



**Rhode Island Department of Health**  
Three Capitol Hill  
Providence, RI 02908-5094

[www.health.ri.gov](http://www.health.ri.gov)

## **MINORITY HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Providence Housing Authority 50 Laurel Hill Avenue Providence, RI 02909**

**September 22, 2008**

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**Members Present:** Aleatha Dickerson, Yvette Mendez, Helena Friedmann, Julie Rawlings, Dannie Ritchie, Deborah Perry, Mary Falvey

**Members Excused Absent:** Janet Anderson, Norma Hardy, Debbie Correia Morales

**Members Unexcused Absent:** Vinnie Velazquez, Donna Huntley-Newby, Maria Barros, Maria Sansiveri, Betty Bernal, Den Soch.

**HEALTH Staff Present:** Carrie Bridges, Rilwan Feyisitan

**Guests/Presenters:** Bartola Ovalles, Sorral Devine

### **I. Call to Order**

Aleatha Dickerson

### **II. Welcome from Host Agency**

Bartola Ovalles, Manager Resident Service Programs

### **III. Review of Minutes**

June 23, 2008 Meeting

### **IV. Old Business / Minority Health Advisory Committee Updates**

#### **A. OMH State Update:**

- There is a hope to fill 2 positions in the office (Office Chief and Health Disparity Specialist. Rilwan Feyisitan, Jr. is currently serving as Acting Chief, Office of Minority Health
- There was a cut of approximately \$4,000 from the federal OMH award. This is year 4 of a 5 year award currently budgeted at \$154,812. The current state funding allocation is \$448,108

- HEALTH received an award of \$370,000 from CDC to address emergency preparedness among special populations. The Health Disparity and Access to Care Team will coordinate the implementation of the funding. The funding has 4 main components. 1) Communications to special populations –printing in alternative formats, translations, and purchasing EP Go-kits. 2) Develop training to expand the knowledge base and competency of emergency managers, planners and responders, community leaders, and individuals with special needs to effectively prepare for, respond to, and recover from public health emergencies. 3) Assessment of statewide emergency response and communications plans, and develop standard operating procedures for special populations. 4) Expansion of the Special Needs Emergency Registry to incorporate GIS, link to the state’s 911 system, and link Hasbro Children’s hospitals Frequent flyer identification of children with special healthcare needs program.
- HEALTH is attempting to build capacity to address charity care regulations. A medical consultant will be hired to coordinate response to complaints.
- The CLAS work group has been working on a system for bulk purchasing for assessment of bilingual capacity. Also, a webinar was scheduled to be provided to hospital personnel by JCAHO on Sept 29<sup>th</sup>.
- HEALTH has been under taking a process of Chronic Care integration feasibility. They are early in the process and updates will be made available at future meetings.

## **B. Review and update of current MHAC Priorities**

- Priority 1: Elimination of Health disparities-1) Increased infrastructure of OMH and partnerships with other state agencies. 2) Prioritize work around CLAS mandate implementation. 3) Expand data analysis work beyond current fact sheets. Desire to provide overall statewide burden summary.
- Priority 2: CLAS Standards- Health Disparity Specialist position that coordinated this work is now vacant. Work is continuing through other OMH staff.
- Priority 3: Health Disparity data base- there are several limitations on internal HEALTH resources to develop this system at this time. The developed HEALTH Data query system maybe an alternative in the current situation.
- Priority 4: Training and capacity-building services to community based organizations-AHEC in coordination with CCRI has developed an 8 week capacity building training.
- Priority 5: Link RI agencies doing racial/ethnic disparities work. - OMH serves as a formal or in formal link to many ongoing initiatives. However, a formal mechanism to coordinate the work among CBO’s, academia, research bodies, and administrative/policy agencies has not been developed.

- Priority 6: Community Benefits-Work to expand the understanding of the Charity care regulations is forthcoming. The regulations have expanded to include annual reporting by each hospital.
- Priority 7: Research and the translation of research into practice. There was no new information to report at this time.
- Priority 8: There were no plans to establish a new office or program at this time. There has been limited discussion about the possibility of a Office of gender Equity in a more favorable economic period.

## **V Partner Updates**

- Aleatha reported on an upcoming seminar on diabetes and visual impairments. That seminar is scheduled for Oct 24<sup>th</sup> at the Warwick Public Library. It is geared toward Diabetes Outreach Educators

## **VI Sub-committee Updates/ Discussion**

- No reports were made for this meeting

## **VII Open Comments / Discussion**

- There were no comments offered. The meeting was adjourned.

## **VII Next Meeting**

Meetings are on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month from 9:00-11:00 am. The next meeting is on Monday, October 27<sup>th</sup>

Location nriAHEC Office:  
1 Cumberland Plaza, (Blockbuster Building)  
2nd Floor  
Woonsocket, RI 02895