



SAINT PAUL – RAMSEY COUNTY  
**COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES**

ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE SAINT PAUL CITY COUNCIL AND THE RAMSEY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101-2260  
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**MINUTES**  
**COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**April 1, 2009**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Patricia Carlson  
Hanna Cooper  
Dorii Gbolo  
Marissa Hendrickson  
Bruce Larson  
Barbara Letourneau  
David Muhovich  
Christopher Mullin  
Regina Rippel  
Kerri-Elizabeth Sawyer  
Pam Schmidt  
Sheri Smith  
Esther Tatley  
Milo Thompson  
Robert Tracy

**MEMBERS EXCUSED**

Nancy Appleton  
Thomas Kottke  
Barbara Lehn

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Catherine Croghan  
Doriscile Everett-O'Neal  
Coral Garner  
Mark Garnett  
John Heiderscheidt  
Jack Rossbach

**STAFF PRESENT**

Sharon Cross  
Rob Fulton  
Richard Ragan

**An Innovative Approach to Promoting Positive Adolescent Parenting**

Sharon Cross, PHN Clinician with the Parent Teen Program, provided a presentation. We have a unique program in Ramsey County, the only one in the state and country. The goals of the program are the following:

1. Healthy teen and child outcomes
2. Secure attachment and healthy interaction between parent and child
3. Delay of subsequent teen births
4. Positive child health indicators such as immunizations, injury prevention, growth and development, child school readiness

5. Regular school attendance and achievement of high school diploma or GED
6. Teen self-sufficiency
7. Interruption of the cycle of intergenerational poverty
8. Positive teen parent decision making

In 1993, the Department asked the question what should we be doing differently with teens in the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP)? If you are on MFIP in Ramsey County you are required to work with a public health nurse. Ramsey County has created a partnership (funding and community) program. David Old's studies have identified the benefits of long term PHN home visit interventions.

The question was asked, "can we measure the success of birth control, are you getting more or less customers?" Sharon answered that there has been a decline in teen pregnancies in the recent past, abortion is more common in the higher income levels and now the teen pregnancy rate is going up again.

Rob said that in Ramsey County the public health nurse is the MFIP worker. We are designated that title and can issue a sanction for non-compliance. We make assessments regarding domestic violence, child/adult handicaps, mental health, learning disabilities. We help resolve problems.

We use an evidence-based model that is well researched. We have very good outcomes. If sanction is remedied between months one and three, chances are they will not become non-compliant again. Teens became overwhelmed with all of the government workers so nurses became their advocates to streamline the system.

Sharon described the demographics of the population being served between July 2003 and December 2007 as 5% age 14, 12% age 15 and 25% age 16. Approximately 50% are African American. Almost 75% have mental health or developmental impairment.

The program's philosophy is that if you are a teen, your "job" is to finish school. We have served clients for as little as six months or as long as five years, the average length of time in the program is 14 months. If the teen is under eighteen years old they must live with a parent or other responsible adult. The program works with fathers of children as much as possible. In 2006, the program did a teen client satisfaction survey. The program has increasing graduation rates.

### **Chair's Report**

Hanna spoke about the SHIP conference she attended. She also asked the members to think about approaches to policy and the role public health should pursue. Policy can be edgy and controversial, but aggressive policy can also be impactful. She described it as one of the arrows in our quiver and sees it as an evolving tool. She posed the question, "how can this committee better understand the role of policy, yet avoid the nanny state." She would like to be able to support the agency to move forward with policy decisions.

## **Director's Report**

Rob mentioned that MFIP is a very complicated system for an already challenged group. There are a number of teens from the program going on to post secondary education. If you graduate from a St. Paul HS you can attend and obtain a 2-year degree for free from the St. Paul College. The St. Paul public schools provide us the attendance data to make certain the teens are attending school. Sanctions can change behavior such as increasing school attendance. We asked the SPPS how the 5 year olds are doing in school readiness success and we saw excellent outcomes. From the teens we learned that some of the schools are not safe places to be and we provided that feedback to the Superintendent. The virtual high school program is targeting teen parents and we would like to see the teens attend school in the classroom for the social benefits.

Rob distributed the latest revision of the Respectful Workplace and Violence Prevention Policy. It was felt by Department staff that before we can go out into the community and discuss this issue we have to have our own house in order. Preventing Sexual Violence is a major theme of Jim McDonough's as president of the Association of Minnesota Counties.

Staff in the West building will be moving to 90 West Plato on May 22. We are funding the move from a fund balance and the move will save money by not having to pay for parking and the lease on a smaller and more efficient space.

The Department is requesting Capital Improvement Plan dollars to fund a permanent household hazardous waste site.

There are numerous budget issues surrounding the 2010/2011 budget such as what is the State going to cut from the counties program aid fund, how much fund balance the County Board will use, how much salary and benefits will increase, can we maintain and possibly acquire more vacant positions, and will the county pursue stimulus package funds. The county may connect the Juenemann building to district heating and cooling to save annual operational costs. The state health improvement program SHIP is expected to receive full funding in the state budget which would bring dollars to the County.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.