

**Rhode Island Department of Health
Women's Health Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes - November 7, 2007**

Members Present: Jessica Marfeo (Teen Ambassador), Marlene McCarthy, Catherine Graziano, Yvonne Freeman, Marie Ghazal, Iris Tong, Kate McCarthy-Barnett, Janet Searles, Cynthia Rosengard, Melanie Duhamel (Teen Ambassador), Carrie Bridges (ex officio), Kristina Diamond, Christine Ryan, Margaret Koch, Danielle Denis, Katie Albert (Teen Ambassador)

Welcome, Introductions & Approval of Minutes from Sept. 20, 2007

Kate McCarthy-Barnett welcomed members. Introductions of members and guests were conducted. Minutes from September 20, 2007 were accepted.

Appointment of Chair & Vice Chair

Unanimous approval of appointments of Iris Tong and Marie Ghazal as Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively, of WHAC. Committee agreed to change the meeting time to 3:00 – 5:00 pm (instead of 4:00 – 6:00 pm).

Role of OWH & WHAC

Carrie Bridges reviewed the role of the WHAC as an advisory committee to the Director of Health and the Office of Women's Health and the role of the Office of Women's Health to staff the Committee. WHAC discussed options for decision-making and agreed to adopt a

consensus model that allows the Chair to accept the “sense of the meeting”.

Project Updates & Next Steps

Janet Searles gave an update from the Planning Committee for the Women’s Health Conference planned for May 2008, sponsored by the Office of Women’s Health, Women and Infants’ Hospital, and other partners. Conference has a target audience of community members instead of health care professionals.

Iris Tong summarized the events leading up to the WHAC considering submitting a letter to the Director of Health regarding access to emergency contraception at RI pharmacies. The committee members agreed by consensus that this is an appropriate topic to be addressed by the WHAC as it pertains to women’s access to healthcare. The WHAC outlined additional questions to be answered before deciding whether to submit a letter to the Director of Health.

Staff Report

Carrie Bridges described the continued organizational placement and work of the Office of Women’s Health in light of the re-organization in the Department of Health. Carrie Bridges announced the placement of Marian Mehegan, DDS, MPH as the Regional Women’s Health Coordinator for the DHHS Office on Women’s Health. Ms. Mehegan will be invited to join WHAC meetings as an ex-officio member.

Announcements

Information was distributed about the RI Osteoporosis Coalition.

Next Meeting Date

December 5, 2007