

**Commission for Health Advocacy and Equity**  
**Meeting Notes**  
**Date: August 21, 2013**  
**Time: 2:00 pm -4:00 pm**  
**Location: R.I Department of Health State Laboratories**

*“Making strides to address health equity and the elimination of health disparities in Rhode Island”*

**I) Call to Order**

Meeting called to order by Commission Chair, Dr. Tanya Dailey

**II) April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2013 Meetings Minutes Approval**

Meeting minutes are approved by Commission Members

**III) Comments on Agenda**

No additional comments provided

**IV) Housing Resources Commission Guests Updates**

**Purpose:** To tackle concerns from previous meeting in December about healthy housing and Refugee Housing

**Initiatives of Healthy Housing**

**Community Development:**

- State development block grant program to support housing rehabilitation for home owners that have low to moderate income.
- About 2 to 3 million dollars a year is used towards this purpose,
- Code violations like to make their homes more energy efficient and healthy,
- Works towards the elimination of lead paint hazards, job creation and housing development efforts as well.

**Housing Resources Commission:**

- Lead Hazard Reduction program support home owners and project sponsors to eliminate lead hazards.
- Resources are also powered into Rehab programs like Weatherization Funds center, USDA. Housing Rehabilitation funds that are available.

## **Refugee Housing:**

Proposals from developers to:

- Improve housing this population because they tend to be an un-identified vulnerable population.
- Lead Hazard Education in the state for the public and contractors.
- There are State agencies charged with the mitigation compliance with the Lead Hazard Mitigation Law, which is attempting to reduce lead poisoning in the state.

## **Refugee Task Force in 2008**

Proposals made:

- Finding an alternative affordable housing for families
- Educate landlords on Landlord Tenants laws in Rhode Island
- Offer neighborhood opportunities NSP Units
  - West Elmwood Housing: Provided a project for several families to live in.

The Commission agreed to:

- Address coordinated policies relating to healthy housing in practical terms
- Mental Health and substance abuse issues
- A health equity plan for the state, focusing on the social environmental determinants of health and equities and issues in these areas.
- Making people care about the well- being of their communities and looking at the language that is used to get in each household to let them know it is for their own good.
- How the outreach will look like and for communities to take ownership of the initiatives that are being put in place.

## **Recommendations for Refugee Housing:**

- Agencies that have direct contact with the Refugee population should let the Housing Resource Commission know about the different challenges and barriers concerning affordable housing opportunities and address them accordingly.
- Policies can be changed to respond to the specific needs of specific populations.

Refugee Health Committee: Address issues that are systematically being raised at the committee level that needs to be brought up as a trend or a policy that needs to be evaluated.

## **V. Healthy People 2020 Discussion Wrap Up**

- Data Sub-Data Committee to review in detail or come up with 5-6 different areas and bring it back to the committee at large to vote on top three areas of focus for this year.
- Review Equity Profile of Rhode Island additional resources in terms of data collection.

## **VI HEALTH Updates**

- Department of Health has a contract with Providence Plan to help out with all the data being discussed and coming up with indicators.
- The deadline to report to the governor and general assembly is in August 2014.
- Proposing sub-committees to meet on a monthly basis to meet before the August deadline. List of people on sub-committees are on blue paper. More volunteers needed

### **Leaders of Sub-Committees (Volunteers)**

- Members who are in each sub-committee will be emailed to Sub-Committee Leaders and will also have email schedule meetings to Committee members in a week.
- Will wait for the Data group to meet first to review results. The committee can continue to meet to review strategies and other ideas.
- The Housing Resource Commission has a couple of slots to anyone who wants to represent interest of racial minorities on the policy group for housing issues in RI. Send recommendations via email that will be sent out to the governor's office.
- 7 vacant seats Dr Daily have reviewed applications and made recommendations have been sent to Dr Fine.
- Fifteen minutes interviews for recommended candidates will be scheduled in a couple of weeks. Formal recommendations to the Board come from Dr Fine.

### **Processes of Commissions**

- Present people on the Commission must be put in an official term.

Angie will be reaching out to individuals ask of résumés and submit paper work needed to get individuals formally into a term usually 2-3 year terms. After that one has to vacate for about a year before serving again on an additional term.

- Process also includes registering Commission Members on the Secretary of State website as an official member of the Commission. Some one administratively might be contacting individuals about these process
- The Department is going to start a community engagement process for a different initiative for accreditation.
- Discussion on hospital data collection on race and ethnicity data

## **VI. Commission Priorities Discussion (Pink Paper)**

### **Commission's Charge and Timeline**

#### **-Timeline**

Proposal to meet before scheduled every third Wednesday. Members will e-mail Angie if any are opposed to the dates and meeting more frequently. Otherwise, a meeting will be scheduled for September in hopes that the Data Sub-Committee group has already met by then.

#### **- Subcommittees & Meetings**

Data sub-committee will meet to develop a layout some proposals and have the Commission vote on top priority of focus. Next meeting scheduled for September 18<sup>th</sup> for 3pm.

## **VII. Rhode Map RI Update (Jeff & Amanda)**

New name for the State's Sustainable Communities Project: RhodeMap RI.

- Developing as state wide plan for sustainable development with the focus on housing and economic development to address the social determinants of health & equity issues
- Week of public forums: The forums did not attract a diverse community including people with low socio-economic background. Alternatives ways of outreach are being discussed.

- “Meeting in a Box”: A new way of collecting data in a semi-standardized way in a non-traditional environment to reach more people living rooms, churches, and social gatherings.
- Opportunity Mapping: takes data points of different opportunity points like educational, health, and housing opportunities etc and compiles them in a composite index like a map to use it as a resource.
- Suggestion: sensitivity of the “opportunity” language and definition.
- Open for participants and input. Angie will send out information.

### **VIII. Actions Items/ Recommendations to Dr Fine & Wrap up**

#### **Recommendations for Dr Fine:**

- Adding a priority that directly relates to treating inequalities.
- Getting data on why and how inequalities exist
- What questions need to be asked of hospitals? How do hospitals retain and collect data?
- Find out what are the standards are for hospitals in collecting data?

#### **Recommendations to Dr Fine/Formal Request to Dr Fine:**

- Need representative from Office of Housing
- Legislation Wrap-up: Legislation policy & agenda for the department
- Adding Data Collection from Hospitals and Providers as part of Priorities of the Commission
- (Suggestion): Action plan or Draft that will be voted on by Commission members for getting the priorities done.