



Maternal and Child Health Advisory Task Force Meeting Summary Friday, August 11, 2023

Members Present:

Carolyn Allshouse
Bryn Basri
Vanessa Bembridge
Sameerah Bilal-Roby
Tricia Brisbane
Sarah Brown
Najoicia Elmore
Rachel Gilbertson
Stephanie Graves
Rachael Joseph
Stephanie de Sam Lazaro
Marie Malinowski
Gene Nichols
Meredith O'Brien
Tamiko Ralston
Jamie Stang
Lindsey Wimmer

Members Absent:

Paige Bowen
Kara Hamilton-McGraw
Michelle O'Brien
Deb Purfeerst
Sadie Swenson
Megan Waltz

MDH Staff

Nicole Brown
Judy Edwards
Jennie Lippert
Maria Sarabia
Elizabeth Taylor-Schiro
Lynn Thompson
Anne Walaszek
Noya Woodrich

Welcome, Introductions and Chair Remarks

Sameerah Bilal-Roby, Task Force Chair-elect, welcomed everyone and introductions were made. It was moved and seconded to approve the August meeting agenda and June meeting summary.

Work Plan Committee Update

Gene Nichols shared that the Work Plan committee met last month to determine that the group was grounded in the work plan and any edits that had occurred had been updated. He also noted that it is a good process for the task force to review the work plan since the initial section of the document provides an overview of what the task force's purpose is and that would be very beneficial to the new members. The committee reviewed tasks that needed to be accomplished. He encouraged everyone to review the work plan in case there are any areas they would like to be involved in. Also please let Judy know if there is a subject area you might like included in the work plan.

CFH Updates

MDH Assistant Commissioner of Health Improvement Maria Sarabia was introduced by Noya Woodrich. Maria provided a high-level overview of her experience to the task force.

Noya reported that MCH section manager Karen Fogg has accepted a position at the Margaret A. Cargill Foundation overseeing their international maternal and child health work. Judy Edwards has been serving as interim section manager. Noya will start scheduling interviews for Karen's position next week.

We are in the process of preparing for the upcoming legislative session. This is a policy session. Our division has submitted three ideas for consideration.

1. Due to the legalization of cannabis in the last session, CFH will be receiving funds for fiscal year 2025 for the use of cannabis by pregnant and breastfeeding persons to promote education on this. Unfortunately, the funding does not include administrative funds to support this education. We will be appealing that decision in the upcoming session.
2. The Family Planning Special Projects grant program has been renamed Reproductive Health and this program would require parental notification if a minor was seeking or referred to abortion services. This language was kept in but we will be requesting this language be removed in the next session.
3. CFH is partnering with Health Promotion and Chronic Disease (HPCD) on a sickle cell proposal that would include funding. This would allow us to monitor and track this disease in Minnesota.

The division is also helping the commissioner prepare for tribal consultations this fall that includes a list of items to propose to tribes. CFH is looking to ensure our tribal funds are being administered in a way that makes the most sense for the tribes.

CFH received substantial grant funds that need to be distributed. An application for infant mortality prevention funding will be posted on Monday, August 14 in which tribes are the only eligible applicants. In addition, an RFP for the infant mortality prevention funds should be published in early September non-profit and local public health organizations are eligible to apply. The goal is to have all funds distributed by January 1, 2024.

We are also working on distributing our Reproductive Health funds which is double the funding that we normally receive for these grant projects. This RFP will also be posted in September.

There are also additional RFPs, one for the Model Jails program continuation and expansion.

Betty Hubbard MCH Leadership Award Committee Update

Lindsey Wimmer noted that the Betty Hubbard Awards will be given in October this year. The awards had historically been presented in December of each year. There will be one round in the application process versus two rounds in the past. The application has moved to an online format (REDCap) for ease of use. The nomination forms have been distributed. Judy noted that the distribution lists have been expanded to include domestic violence shelters.

I-MOM Perinatal Task Force Subcommittee Updates

Subcommittee co-chair Najoicia Elmore updated members on the current progress of the subcommittee which includes:

- Provided input on the creation of a data dashboard on perinatal health.
- Finalized community agreements.
- In-person gathering hosted by the Division of Indian Works.
- Compensation contracts finalized.
- MAD (Management Analysis and Development) will be facilitating strategic planning.

Future initiatives include:

- Environmental scan/analysis of perinatal health recommendations and strategies.
- Perinatal health gap analysis.
- Finalized draft of strategic plan.
- Workgroups on specific topic areas will be created based on priorities outlined in the strategic plan.

Najoicia invited additional members to join the subcommittee.

How to Become a More Effective Group Discussion

Sameerah asked the group what is getting in the way of joining subcommittees. One member shared that they would be more available moving forward. They also mentioned technical issues in Webex meetings.

The question of subcommittees being virtual or in-person was raised and what members prefer. Judy noted there are three standing subcommittees besides the executive committee and those are the membership committee, workplan committee and commissioner report committee. Other subcommittees/workgroups have been created as needed. More volunteers are needed for the commissioner's report committee.

Another member shared that they needed guidance on what exactly the task force is doing and what kinds of recommendations should they be making to the commissioner.

ACTION ITEM: Judy will provide the task force with the list of subcommittees and the responsibilities of each.

ACTION ITEM: Poll for members on having virtual or in-person meetings.

Mentorship/Engagement Discussion

A member shared their question on how to obtain more engagement from task force members and possibly having each member category meet outside of regular task force meetings. There could be more engagement if members felt a stronger connection to the task force and one option would be connection through sub-categories. This could be obtained through an interim meeting. These may be held once or twice per year and possibly led by an executive committee member and could be informal.

This topic will be tabled until the next meeting as it requires discussion and planning.

Member News and Issues

Sameerah shared that the Wilder Foundation will be hosting a Native American forum with UCare to discuss health and wellbeing. On September 13-15 is the [Black and Brown Birthing Summit](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2023-black-and-brown-birthing-summit-tickets-680287166227) (<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2023-black-and-brown-birthing-summit-tickets-680287166227>) which will also be held at Wilder. They are expecting national attendees as well as healthcare systems, on the ground perinatal community, and legislators from the black caucus. September 13 is a pre-conference which will be held by UCare and Dr. Julia Joseph-DiCaprio will be present. Please mark your calendars.

Meredith shared that she as well as several MDH staff attended the Maternal Health Innovation Symposium on August 2-3 in Minneapolis. This is a national conference and federal panels such as HRSA and MCHB and MDH's MCH team attended. Indigenous leaders were also on a panel. She noted that it was an amazing, free conference and had very good breakout sessions. It was very inclusive and focused on maternal health outcomes, reducing disparities and was focused on promoting health and racial equity. It will be held annually, and she encourages members to attend.

ACTION ITEM: Email the items that were in the chat with the task force.

Adjourn (next meeting – Friday, October 13, 2023)