



Meeting Summary, May 19, 2009

Commission Attendees: Nancy Berger (Department of Public Health), David Carlow (Department of Developmental Services), Lorraine Carrano (St. Vincent's Hospital), Hillary Waldman for Jeannette DeJesus (Hispanic Health Council), Kelson Ettienne-Modeste (Hartford Public Schools), Ann Ferris (UConn Center for Public Health and Health Policy), Cheryl Harris Forbes (African-American Affairs Commission), Colleen Gallagher (Department of Corrections), Andres Martin (Yale University Medical School), Jose Ortiz (Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services), Werner Oyanadel (LPRAC), Stephanie Paulmeno (public member--Greenwich Department of Health), Natasha Pierre (PCSW), Jim Rawlings (Connecticut NAACP), Marie Spivey (public member—Capitol Workforce Partners), Gregory Stanton (public member--Lawrence & Memorial Hospital), Tory Westbrook, Rev. Michael Williams, Robert Zavoski (DSS)

Other Attendees: Elizabeth Brown (Commission on Children)

Administrative Attendees: Victoria Veltri and Michael Mitchell (Office of the Healthcare Advocate)

Jim Rawlings asked Michael Mitchell to see how many people have missed three meetings or more and report back at the next meeting.

All members were provided with a copy of the meeting agenda. All members and other attendees were asked to sign-in to confirm attendance.

Attendance was taken by Michael Mitchell at the request of the Chair.

Motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda. Agenda was approved.

Jim Rawlings congratulated Cheryl Harris-Forbes on putting together the Health Equity Week events at the LOB.

Jim reminded the commission that the next meeting is the retreat on June 16, 2009 from 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. at the Hispanic Health Council.

Stephanie reported that the communications committee is beginning work on a newsletter. Kelson Ettienne-Modeste said that the committee is in the process of getting

a website together. The committee is looking for funding and someone to develop it. The group is also looking for information from other states, commissioners and those they know. Vicki reminded the commission that the website will have to be a state website and suggested a meeting with the DOIT staff.

Jose Ortiz reported for the policy committee. There needs to be more staff for the policy and legislative components of the committee. Next meeting is at the HHC on May 11th at 2:00 p.m.

Jim Rawlings received a proposal from the facilitator to carry the commission through the first year and which has been sent to the Universal Health Care Foundation and the Connecticut Health Foundation. Outstanding issues remain with funding through the OHA since it is subject to state contracting rules. Jim requested all three committees to provide proposals on how much funding those committees might also need.

Jim Rawlings said letter went to the Governor's office. Vicki reported that no response has been received yet.

Jim Rawlings suggested that the commission adopt letterhead and request the use of the state seal. OHA agreed to submit the request for the use of the state insignia to the secretary of state.

In response to a request, Vicki reported that a half-time position would be needed to staff the position. She also reported that the status of the position in the Appropriations committee budget is unclear since it is subject to negotiations.

The Governor has claimed funds that the Attorney General collects in fines that might have been otherwise directed to the commission.

Jim Rawlings reported that the CHA approached the commission with some funding options. There is a new partnership between the NAACP and the CHA to bring diversity to the hospital performance task force and to individual hospital boards. CHA also has agreed to work on three health issues with NAACP--diabetes, asthma and infant mortality.

Greg Stanton commented on this issue raised at the last meeting about how state agency officials can participate in actions of the commission. The by-laws work group met and discussed the issue. The committee wanted the full participation of state agency designees while also preserving the ability of the commission to act. Commissioners needed the ability to abstain, but not affect the ability of the commission to take action. A

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simple majority of those voting would be sufficient for an action to pass. A quorum would still need to be present at the meeting in order for any action to take place.

The proposed by-law change stated that in terms of voting, there needs to be a simple majority of those present and voting. The language resolves the issue of abstentions preventing with commission action. This language was moved, seconded and approved by the commission. Those who wish to abstain can have the explanations incorporated into the minutes.

There was discussion about the commissioners' desire to amend the statute to allow the participation of members at large that would be representative of the demographics of the state. There were suggestions made that the commission could extend a wider net in terms of committee membership.

The commission then discussed the purpose and goals of the retreat next month at the Hispanic Health Council. Jim Rawlings stated that the three workgroups should be coming to the retreat with their work plans. Jim remarked that the timeline for deliverables is included in the last retreat summary which is available on the website.

Liz Brown discussed the proposed change in the definition of medical necessity in the Medicaid program and the need to address this issue. Rob Zavoski explained the DSS position on the definition.

Liz Brown also mentioned Sustinet and the CT Health Partnership Bills and recommended that the policy committee examine the bills.

The meeting was adjourned.

Next Meeting: Retreat at Hispanic Health Council, June 16, 2009, 9:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m.

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