

Minutes of the April 23, 2009

***Minority Health Advisory Council (MHAC)***

**10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

**Members Attending:**

D. Ann Travis Honeycutt, M.D., Co-Chair  
Pamela Craft  
Katherine Cummings  
Chaiwon Kim  
Mel Lindsey  
Sonia Alvarez-Robinson  
Tish Towns

**Members Absent:**

George Rust, M.D., Co-Chair  
Jaime Altamirano, M.D.  
Juanita Cone, M.D.  
Orlin Marquez  
Dan Salinas, M.D.

James Peoples, OHI Executive Director

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Co-Chairman Dr. D. Ann Travis Honeycutt opened the meeting, and since no quorum was not yet present, Dr. Honeycutt as Council member Sonia Alvarez-Robinson to begin the meeting.

Council member Sonia Alvarez-Robinson discussed the activities of the Hispanic Health Coalition of Georgia (HHCGA) and potential ways that the Minority Health Advisory Council and the Office of Health Improvement can link up with the HHCGA to be more productive in the Hispanic community. Due to audio difficulties, some discussion not captured. Handouts of HHCGA's mission, vision and strategic goals were distributed to council members for their information. Mrs. Alvarez-Robinson asked members for additional ideas or ways to work with HHCCA. She will bring input received from Council back to coalition members.

At this time, Dr. Honeycutt called for the approval of the minutes from the last meeting. The minutes were approved as written.

Council member Pamela Craft introduced Dr. Judy Greenlea Taylor with the Georgia Dental Society, to discuss oral health disparities and possible initiatives for the Council and the Office of Health Improvement to bring about awareness of the benefits of good oral health.

Dr. Taylor stated that public perception is the number one call to action. Her passion is to bring about awareness and education about the importance of good oral health to communities, particularly minority communities and how we need to take a holistic approach when trying to fight health disparities. Poor oral health contributes to cardiovascular disease, diabetes, infant mortality, and a host of other diseases affecting the minority population. Dr. Taylor is excited about the proposed Minority Health Academy- to be implemented by OHI- because it can be an excellent tool to train community leaders, organizations, etc. about the importance of good oral health.

Also in attendance, Dr. Arlene Lester, Division of Health and Human Services and a dentist, stated that 80% of oral diseases are in 25% of the population - African Americans. She also stresses the urgent need for the healthcare industry to recognize the importance of good oral health.

Dr. Honeycutt requested that if Drs. Taylor and Lester have any other specific initiatives that MHAC might be able to tap into to contact Council member Pamela Craft.

James Peoples informed the Council that OHI will take additional step in increasing awareness by distributing oral health information through our outreach activities, to include health fairs, etc. James requested OHI staff member Kristal Ammons and Council member Pam Craft to work with Drs. Lester and Taylor on a possible good oral health awareness campaign here in Georgia.

Kristal Ammons spoke on behalf of absent Council member, Orlin Marquez, and stated that MING is expected to maintain the registry. Mr. Marquez asked members for their feedback on the standards that MING put out. Mr. Marquez will contact Council member Chaiwon Kim. OHI will get the medical language out addressing the liability for personnel that provide health care services (survey).

The next item on the agenda is regarding the OHI Logic Model. James informed members that the logic model is basically an agenda for the OHI for the upcoming year. He asked Council members for their input and if they would like to see other initiatives to email him their suggestions.

James Peoples proceeded to give the Director's Update. He updated members on the progress and purpose of the Georgia Minority Health Academy, which was created out of the response from the Community Conversations from the Georgia Health Equity Initiative report. Hopefully funding will be provided by stimulus money. Dr. Lester will provide assistance as needed with the Academy.

James updated the members regarding the Public Health transition. DHR's Public Health will become a part of the Department of Community Health. The Public Health director will be appointed by the Governor. An advisory council has been established to monitor this transition and will make a final determination in December of 2010 to determine if the Public Health will remain under DCH or become a separate state agency.

James stated that OHI is on the look out for the availability of Federal stimulus money. OHI wants to expand the health disparities grant program so that we can outreach to more communities and/or add to those current grantees. James asked that members also be on the look out.

James also updated members about the Georgia Volunteer Health Care Program. This program extends state-sponsored Sovereign Immunity protection to providers who volunteer their professional skills to uninsured and low-income Georgia residents. This program now resides under the Office of Health Improvement. He requested the assistance of council members to help increase the number of professional participants. The program now covers 55 clinics across the state to include 21 counties. There are multiple sites in some counties. The goal is to have at least one clinic in every county in Georgia.

Members decided that the next meeting will be Wednesday, June 24, 2009.

There being no further business on the agenda, the meeting adjourned at 12:00 noon.

**Items for Follow-Up**

- ✓ James Peoples asked Lynn to email standards to council members for their input. Lynn to get email from Kristal.
- ✓ James to provide more information on GVHCP.