

BOSTON PUBLIC HEALTH COMMISSION

BOARD MEETING

THURSDAY, MAY 15, 2008

1010 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE

HAYES CONFERENCE ROOM

MINUTES

Board Members Present:

Paula Johnson, MD, MPH, Chair
Ruth Ellen Fitch, JD, Harold Cox

Board Members Absent:

Hortensia Amaro, PhD., Vice Chair
Jack Cradock, Celia Weislo, Elaine
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Administration & Staff Present:

Barbara Ferrer, Ph.D., MPH, M.Ed,
John Townsend, Maia BrodyField,
Nancy Norman, Peter Holtgrave,
Mary Ann Crayton, Phyllis Sims,
Betty Holt, Dan Dooley, Christine
Hayes, Ellen Coletti, Greg M. Lanza,
Gerry Thomas, Ian Newton, Ann
Scales, Raia Warfield, Rosie Munoz-
Lopez, Samatha Panati, Pam Jones,
Daisy DelaRosa, Maurice Myrie,
Maddie Ribble, Ann McHugh, Anil
Anand, Kathrina Chesmol, Julie
Webster, Chuck Gagnon

Paula Johnson, MD, MPH, Chair called the meeting to order at 4:10 PM on Thursday, May 15, 2008.

Executive Director's Report – Barbara Ferrer

Barbara Ferrer, Executive Director, spoke briefly regarding the Health of Boston Report in regards to substance abuse and reported that there has been an increase in substance abuse deaths. Dr. Ferrer stated that the press has picked up on the number of dramatic substance abuse deaths, especially in women, and that the Commission is negotiating to be able to look at every autopsy report to determine exactly what drug was related to the death in order for programs to take the right action. Dr. Ferrer said that most of the deaths result from opiates combined with prescription drugs. Dr. Ferrer reported that the Commission has opened up a brand new intensive treatment center for women located in the Finland Building and the Center will serve approximately 100 women a year.

Dr. Ferrer welcomed the new Boston Healthy Start Initiative Director, Mary Ann Clayton, to the Commission.

Dr. Ferrer stated that the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has awarded the BPHC a new grant for a half million dollars over four years. This grant will fund an expansion of the VIP grant.

Dr. Ferrer asked John Townsend, Interim Director of Administration, to speak regarding the Commonwealth Compact. Mr. Townsend stated that the goal of the Commonwealth Compact is to make greater Boston a desired destination for people of color, immigrants, and women, in the belief that their contributions are vital to the region's social and economic future. Commonwealth Compact promotes diversity in the workplace and dozens of employers and corporations have joined the compact. Mr. Townsend recommended that the Board endorse joining the Compact.

Board Member Fitch stated that the Board supports the BPHC with the Commonwealth Compact.

Sexually Transmitted Infections & Youth – Phyllis Sims/Dan Dooley

Phyllis Sims, Analysis Unit Manager, Research Department, gave a brief update on the statistics of sexually transmitted infections. Ms. Sims stated that chlamydia and gonorrhea are the most commonly reported infectious diseases in the United States. Ms. Sims said that youth ages 15-19 and 20-24 are at a greater risk for sexually transmitted infections and proceeded to give a breakdown of the increasing percentage rates among various cities.

Board Member Cox asked if there was a change in the reporting which accounts for the increased rates. Ms. Sims replied, no.

Dan Dooley, Research Associate II, Research Department, also spoke regarding sexually transmitted infections and stated that the survey is a national survey of adolescents and young adults.

Board Member Cox asked whether the survey was from Boston data or Massachusetts data. Mr. Dooley answered that the data is from Boston.

Dr. Johnson inquired about the condom use and asked if there were any questions regarding youths using condoms consistently. Mr. Dooley replied, no, there were no questions regarding regular condom use.

Programmatic Efforts to Address STI's Among Youth – Betty Holt/Ellen Colletti

Ellen Colletti, Associate Director, School Based Health, spoke regarding educational efforts and potential strategies to address the increase in sexually transmitted infections. Ms. Colletti stated that eight School Based Health Centers will provide STI risk assessment (screening, education and referral), STI testing, reproductive health education and can provide condoms and prescriptions for other contraceptives.

Betty Holt, Director, Adolescent Wellness Program, spoke regarding prevention and education related to the STI problems. Ms. Holt said that there is an effort to do classroom education and/or small groups during or after school. Ms. Holt stated that the curriculum was adapted from five different curricula and there is a pre and post testing to evaluate the impact.

Ms. Colletti stated that the challenges in addressing STI's among youth are as follows:

- Difficulty in obtaining data reports;
- Limited ability to evaluate impact of health;
- Limited number of mandatory hours for health education in school;
- Ability to provide health education dependent on school administration and;
- Ensuring communication between providers, youth, BPS, BPHC and healthcare system.

Ms. Colletti also spoke regarding the strategies and efforts to address STI's and gave the following strategies:

- Supplement required health education (only up to 9th grade);
- Supplement health education in seven middle schools in Boston;
- Form committees to assess, evaluate and improve quality/consistency of services;
- Engage youths in legislative efforts to promote health education in schools and;
- Explore new partnerships with organizations to augment current services.

Budget for the Commonwealth – Maddie Ribble

Maddie Ribble, Director, Intergovernmental Relations & Public Health Advocacy, gave a brief update regarding the budget for the Commonwealth. Mr. Ribble reported that the Violence Intervention Prevention bill was passed in the Senate on 5/15/08. Mr. Ribble stated that the Senate budget is more responsive to public health issues than the house budget.

Mr. Ribble spoke regarding the largest concerns of the FY09 budget and stated that the step down services is of concern in that the Senate Ways and Means budget proposes to eliminate the line item which will significantly impact access to critical step down beds for individuals in recovery. Mr. Ribble reported on the new initiatives or funds and said that the Senate Ways and Means proposes the creation of a line item dedicated to primary care recruitment and retention.

Strategic Planning for the Commission – Pam Jones

Pam Jones, Director of Policy and Planning, spoke regarding strategic planning for the Commission and gave some planning survey highlights. Ms. Jones stated that 93% of the employees felt that their work was connected to the mission statement. Ms. Jones gave a brief update on the internal challenges and said that staff felt that more relevant training and professional development was needed. Staff also felt that some of the internal challenges were as follows:

- Cross-Commission communication/collaboration;
- Data collection and analysis;
- Information Technology resources and support;
- Parking and transportation;

- Space/Environment and;
- Staffing.

Ms Jones stated that the external challenges were CORI reform and relationships with other city agencies. Ms. Jones also reported on the short and long term recommendations to combat some of the challenges.

Short-term recommendations – recommend forming cross-commission work groups, research and identify potential partnerships, address transportation and parking needs and build relationships and increase collaboration.

Long-term recommendations – identify and work on possible parking solutions, assess communication needs and develop an aggressive schedule for improving the technology infrastructure, conduct a master space planning/assessment to identify, prioritize and respond to programs' space needs.

Primary Care Working Group – Maia BrodyField

Maia BrodyField, Chief of Staff, gave a brief update regarding the Primary Care Access Working Groups. Ms. BrodyField said that there are three work groups (healthcare systems, workforce development & support, and financing). Ms. BrodyField stated that the groups looked at different areas to see how they were working.

Ms. BrodyField reported on the three working groups starting with the Healthcare Systems group. Ms. BrodyField said that three meetings were held and the focus was on six of nine proposed areas for improvement. In regards to the Workforce Development & Support, three of four meetings were held, and that guiding principles were drafted. Lastly, Ms. Brodyfield reported on the Financing piece and stated that three of four meetings were also held and payment models were reviewed that support the model of the medical home.

Ms. BrodyField spoke regarding the challenges across the groups and stated the following:

- Developing common methodology to make recommendations;
- Overlap of each working group's charge with other groups;
- The effort to make real change in the systems will require not only political will, but institutional commitment of human and financial resources.

Ms. BrodyField said that the Steering Committee will be convening on June 24, 2008 from 3-5 PM in the Hayes Conference Room and the goals of the meeting will be as follows:

- Review and align recommendations across the three groups;
- Determine format and process for communicating recommendations to the Mayor;
- Provide additional input.

All Board members were invited to attend.

Ruth Ellen Fitch adjourned the meeting at 6:00 PM.