

Minority Health Advisory Commission (MHAC)
Meeting Minutes
January 7, 2011

NOTE: These minutes are the summary of the meeting convened by the Minority Health Advisory Commission. The complete and accurate record is the tape recording of the meeting. The meeting was held from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Building C, Room C1A, Denver, Colorado.

Members Present: Leona Abdullah-Allen, Theron Bell (MHAC Co-Chair), Patricia Iwasaki, Dr. Stephen Meeks, Dr. Lisa Miller, Dr. Diego Osuna (MHAC Chair), Dolores Pitman, and Lucio Torres-Florez

Absent Members: Thomas Duran and Guadalupe Salazar

Staff Present: Rachel Carmen, Barbara Quintana, Kim Phi, John Romero Campbell, and Deanna Butler

Guests Present: Stephanie Kuhn, Indira Gujral, Miranda Meadow, all from the Prevention Services Division of CDPHE and Maria Zepeda-Sanchez from the CDPHE's Executive Director's Office.

Meeting called to order at 10 a.m.

Introductions were made and the minutes for December 3, 2010 were read. There was discussion on the voting power of ex-officio members. Lucio Torrez-Flores made a motion to approve the minutes, and Patricia Iwasaki seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

New Business

1. **Introduction and Welcome of New Commissioner, Leona Abdullah-Allen:** On behalf of Executive Director Martha Rudolph, Dr. Lisa Miller presented Commissioner Abdullah-Allen with a formal certificate of appointment. The commission welcomed the new commissioner, who is from Colorado Springs and was highly recommended by former MHAC Chair Dr. Anthony Young.
2. **Healthcare Reform Implementation Update:** Lorez Meinhold, Senior Health Policy Analyst for Governor Ritter spoke to the commission. She said she was appointed in April to be the Director of Health Performance Implementation by the governor, who also issued an executive order to create that director position as well as create an interagency board on the implementation of healthcare reform. Ms. Meinhold encouraged the commission to visit the website colorado.gov/healthreform which contains all sorts of information on healthcare reform. She also conducted a questions and answers session.
3. **Discuss and Approve Possible MHAC Recommendations to CDPHE Executive Director:** The matrix which will track commission discussions and formal recommendations was discussed. There are five priority areas which will

be cross-referenced with MHAC recommendations. Dr. Osuna tabled voting on each recommendation until a future meeting. Ms. Iwasaki made a motion to adopt this practice and have it as a standing agenda item to discuss specific recommendations. Mr. Torres-Florez seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

4. **Dialogue with Lt. Governor-Elect Joe Garcia:** Dr. Osuna welcomed Lt. Governor-Elect Garcia and provided him with some history of the commission and the Office of Health Disparities. The commissioners and OHD staff introduced themselves. Lt. Governor-Elect Garcia said health disparities are important and so are disparities in terms of representation among health professionals from communities of color. He spoke about discussions he has had for many years about studies that show incredible disparities in diabetes, obesity, cancer, heart disease, strokes especially among the African American, Hispanic and Native American populations. He spoke in personal terms how health disparities have affected his own family. He said he is optimistic about healthcare reform and thinks it is long overdue and critically important especially in communities of color. Dr. Osuna said he is heartened by the Lt. Governor's efforts to encourage students of color to attain higher education especially in the healthcare arena. Lt. Governor-Elect Garcia said it is critical to get more young people of color into the health professions; getting them through high school and enrolled in colleges. And ensuring they take the right types of courses in high school so they have a strong science and math foundation and are not poorly prepared when arriving at college. Emphasis needs to start at early stages of their education. Lucio Torres-Florez said one of the concerns the MHAC has voiced is the department's senior management's low minority representation which has been consistently low within the last 10-15 years and continues to decrease. Lt. Governor-Elect Garcia said he is hopeful that with Dr. Chris Urbina's leadership there will be steady progress in this area. Dolores Pitman spoke about the annual MHAC town hall meetings which inform communities about the OHD and the MHAC but most importantly hearing about the communities' concerns, conditions of their health care and any suggestions they have how the commission can help them. Ms. Iwasaki invited the Lt. Governor-Elect to join the commission at the next town hall meeting in Durango in June. Lucio Torres-Florez said that former Lt. Governor Jane Norton held a seat on the commission in the past and he invited Lt. Governor-Elect Garcia to attend the monthly MHAC meetings or to send a representative from his office. Theron Bell spoke about the Interagency Health Disparities Leadership Council and asked him or a representative from his office to sit on the council and to encourage other directors of other state agencies to participate on the council. Mr. Torres-Florez said the Health Disparities Grant Program has funded innovative programs which have received positive evaluations. Dr. Miller talked about the challenge of addressing long-term issues with a one- or two-year grant that can't be expected to show immediate changes, but that is what the JBC requests and how educating the legislators is important. Dr. Osuna said the commission looks forward to the new administration's leadership and wished success for all of the state's communities. Lt. Governor-Elect Garcia said he is looking forward to attending the town hall meeting in June and that health disparities are of personal and professional interest to him.

5. **Health Disparities Grant Program Review Packets:** Barbara Quintana and Kim Phi distributed the review packets to the commissioners for the Health Disparities Grant Program review. Ms. Quintana explained the contents of the packets and answered questions. She said there are 23 eligible applications. Dr. Meeks made a motion that the commission meet for one day to review the grant applications from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Dr. Osuna seconded the motion. The commission voted 6 in favor and one abstention. The motion carried. The review will be February 4 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Old Business

1. **Other Discussion:** Ms. Iwasaki said she made changes to the strategic plan and e-mailed the document to the commission, but has been having problems with her computer and will try to e-mail it again. John Romero Campbell said Google Docs cannot be hosted by a state e-mail and there was discussion about how to edit the document, which is very close to being finalized. Dr. Osuna asked that the document be sent via e-mail for review by the commission and if there is time at the next meeting, after the review, it can be discussed.
2. **Commissioners' Reports/Updates and Announcements:** Ms. Iwasaki said 2040 Partners for Health as well as the Be Well Stapleton Foundation Taking Neighborhood Health to Heart and the University of Colorado Denver primarily Family Medicine and Health and Behavioral Sciences are hosting a health summit in the five neighborhoods that are Northeast Denver and Northwest Aurora the first weekend of February. The surgeon general will give a keynote address and there will be several different research presentations that have been done in the locality. She encouraged all the commissioners to attend. Dr. Miller reminded everyone about the Rural Health Care Program grant which was sent out via e-mail.

Meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Submitted by Rachel Carmen