



**Draft Minutes of the Governor's Interagency Council on Health Disparities**  
**May 13, 2015**  
**South Seattle Community College-Georgetown Campus, Multi-Purpose Room C122**  
**6737 Corson Ave. S., Seattle, WA 98108-3450**

**HDC members present:**

Marietta Bobba  
Gail Brandt  
Vazaskia Caldwell  
Nora Coronado  
Emma Medicine White Crow  
Kim Eads  
Sara Franklin  
Erica Hansen on behalf of Nova Gattman

Michael Itti on behalf of Sofia Aragon  
Diane Klontz  
Stephen Kutz  
Frankie Manning  
Jan Olmstead  
Millie Piazza  
Gwendolyn Shepherd

**HDC members absent:**

Mona Johnson

Greg Williamson

**HDC Staff present:**

Melanie Hisaw, Executive Assistant  
Christy Hoff, Health Policy Advisor  
Kelie Kahler, Communications Consultant

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

**Guests and Other Participants:**

Stacey Bushaw, Health Care Authority  
Jessie Dean, Health Care Authority  
Alia Fry, Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Minority Health  
Stacy Gillett, Office of Education Ombuds  
Rebecca Lee, Cross Cultural Health Care Program  
Devon Love, Center for MultiCultural Health  
Shelley Means, Native American Women's Dialogue on Infant Mortality

Janelle Okorogu, Center for MultiCultural Health  
Lisa Packard, Qualis Health  
Martha Perla, Department of Social and Health Services  
Jesus Reyna, Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Minority Health  
Val Thomas-Matson, Healthy King County Coalition  
Cathy Wasserman, Department of Health  
Heather Weiher, Health Care Authority

Emma Medicine White Crow, Council Chair, called the public meeting to order at 9:37 a.m. and read from a prepared statement (on file). She asked Council members, staff, and members of the public to introduce themselves.

**1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

*Motion: Approve May 13, 2015 agenda*

*Motion/Second: Vazaskia Caldwell/Marietta Bobba. Approved unanimously.*

## 2. ADOPTION OF FEBRUARY 11, 2015 MEETING MINUTES

*Motion: Approve February 11, 2015 minutes*

*Motion/Second: Frankie Manning/ Sara Franklin. Approved unanimously.*

## 3. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COUNCIL BUSINESS

Christy Curwick Hoff, Council Staff, shared information about staff changes. She acknowledged the assistance that Kelly Gilmore provided in her four-month position working on health impact reviews. She also introduced Kelie Kahler the new Communications Consultant. She referred Council members to three letters of support (on file behind Tab 3). Letters were provided to the Chinese Information and Services Center and the Asia Pacific Cultural Center. She said staff was monitoring SB 6121 and HB 1314, which are both carbon pollution cap and trade bills and would expand the Council's authority to convene and staff a Cumulative Impacts Taskforce.

## 4. BRIEFING—HEALTH DISPARITIES DATA

Chair Medicine White Crow referred Council members to the memo behind Tab 4. She said the Council is required to identify priorities on an incremental basis and include recommendations in its reports to the Governor and Legislature. She said it had been a while since the Council had received a briefing on health disparities data and that today's presentation would help to inform future selection of priorities. Gail Brandt, Council Member, introduced Cathy Wasserman, State Epidemiologist for Non-Infectious Conditions with the Department of Health, who gave her presentation (on file behind Tab 4). Her presentation highlighted demographic data, a conceptual framework for how inequities arise, and data on the social determinants of health. Kim Eads, Council Member, asked about linguistic isolation and if that referred to verbal only or also written. Ms. Wasserman said she would check and get back to her. Diane Klontz, Council Member, clarified that the data on affordable housing refers to out of pocket expenses (i.e., not including subsidies). Sara Franklin, Council Member, asked about projected population numbers and what would drive changes in population growth. Ms. Wasserman said the Office of Financial Management has reports on population growth (looking at birth, death, and migration) and she would provide a link for a good resource. Michael Itti encouraged reporting of data broken out for Southeast Asians.

Member Brandt said they had hoped the Department of Health's Chronic Disease Profiles would be completed. She said she would send links to Council members when they are ready. Member Brandt provided information on the life course perspective, which explains how risk and protective factors from birth through the life course impact our health and result in health inequities. Member Eads asked if risk factors included things that were choices or also things that were outside someone's control. Member Brandt said they included both. Vazaskia Caldwell, Council Member, asked for more information on the life course model. Ms. Wasserman said it was from a peer-reviewed publication and that it was a theoretical model, not based on actual data. Ms. Hoff said she would send a link to the article to Council members.

Ms. Wasserman then provided data on life expectancy, causes of death and disease, and risk factors that impact health. Frankie Manning, Council Vice Chair, asked for more information on hospital collection of data on race/ethnicity. Ms. Wasserman said that the race/ethnicity data are often not filled out. Vice Chair Manning said that there is a discomfort with asking someone to self-identify their race/ethnicity so often it is assigned to them by a provider or someone else. She suggested that the Council might be able to address this issue in the future. Ms. Wasserman added that as the state moves more toward an electronic medical record system, perhaps self-reported data can be carried forward with the patient. Michael Itti asked who designs the birth and death certificates. Ms. Wasserman said they are designed nationally with input from the states and then states are asked to

adopt the national standard. The last standard revision to the birth certificate was in 2003. Chair Medicine White Crow said there is variance by county in who fills out the death certificate, adding that the informant is supposed to be the one to fill them out but sometimes it is the coroner or funeral director. Marietta Bobba, Council Member, asked whether data can be broken out by U.S. borne vs. foreign born and Ms. Wasserman said they can with some data sources. Member Bobba also asked about employment and whether it can affect health. Ms. Wasserman said that the scientific literature does show that employment impacts health but the data provided in her presentation were not disaggregated by employment status. Michael Itti shared that this year was the first time students of color exceeded the white population and that the K-12 system is working to make sure data are collected by East African and other populations that are growing quickly. He highlighted the need to collect and report racial/ethnic data better in the future. Michael Itti asked if Ms. Wasserman had any data on mental health disparities. Ms. Wasserman said there are some available data on mental health issues and that they are included in the Chronic Disease Profiles. Member Caldwell asked for additional data on specific cancers, particularly breast and prostate cancer. Nora Coronado, Council Member, shared that the Council's Adverse Birth Outcomes advisory committee was presented with some data showing the prevalence of congenital anomalies making up a higher proportion of post-neonatal deaths. She asked if Ms. Wasserman might have some insight on that. Ms. Hoff said she would share those specific data with Ms. Wasserman.

## 5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Medicine White Crow announced that she was going to transition to the public comment period and read from a prepared statement (on file). She said that the Council made a special call out for the public to attend and share what they believe the Council should identify as future priorities. In addition, the Council specifically asked for feedback from the public on the draft equity guidance that would be reviewed under agenda item 7.

Janelle Okorogu, Center for MultiCultural Health, said that she had previously shared with the Council the importance of tobacco prevention and control. She said the state has done a fantastic job of reducing the tobacco rate, adding that it should still be a priority and the focus should also include e-cigarettes. She said e-cigarette use is high among 10<sup>th</sup> graders and that students are vaping in school, including in classrooms. She said there are metals and other harmful substances in the vapor and that nicotine is often included in the e-juice that is marketed as nicotine-free. She said students are also using e-cigarettes to smoke marijuana oil in school. She said kids are purchasing the e-juice and selling it by the drop. They are also adding it to Gatorade and other beverages. She said it can come into contact with children's skin and they can be poisoned by that route as well. She said toddlers are ingesting the e-juice and calls to the poison center have been increasing. She offered that as the Council works on developing priorities that it consider tobacco prevention and control and include e-cigarettes. Member Franklin acknowledged the excellent work and educational information provided by the Center for MultiCultural Health and thanked Ms. Okorogu for her comments.

Stacy Gillette, Director of the Office of the Education Ombuds, provided information on her office. She said the OEO helps families and students resolve conflict with the public schools. She said they are usually contacted by parents and increasingly by grandparents, social workers, counselors, and others. She referred Council members to their annual report, which includes their recommendations. She said 60% of their cases involve obstacles for students with disabilities, including children with autism, mental health disorders, and post-traumatic stress disorder. She said these students are more likely to experience bullying and are more likely to be expelled, isolated, and restrained. She suggested that there might be opportunities for the Council to work with the OEO. She also

referred Council members to reports regarding language access. She said interpreters in schools are not trained and it is difficult to get districts to use the telephone language line to provide support to family members. She said that schools focus on the English Language Learner students and not the families, adding that family engagement is important. She asked the Council for its support on these issues and said she would welcome the chance to work together to address the needs of these vulnerable children.

Ms. Hoff referred Council members to the written comments received (on file behind Tab 5).

## 6. ADVERSE BIRTH OUTCOMES RECOMMENDATIONS

Chair Medicine White Crow said that the Council recently convened an advisory committee to help develop recommendations to eliminate disparities in adverse birth outcomes. She said the full Council would have the opportunity to hear the proposed recommendations, ask questions, and engage in discussion during this agenda item. She said that at the end, she would be asking the Council to consider a motion to approve the recommendations for submission to the Governor and Legislature in the Council's June Update.

Ms. Hoff introduced three members of the Council's advisory committee: Heather Weiher, Program Manager for the First Steps Program at the Health Care Authority, Devon Love, Project Director for the Center for MultiCultural Health, and Shelley Means, Co-facilitator for the Native American Women's Dialogue on Infant Mortality. Ms. Weiher provided an overview of the committee, Ms. Love discussed the work processes that the committee used, and Ms. Means shared additional strategies and next steps. They each provided detail on the committee's three recommendations. The presentation is on file behind Tab 6.

Stephen Kutz, Council Member, asked why one of the recommendations was to fund Maternity Support Services only in the postpartum period. Ms. Hoff clarified that the intent is to fund additional units that could only be used in the postpartum period – these would be in addition to those units that could be used in the prenatal period. She acknowledged the language was misleading and said she would clarify in the report. Member Franklin asked about the distinction between cultural humility and cultural competency. Ms. Means indicated that cultural humility is about understanding that the person sitting next to you may have their own value system and experiences that impact health. Ms. Hoff shared the definition of cultural humility included in the report, adding that it was a term that was being used more frequently and one that was preferred by the committee. Jan Olmstead, Council Member, commented that she really supports the cultural humility recommendation and that the work needs to be driven by the community. Member Brandt asked if the committee considered a recommendation that would mandate cultural humility training for state employees. Ms. Love said the committee would prefer that such training be mandatory but that they understand the Council does not have that authority. Member Caldwell indicated that she respects the committee's work, and that they have an opportunity to make an impact by adopting these recommendations.

Ms. Hoff referred Council members to Tab 6 and walked members through the document outlining the Advisory Committee's recommendations. Michael Itti commented on the section of the report that highlights data on disparities in adverse birth outcomes. He said that due to lack of data disaggregation it appears that Asian Americans do not experience disparities. Ms. Hoff said she would make a correction to that section to note the lack of data disaggregation. Gwendolyn Shepherd, Council Member, asked if there is an evaluation plan to determine whether the recommendations make a difference. Ms. Hoff said that they planned to track the recommendations

to determine if they are implemented and to what extent. Ms. Weiher added that they have not had the funding to evaluate the First Steps Program, but if they received funding they would like to evaluate the program. Member Eads asked if the committee considered WIC and the emergency food system in their deliberations, adding that there is a recognition that nutrition impacts birth outcomes. Ms. Love said that there is some alignment between the WIC system and both the First Steps and the community driven approaches recommendations. Ms. Hoff added that the committee did talk specifically about WIC, but that one reason that it may not have been elevated is because enrollment has been dropping. Member Olmstead said the American Indian Health Commission has been working on a home visiting project with the Department of Health and they are sponsoring focus groups with tribes and urban Indian programs. She said she hoped that the Committee would consider this work in their discussions moving forward. She extended an invitation to the panel to present the recommendations to the AIHC Infant Health Workgroup.

***Motion:** The Council approves in concept the draft adverse birth outcomes report and recommendations as submitted on May 13, 2015, directs staff to incorporate changes from today's discussion as necessary, and authorizes the chair to approve the final version for inclusion in the Council's June 2015 Update Report*

***Motion/Second:** Vazaskia Caldwell/ Gwendolyn Shepherd. Approved unanimously.*

## **7. GUIDANCE FOR PROMOTING EQUITY IN STATE POLICIES AND PROGRAMS**

Chair Medicine White Crow referred members to the memo behind Tab 7. She said that through its partnership with the Healthiest Next Generation initiative, the Council was asked to develop guidance to promote equity in state policy and program decisions. She said that Sierra Rotakhina, Council Staff, would provide a briefing on the guidance. Ms. Rotakhina gave her presentation (on file behind Tab 7). She discussed the process to connect with stakeholders with equity expertise. She also looked at policies in Washington and other states as well as research on initiatives to promote equity. She acknowledged the stakeholders who contributed to the report. She also highlighted how the Council has authority and responsibility to develop recommendations to ensure state actions do not perpetuate disparities. She then reviewed the draft guidance with Council members (also on file behind Tab 7).

Member Caldwell said that the Institute of Medicine had data disaggregation standards that could be of use to the report. Ms. Rotakhina said she would look at them. Millie Piazza, Council Member, suggested the following changes: (1) including environmental conditions as a societal factor, (2) using the word populations sometimes instead of communities, and (3) adding "...to eliminate barriers to participation" to the end of the bullet regarding civic participation. Member Brandt requested adding definitions for inequity, cultural competency, and cultural humility.

***Motion:** The Council approves in concept the draft text of the Guidance for Promoting Equity in State Policy and Program Development as submitted on May 13, 2015, directs staff to incorporate changes from today's discussion as necessary, and authorizes the chair to approve the final version for inclusion in the Council's June 2015 Update Report.*

***Motion/Second:** Gail Brandt/ Steve Kutz. Approved unanimously.*

## **8. REVIEW ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

Chair Medicine White Crow referred Council members to the memo behind Tab 8. She said that the Council would have the opportunity to review the draft text of the next update report to the Governor and Legislature. Ms. Hoff reviewed the draft Update (on file behind Tab 8). Member Kutz noted that there has been a broad range of topics for health impact reviews and that

everything impacts health. He asked if there are other groups in the state doing this type of work. Ms. Hoff mentioned that there were two bills this session, which did not pass, that would have created equity impact evaluations. Member Bobba said it has been valuable for Council members to be alerted to HIRs when a request is received so that state agencies can be engaged on the front end.

***Motion:** The Council approves in concept the draft text of the Guidance for Promoting Equity in State Policy and Program Development as submitted on May 13, 2015, directs staff to incorporate changes from today's discussion as necessary, and authorizes the chair to approve the final version for inclusion in the Council's June 2015 Update Report*

***Motion/Second:** Marietta Bobba/Vazaskia Caldwell. Approved unanimously.*

## 9. HEALTH IMPACT REVIEWS

Chair Medicine White Crow referred Council members to the memo behind Tab 9. She asked Ms. Rotakhina to give her presentation (on file behind Tab 9). Ms. Rotakhina's presentation covered the new strength of evidence criteria, the ways that health impact reviews have been becoming more integrated into the legislative process, and the reviews completed this session. Member Franklin asked if a legislator could request a review on something that is not a bill (e.g. draft bill or a proposal not yet in bill format). Ms. Rotakhina said they could make such a request, adding that it was a good approach since there would be ample time to make changes based on review findings.

## 10. UPDATE—CLAS PROJECT

Chair Medicine White Crow referred Council members to the memo behind Tab 10. She asked Yris Lance, Council Staff, to give her presentation (on file behind Tab 10). Her presentation covered activities to promote CLAS standards across agencies and other organizations, the Interagency LEP Workgroup, and activities with the Washington State Coalition for Language Access to develop a Tools for Health Toolkit. Grant activities included sponsoring a flyer for providers that included information and resources on CLAS, developing in-person and online CLAS training, as well as conducting trainings with local health jurisdictions. Member Caldwell asked for clarification about the audience for the online training. Ms. Lance said it was at the employee level. Member Eads said her agency would be interested in including CLAS materials in new employee orientation packets.

Member Caldwell said the Health Care Authority adopted their CLAS policy last week. She said they were working with a strategic planning consultant on their work plan. She said they inserted CLAS language into contracts with managed care organizations. Their CLAS committee has also developed a reporting tool to track accountability. She highlighted that they were beginning efforts to integrate CLAS into the PEBB program and CLAS was adopted as one of their agency's top priorities for their communication plan.

Ms. Lance said she recently met with leadership at the Department of Early Learning and she would be providing a CLAS presentation at an upcoming staff retreat. She also provided some highlights on the work at the Department of Health. Chair Medicine White Crow said the grant ended at the end of August and the new funding opportunity announcement included requirements that were outside the Council's authority. Therefore, the Council would not be able to apply for continued funding. She acknowledged the work that Ms. Lance and Ms. Meehan had done to promote CLAS standards. Member Shepherd thanked Ms. Lance for her work.

## 11. COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS AND UPDATES

Chair Medicine White Crow said that this was an opportunity for Council Members to share any updates of announcements.

Member Eads shared leadership changes at the Washington State Department of Agriculture, including her former boss now serving as the acting deputy director the resignation of the director. She said they have hired a nutritionist, who is developing informational materials and they are asking for input on languages for translation.

Member Caldwell said the Healthier Washington Initiative had a meeting with the Accountable Communities of Health to determine how they are going to work together. The agency's Chief Medical Officer received authorization to certify shared decision-making aids and they convened a subcommittee to look at tools. She said she would send a link to the Diabetes Epidemic Action Report to staff to send out to members. She also provided notice of two upcoming events – the Black Education Strategy Roundtable and the Leaders in Women's Health Summit in Pierce County.

Member Kutz acknowledged the written public comments received. He suggested that as Council members review the comments they keep in mind that when those convicted of a crime are finished serving their term that they are released back into their own communities.

Member Piazza announced that the Environmental Justice screening tool (EJSCREEN) would be released soon and she would send staff information on future webinars to forward to the Council.

Member Franklin shared a new resource from the Commission on African American Affairs—“Creating an Equitable Future in Washington State: Black Well-Being and Beyond.” She said the document is available on the Commission's website

Michael Itti – said the Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs is seeking a proclamation from the Governor to recognize minority mental health month and he offered to coordinate with agencies on activities during the month.

Member Bobba said the Department of Social and Health Services is continuing with their tribal-centric behavioral health project, “Money Follows the Person”. The project identifies how services meet or do not meet the needs of American Indian/Alaska Native populations and if there are needed services to help them return to their communities. She said they are holding a two-day meeting in June to discuss findings and come up with draft recommendations to send to the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare. Next steps will be to implement recommendations.

Erica Hansen announced that the next Health Workforce Council meeting would be on June 24 at the Tacoma Community College.

Member Shepherd provided information on efforts in Kitsap County to work with senior citizens to provide health information to younger generations. She said she is excited about the meeting today and will use what she learned to incorporate into their grant proposals.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair White Crow adjourned the meeting at 3:58 p.m.