medical settings, and the tools for Health Toolkit will help to provide education to reduce these practices. She said they are posting the materials on the WASCLA website for free download—materials can also be ordered directly through WASCLA.

Leah Tanner, Native American Women’s Dialogue on Infant Mortality (NAWDIM), Equal Start Community Coalition, and Global Alliance to Prevent Prematurity and Stillbirth (GAPPS), shared written testimony from the three organizations she was representing (on file under Tab 9). She said each group was also interested in participating on the Council’s birth outcomes advisory committee.

Crystal Tetrick, Public Health—Seattle & King County, offered the following recommendations to the Council as it moves forward with its work to address adverse birth outcomes: (1) include a focus on men, (2) dedicate funding to increase universal home visiting, (3) promote a Health Home model, (4) support studies to assess experiences of discrimination and impacts health, (5) promote access to affordable housing, (6) promote a life course approach to the healthcare of women, and (7) promote programs that reduce the impact of stress on African American and Native American women. She said Public Health—Seattle & King County is available as a resource to the Council.

Susanne Pak, Cornerstone Medical Services, said they are embarking on a project to raise awareness of stomach cancer among Asian Americans. She invited Council members to attend a summit called, “Making Stomach Cancer a Health Priority Among Asian Americans” on August 22 at the Clarion Hotel in Federal Way. She said stomach cancer is a classic example of a health disparity and provided some statistics on its impacts among Asian Americans.

## **10. REVIEW AND DISCUSS STATE SYSTEM WORKGROUP RECOMMENDATIONS ON LANGUAGE ACCESS**

Chair Medicine White Crow referred Council members to the memo and language access policy paper behind Tab 10. She said that members were sent the paper in advance to allow time for discussion within member agencies and constituencies. She said she served on the Council's workgroup, which drafted the recommendations, along with Vice Chair Manning and Members Brandt, Coronado, and Piazza. She added that she and Member Piazza met with staff from the Governor's Office to discuss the recommendations.

Member Brandt indicated that the workgroup went through a few iterations of the paper and are happy with the recommendations. Member Piazza thanked Ms. Hoff for her work on the paper indicated that she is using it extensively. Vice Chair Manning said she thought it was useful to learn about the other statewide language access policies that have been adopted in other states. Member Williamson said he is pleased to see OSPI addressing language access and that the recommendations allow his agency an opportunity to continue this work. Member Caldwell said the policy paper has been very helpful in advancing this work in her agency as well.

Member Piazza asked Ms. Hoff to summarize the meeting with the Governor's staff. Ms. Hoff said she reached out to the Governor's Office to let them know about the recommendations in advance and that staff asked for the meeting. She said that in addition to Chair Medicine White Crow, Member Piazza, and four of the Governor's policy staff, Uriel Iniguez with the Commission on Hispanic Affairs was also at the meeting. She said the meeting went well and that they expressed an interest in having more information on what state agencies are already doing around language access. Member Piazza agreed that the meeting went well and that participants seemed engaged. She highlighted one participant's comment about the importance of providing information to limited English proficient individuals during emergencies, such as the Oso landslide. Chair Medicine White Crow said she appreciated the opportunity to continue to work with the Governor's Office on this issue. Ms. Hoff summarized some written comments from Kim Eads, Council Member, on the recommendations as Member Eads needed to leave the meeting early. Council members engaged in a discussion around potentially changing some language in the recommendations, but decided to retain the language as submitted in the policy paper.

***Motion:*** *The Council adopts the recommendations presented in the Language Access Policy Paper as presented on May 15, 2014.*

***Motion/Second:*** *Greg Williamson/Vazaskia Caldwell. Approved (thirteen ayes, one abstention).*

## 11. REVIEW AND DISCUSS ACTION PLAN UPDATE

Chair Medicine White Crow asked Council members to review the memo under Tab 11 and asked staff to review the draft report. Ms. Hoff said that before drafting the report, she met with Council Members Caldwell, Eads, Williamson, and Piazza to seek their input on how best to share current progress toward implementing the Council's recommendations. Ms. Hoff said that Council members felt strongly that the report should highlight how the Council's align with Results Washington. Ms. Hoff then reviewed the draft report with the Council – members made a few suggestions for edits and changes. Most notably, members suggested adding a table for Results Washington Goal 2 (Prosperous Economy) and to note that promoting educational and health equity can increase return on investment and improve economic prosperity.

***Motion:*** *The Council approves in concept the draft text of the June 2014 Update as submitted on May 15, 2014, directs staff to incorporate changes from today's discussion as necessary, and authorizes the chair to approve the final report for submission to the Governor and Legislature.*

***Motion/Second:*** *Vazaskia Caldwell/Nova Gattman. Approved unanimously.*

## 12. COUNCIL MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Nova Gattman, Council Member, said she is the staff coordinator for the Healthcare Personnel Shortage Taskforce and that they have a meeting at Pierce College on Monday May 19, 2014. She said more information is on the Workforce Board's Web site. Member Caldwell mentioned the State Healthcare Innovation Plan and the collaborative work that is going on in the state. She said the Health Care Authority has released a request for letters of intent for planning grants to encourage community organizations to be involved in the planning in their communities. She said she would be attending the Healthcare Quality and Equity Action Forum in Boston in June. Member Williamson said he received a phone call from a woman at the Department of Health and Human Services who is working on a project to teach students about the social determinants of health and health equity. He said that he would keep the Council informed and Chair Medicine White Crow offered her support. Member Piazza shared that the Department of Ecology is developing a Language Access Plan. She added that the toxics program recently released a Spanish language webpage on the Tacoma smelter plume. Member Shepherd mentioned that she recently attended a workshop on dismantling racism in Olympia. Vice Chair Manning highlighted the remote access clinic that will be in Seattle on October 23-26<sup>th</sup>. She expressed how important it is to let the community know that this resource will be available. Member Bobba indicated that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services recently provided funding to the Department of Social and Health Services to determine the demographics for people at risk for institutional placement or those already in institutional placements among Native American communities. They will hire a consultant to work with each individual tribe on this assessment. Member Green said that the Department of Early Learning is continuing to expand preschool in Washington and they are now receiving applications for the next contract year. Member Green said that he will be leaving the Council and that he has greatly enjoyed the work. Chair Medicine White Crow said it has been a pleasure serving with Member Green. Chair Medicine White Crow shared Member Coronado's written update, including that she will be serving on the Department of Health's anencephaly advisory committee. Ms. Hoff shared written updates from Member Klontz and Member Eads.

## ADJOURNMENT

Chair Medicine White Crow adjourned the meeting at 4:33 p.m.