



SAINT PAUL – RAMSEY COUNTY

COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES

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

555 Cedar Street

Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101-2260

651-266-1200



MINUTES COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE March 4, 2009

MEMBERS PRESENT

Nancy Appleton
Patricia Carlson
Hanna Cooper
Coral Garner
Dorii Gbolo
Marissa Hendrickson
Thomas Kottke
Bruce Larson
Barbara Lehn
David Muhovich
Regina Rippel
Jack Rossbach
Kerri-Elizabeth Sawyer
Pam Schmidt
Sheri Smith
Milo Thompson
Robert Tracy

MEMBERS EXCUSED

Catherine Croghan
Doriscile Everett-O'Neal
Mark Garnett
John Heiderscheidt
Barbara LeTourneau
Christopher Mullin
Esther Tatley

GUESTS/STAFF

Rob Fulton
Richard Ragan
Kelinde Carolyn Adernrd
James Garubana
Jennifer Garubana
Angela Ativie
Chichi Osuji
Margaret Agyekum
Fox Nyanjom
Maureen Odera
Lydea Nkwankam

Director's Report

Rob mentioned that he would be leaving the CHSAC meeting early to facilitate a discussion at the Jewish Community Center on the film Unnatural Causes which deals with the topic of health disparities.

The Department's Disease Report for 2007 is now complete. It takes almost an entire year to accumulate all the data related to disease reporting in Ramsey County. Much of the data comes from medical laboratories and other medical providers.

Rob talked about the department's budget for 2009 and coming years. There was a cut in Local Program Aid to the County for fiscal year 2009 of approximately \$7 million. Half of the shortfall was made up when the health insurance plan for employees was negotiated for 2009 saving \$3.5 million. The public health department's share of the remaining amount is approximately \$414,000. To deal with the remaining shortfall a vacancy review committee has been put in place. Staff is encouraged to respond to a survey in survey monkey with ideas on reducing expenses and increasing revenues.

The Department is looking at a possible \$1 million shortfall in 2010. There are many things happening that will influence how we make up this shortfall. First, the State shortfall was not as large as was projected. Second, there is money in the stimulus bill for public health. There is additional money for eligibility and reimbursement rates, there is the 317 Fund for vaccinations, and there is \$650 million going to the CDC. In the President's 2010 budget there are dollars to expand the family-home –visiting-program using a model such as the Nurse Family Partnership. There may also be dollars for an electronic medical records program call HIT. There is rapid movement of hospital and clinics moving to electronic medical systems.

The County Board may delay the budget process until June 2009. As the Department's leadership team starts making budget decisions Rob will be sharing the information with the committee. Saint Paul however is facing some serious budget issues with a \$25 million shortfall and layoffs beginning in April and incentives for early retirement.

An interesting fact is the Twin Cities (Ramsey and Hennepin counties) have the lowest rate of uninsured in the nation at only about 7%.

Space Issues

We are relocating approximately 70 staff from Government Center West to Plato Blvd. on May 22, 2009. We will save \$60k annually by not having to pay a parking bill. We will also be paying for a smaller leased space. This will be the first time for most employees to have new (refurbished) office equipment that is ergonomically designed and color coordinated. The new offices will also have 2 treadmills and a shower available for staff who want to exercise.

Chairperson's Report

All County representatives on the committee should expect some communication with the county clerk. Almost everyone will need to fill out an application and reapply for appointment to the committee. Many appointments expire in June. The chair mentioned she hopes that everyone will want to continue their work on the committee. Members should direct their questions and or concerns to

bonnie.jackelen@co.ramsey.mn.us

Discussion Regarding Draft Recommendations

The committee had some great discussion on the topics presented at the last five meetings.

The first topic discussed was councilman Helgen's desire to support Minneapolis in the banning of trans fats and requiring calorie labeling in Saint Paul at certain food establishments. There was considerable lively discussion on this topic. Dr. Kottke spoke from his perspective as a cardiac surgeon and as a member of the West Metro Medical Society. The CHSAC discussed the following possible recommendations. First they would support the survey as proposed by the Saint Paul City Council, Resolution – 09-238 – Requesting the Department of Safety and Inspections to work with the Minnesota Restaurant Association to survey the restaurant industry regarding trans fat in food preparation and menu labeling practices. The staff is asked to report back to the City Council by April 15, 2009 with the survey results. The CHSAC supports the idea of voluntary participation in the survey process. The committee also requests that the results of the survey be provided to the SPRCDPH and the CHSAC. The committee supports the idea that the Environmental Health Section should provide public education to the restaurant owners via the Thought for Food Newsletter on the topics of trans fat and calorie labeling. Committee members were provided with a draft article and were asked to provide comments by March 13.

The next topic discussed by the committee was whether or not to lend support to the Position Statement adopted by the SPRCDPH assisting schools within Ramsey County to create Smoke Free Campuses. The purpose of the position statement is to protect the health of students attending schools, colleges and universities in Ramsey County. Saint Paul - Ramsey County Department of Public Health encourages all academic campuses to prohibit smoking on their entire campus. The committee endorsed (two nays) the proactive role of the SPRCDPH to protect the rights of non-smokers against involuntary health hazards and supported the role of encouraging and working with campuses (faculty, students and staff) to create smoke-free environments. They want to encourage staff to work with students, faculty and staff on the campuses. As was pointed out by several committee members, the industry targets young people for long-term use of their products and we need to push back against their marketing plans. The committee would like to see this topic discussed again in the next program year (Fall of 2009).

Binge Drinking by Young Adults was vigorously discussed. Committee members were provided a copy of the recommendations created and approved by the Minneapolis Public Health Council. After lengthy discussion there was no consensus built regarding approving the recommendations on binge drinking by young adults. The topic was tabled until additional information becomes available. The committee members did ask staff to keep them apprised of the work of the Minneapolis task force and any possible actions by the Minneapolis City Council. Several members thought irresponsible bar owners were the problem and said the DRAM law/insurance should be used to deal with this problem. They did not want to criminalize drinkers. They hoped for community-based responses and not just relying on enforcement (legislative) tools.

At the annual joint meeting of the CHS Advisory Committees (Minneapolis, Hennepin and Saint Paul-Ramsey County) Minneapolis staff presented their work on the project (DVD and discussion) titled Multicultural Story telling. In the summer of 2006, Minneapolis Public Health developed a gender-balanced community advisory

committee reflective of some of the major racial/ethnic groups residing within the City. The Committee was charged with designing a community engagement process for the well-being of City residents. With the goal of informing the policy and programmatic work of the Department, the community advisors and the Department embarked upon an equal partnership to pilot a multicultural health storytelling project in December 2006. Ten intergenerational health storytelling events were held and videotaped with members of the: African American, American Indian, Caucasian, Hmong, Latino, Somali, and Vietnamese communities. Gender-specific events were held in the African American and Somali communities. The focus of the events was to “talk about a time when the family/community was healthy.” In Summer 2008, a short DVD of these events which highlights six of the dominant health themes was completed.

- Extended kinship networks and social interaction promotes health.
- People can be extremely resilient despite great hardships.
- Health is viewed holistically, with physical, mental, social and spiritual aspects.
- Access to and engagement in physical activities is important to health.
- Racial/cultural pride and maintaining cultural traditions and ties to a cultural community are important to health.
- Culturally-competent and language-specific services are essential.

The results of this pilot project support the overarching need to shift traditional health paradigms focused on individuals and needs towards families and cultural assets in order to eliminate health disparities. MDHFS is committed to taking new policy and programmatic actions with this information and sharing findings with: community members, policy makers, health decision makers and funders.

The SPRCDPH applauds the work of the Minneapolis Health Department in producing this DVD and requests that it be made available to local health departments, community groups and educational institutions. A committee member suggested it might be appropriate programming for public access TV and suggested the Director of ECHO be contacted. Another member requested that it be made public on a web site for downloading. The committee advised staff to request that Minneapolis staff make a presentation to Saint Paul-Ramsey County staff at a public health presents lecture and invite community partners to participate as well.

The final topic discussed was reducing asthma. The committee supported the draft legislation Senate file #178 and House file #264 and asked staff to send a letter of support and take the draft legislation and report back to the committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:41 pm.