



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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MINUTES
COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
June 6, 2012

MEMBERS PRESENT

Bob Tracy, Chair
Kathryn Champion
Luna Cooper
Thomas Kottke
Colleen Quesnell
Karla Sand
Kerri-Elizabeth Sawyer
Nancy Shier
Jill Stewart
Esther Tatley
Mayblia Yangsao

GUESTS

Georgia Harris
Jeanne Johnson
Kristin Raab

STAFF PRESENT

Cheryl Armstrong
Robert Einweck
Zack Hansen
Diane Holmgren
Rina McManus
Richard Ragan
Julie Seiber
Marijo Wunderlich

Welcome Chair Report (Bob Tracy, Chair)

Bob introduced Luna Cooper who will be joining the committee “formally” in the near future. Luna Cooper is the Interim Chief Executive Officer/Chief Operating Officer of the Open Cities Health organization. Luna has been an employee of Open Cities Health Center for many years and has served the organization in many capacities including the role of Performance Improvement Coordinator.

Rina McManus, Director, introduced Diane Holmgren to speak on the topic of senior public health. She used the theme of “living longer and stronger.” The senior public health programs are imbedded in programs throughout the public health department - Environmental Health, Clinical Health Services, House Calls, and Screening and Case Management.

One of the largest agencies that provides senior health care is the Living at Home Block Nursing program. The programs are volunteer-based and provided based on the needs of the neighborhood. Karla Sand mentioned that the programs are only for low income people and county assisted programs. Metro mobility is not a public health sponsored

program. Long-term care consultants determine if people return to or stay in their communities. There are fewer services for people who do not qualify for Medical Assistance. All services have limitations. Esther Tatley testified that the elder waiver program was effective for those individuals that would qualify. Services don't come easily to those individuals just over the poverty line.

Diane mentioned that her team screens about 3,000 clients each year and about 2/3rds are adults and people on Medical Assistance. She stated that they work diligently to find services for the clients they serve. Karla is concerned about individuals who have needs that are non-MA eligible.

Bob mentioned that as the Chairperson, he would make sure that senior issues are integral to all future discussion topics. He realizes that barriers to service are not always financial.

Zack Hansen, Director of Environmental Health, introduced the topic of Air Quality and Extreme Heat Events. He introduced the two speakers from the Minnesota Department of Health, Jeanne Johnson, PhD, who addressed the topic of poor air quality events and Kristin Raab who spoke about Extreme Heat Events and Response.

Jeanne Johnson addressed the topic of fine particle pollution or PM2.5. These particles can cause a pyramid of health effects from lung function changes to death. Air pollution controls have resulted in better health and an increase in life expectancy. The segments of the population most susceptible to the adverse affects of air pollutions are increasing with an aging population. The air quality report card from the American Lung Association that gave Ramsey County a low grade was as the result of several unhealthy air days. The Minnesota Department of Health conducts research and found associations in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area between PM2.5 and respiratory hospitalizations. Air pollution affects health even at low levels. Air pollution affects the entire population. All regions of MN experience poor air quality days (including Ely during forest fires) but MN has been making improvements in air quality.

Kristin Raab addressed the topic of Extreme Heat Events and Response. Extreme heat events are linked to increased rates of emergency department visits, hospitalizations and deaths. Winter temperatures have been rising about twice as fast as annual average temperatures. Since the early 1980's, the temperature has risen slightly over 1 degree F in southern Minnesota and a little over 2 degrees F in northern Minnesota. Heat related illnesses include the following: hyperventilation, heat rash, heat exhaustion, heat edema, heat stroke and death. Heat aggravates existing health conditions increasing stress on organs. The very young and very old, persons with chronic disease and who are on medications are vulnerable populations. The strategies to prevent morbidity and mortality include: awareness education, identifying vulnerable populations, activation of a heat – hot line, designate community cooling centers, and suspension of utility (air conditioning) shut offs. Every heat-related illness and death is preventable.

Director's Report

Director of Public Health Rina McManus gave an update on the Operation Medicine Delivery which took place Sunday, May 6th. In a public health emergency involving anthrax, the U.S. Postal Service would deliver a bottle full of antibiotics to Twin Cities neighborhoods. Director McManus also cited an article which announced that Ramsey County received an "F" for air quality and stated that the staff from Environmental Health will meet with the American Lung Association and the MPCA next week to discuss the report, the findings, and how to take corrective actions.

SHIP Update and Evaluation

Julie Seiber of Public Health gave a progress report on the Ramsey County SHIP Initiatives. She noted that highlights include the Wellness Programs at Saint Paul Public Schools and that the Food and Nutrition Commission will submit reports to the City Council and County Board during the month of May, 2012. Marijo Wunderlich, the SHIP evaluator, detailed the evaluation plan for the SHIP initiatives. She explained how both qualitative and quantitative data must be collected and interpreted. An interim report is due to MDH in November, followed by a final report in August. Marijo asked the committee to review the reports prior to the deadlines.

Next Meeting

September 5, 2012 (as the SHIP Community Leadership Team)

The committee adjourned at 7:00 p.m.