

Minutes of the November 12, 2008
Minority Health Advisory Council (MHAC) Teleconference
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Members Attending:

D. Ann Travis Honeycutt, M.D., Co-Chair
Pamela Craft
Katherine Cummings
Chaiwon Kim & Lindsey Romasanta
Orlin Marquez
Sonia Alvarez-Robinson
Dan Salinas, M.D.
Tish Towns

Members Absent:

George Rust, M.D., Co-Chair
Jaime Altamirano, M.D.
Juanita Cone, M.D.
Mel Lindsey

James Peoples, OHI Executive Director

Co-Chairman Dr. Honeycutt greeted members and obtained a roll call of members present. She then turned the floor over to Executive Director James Peoples who talked about the work completed for 2008 and referenced the agenda to set the framework for what the council wants to set forth for 2009. He began talking about the Health Equity Grant Initiative. The feedback has been tremendous, in and out-of-state.

As a follow-up to the report, James first commended the council for their work on the report. He would also like to see feedback on how to help build the collaborative efforts by county to address disparity issues in their communities. He proposed a possible addendum to the report in response to additional information and questions that have been proposed as a result of community feedback from the report—both positive and negative. The report received a lot of media inquiries as well.

To give a status on the health equity grants, resulting from the disparities initiative, James informed council members that the Department received over 50 applications for the health equity grants. A total of nine grants were awarded across the state ranging from \$75K-100K. In addition, monies from the health equity grants were used to fund eight mini-grants under OHI's HIV/AIDS TAKE Project. These grants ranged from \$20K-30K.

Lindsey Romasanta, coordinator on health disparities and advocacy for the Center for Pan Asian Services, asked about the status of the update on the Asian population data for the on-line version of the health disparities report. James Peoples responded that the update has not been made but the OHI will follow-up with Dr. George Rust regarding this issue. As soon as an updated is made, he will inform the council.

Council member, Katherine Cummings asked if there was going to be a press release announcing the awards. James Peoples responded that there has been no discussion around a press release and that there probably would not be one.

Subsequently, OHI staff member Kristal Ammons stated that she would forward additional information about the grantees and their proposed projects with more detailed information.

James Peoples addressed further issues with the report. One of the problems encountered was the lack of data for the Asian population and data on oral health was limited. He explained that some of the data was very difficult to collect despite our efforts to do so. He stated that the council would try to address this issue and possibly have this developed as an addendum to the report. Some groups have committed to helping the council obtain some of the information not included in the initial report. The OHI will identify these groups and work with them to develop the addendum.

James Peoples asked council members if this would be an issue they would like to address for their 2009 agenda.

Council Member Dr. Salinas stated that the scope of what we do is fairly narrowed in focus. James Peoples agreed that we don't want to get bogged down or too broad in our focus. Council Member Pamela Craft agreed with keeping it focused and asked what is it that people wanted to see added to the report.

James Peoples responded that people wanted to see more data on oral health access by race; and more accurate or recent data around the Asian and Hispanic/Latino populations.

Lindsey Romasanta agreed that data on the Asian population is very limited. Kristal Ammons stated that Chaiwon and her group have met with Co-Chairman George Rust and that some progress has been made in developing concepts for additional data and reports.

Council member Orlin Marquez stated the best way to move forward is to identify the people who brought up concerns about the data and have them work on this area of difficulty to assist the council with much needed and hard to obtain data.

Council member Chaiwon Kim stated the report was disappointing because of the lack of information on the Asian population and very much wants to see the current Asian data/information supplemented. James Peoples responded that the council is sensitive to the issue and, as stated earlier, will work on this issue.

Kristal Ammons will get names of organizations to help collect this information. James Peoples said we should have or identify these groups by the next meeting.

Dr. Salinas asked was there anything else in the report that lead to concern around disease disparities that might require further studies. Is there something else that we discovered that we need to further research regarding health disparities? James Peoples responded that we didn't necessarily find anything in the report, but people were talking about those issues during some of the Community Conversations meetings held across the state.

Pamela Craft asked were there any concerns regarding oral cancer, diagnosis, etc. from the Community Conversations. James Peoples responded that some questions around oral health and its relationship to other diseases were raised. People wanted more information on oral health and oral health data but nothing specific to oral cancer.

Council member Sonia Alvarez-Robinson stated that it would be good if we, the council, can go to those counties that have done well to determine how we can duplicate or replicate their efforts in counties that did not grade so well.

Lindsey Romasanta asked for a timeline for identifying the supplement piece for the Asian population. James Peoples responded that we can not commit to a time at this meeting. He will discuss with OHI staff and provide the information to be discussed at the next meeting.

Dr. Honeycutt asked about the racial diversity of the counties that did well in the report. James responded that some of them were. Honeycutt asked how can we look at these counties and target them as a best practice sites. James Peoples responded that that project could very well be an agenda item for 2009.

Moving on to the next agenda item, James Peoples introduced the concept for the development of the Health Equity Academy and referred members to the hand out. He stressed that this is only a proposal and a draft in response to community feedback regarding the report. Communities wanted to know how can they and Georgia work together to address health disparities. The concept of the Academy would be a training program, toolkit or project around understanding disparities, and working together and building local health coalitions. Strategic plans might be developed to build upon initial programs and then working on areas that would be locally driven to address their community needs.

James asked that members read the document and provide feedback on whether they want to pursue this effort or if there are any suggested changes and/or additions that could further develop the concept. He asked for comments to be sent via email. Responses will be discussed at the next meeting.

Chaiwon Kim liked the idea, but inquired as to what would happen next.

James Peoples responded by saying ideally, the response would be legislative participation in the local coalition to address and improve health disparities in their communities. At least, that is the response we would like to see after the plan is developed.

Kristal Ammons discussed “A Year in Review”. She stated that the MHAC had other agenda items that were tabled while developing the report; however, understanding the focus of the report, there were some agenda items that were not addressed, such as, the hospital survey supplement and the Limited English Proficiency Statement. She went over the accomplishments of the MHAC citing the guiding principles, the vision and mission statement.

Kristal Ammons asked council members what the office can do to help the council shape its focus as the New Year approaches to become more effective as a group.

Orlin Marquez suggested that we set up a priority project that we want to see happening from the MHAC at the next meeting. James agreed with Orlin.

Orlin shared information regarding the MHAC’s Language Access Policy statement. He stated that his concerns after vetting to key stakeholders are implementation and the identification of tools needed. He also discussed MING’s (Minority Interpreters Network of Georgia) efforts to develop a registry for medical interpreters in Georgia. They have received permission from the state of Oregon to replicate

and tailor the registry to Georgia's needs. He asked that Kristal Ammons send the document to members for feedback and whether this is something the MHAC would want to work on.

With no further items on the agenda, James asked council members for dates for the next face to face meeting. The group decided on January 29, 2009 at 10:00 a.m.

There being no further items on the agenda, the meeting was adjourned.

Items for Follow-up

- ✓ James and OHI staff will follow-up with Dr. Rust regarding the status of the update on additional Asian data to be added to the report.
- ✓ Kristal Ammons will get the names and contacts of those organizations willing to assist with the additional data for the Asian population.
- ✓ James Peoples will report back to the MHAC members the timeline for obtaining the additional data on the Asian population.
- ✓ Kristal Ammons will email members a copy of Oregon State's medical interpreter's registry_to members for their review and input.