



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMISSION ON HEALTH
Virtual Meeting via Zoom
January 20, 2022
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Jonathan Arias, Alana Aronin, Brent Berger, Christopher Burt, Marcela Campoli, Desiree de la Torre, Crystal DeVance-Wilson, Cara Grant, Kendra Harris, Jessica Kronstadt, Linda McMillan, Rosemary Payne

Members Absent: Dr. James Bridgers, Elliott Brown, Sarah Emami, Amy Gyau-Moyer, Nadia Hashimi, Lenna Israbian-Jamgochian, Terri McGuire, Fabienne Santel

Staff Present: Felicia Hugee, and Christopher Rogers

Guests: Melvin Cauthen, Susan Emery

AGENDA ITEMS/PRESENTER	ACTION ITEMS /RESPONSIBLE PARTY
<p>Meeting call to Order and Officer Report – Jessica Kronstadt and Crystal DeVance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The meeting was called to order at 6:10 p.m. The COH Chair welcomed members and provided an update on the goals for the meeting Upcoming meetings are February 17th and March 17th. These meetings will take place virtually via Zoom. It is possible that the March 17th meeting will include the new members as the selection process is currently underway The new member orientation might be incorporated into the meetings as a refresher to all members The Chair discussed the possibility of holding in-person meetings in the springtime The Chair announced that a guest would join today's meeting to talk about communicable diseases and epidemiology, with a focus on HIV and STIs, she also noted that this would be followed by a conversation related to the STIs letter that had been previously discussed <p>As quorum was not met during this meeting, the minutes were not approved.</p>	<p>Add December's and January's minutes to February's agenda for approval- <i>COH Staff</i></p>
<p>MCDHHS Health Officer's Report –Dr. James Bridgers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Bridgers was unable to join due to some urgent Covid-19 issues 	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Communicable Diseases and Epidemiology – Melvin Cauthen See Presentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Melvin Cauthen introduced himself and presented on "STIs in Montgomery County" He began with a summary of what STIs look like in Montgomery County, what the County is currently doing, followed by what the future plans and interventions are 	<p>NA</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He summarized that the upward trend in STIs continues and noted that from 2016-2020 STIs in Montgomery County have gone up every year in the following categories: Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, and Syphilis (primary and secondary) • He also provided an overview of the population by zip code of the clients being served at the Dennis Avenue Health Center (DAHC). He noted that most of the population that comes to the DAHC lives down county and this is the reason why they are planning on opening a satellite clinic at the Upcounty regional service • He mentioned that he plans on using satellite pilot as a model to affect or impact how services are provided at the DAHC • Melvin Cauthen also informed the Commissioners of the different services provided at the DACH which include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ STI and HIV testing and treatment ➢ PrEP for HIV prevention ➢ Partner services for Syphilis and HIV ➢ HIV medical and support services ➢ Referrals to outside services ➢ Housing resources ➢ Mental health resources ➢ Substance abuse • He emphasized that their mission is to get into the community as they do not want to just be a building where people go to for treatment. He also noted some of the programs interventions and initiatives • The Vice Chair asked Mr. Cauthen if there was anything the COH could help with or support. He noted that support may be needed for when the funding for EHE starts to run out so that things that have been put into place (people as well as resources) are able to stay, he also mentioned that he would like for STIs screenings to one day become part of the basic screening 	
<p>Sexually Transmitted Infection Letter - Vice-Chair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair noted that the letter highlights the approaches the COH recommends are considered for combating HIV and other STIs. She also noted that the letter resonates with the last comment from Mr. Cauthen about the need for screenings to be more routine • The Vice-Chair Crystal DeVance-Wilson pointed out that she had made changes to the letter and noted that based on Desiree de la Torre's suggestion, she had added a paragraph at the end of the letter about being sensitive and acknowledging the challenges the pandemic has caused. She also highlighted the additional changes made to the letter • The Vice-Chair mentioned an STI screening initiative that was launched a few years back (2018) in Howard County that involved the parents, the school system, and the State and local health departments. She pointed out that the program was very successful, and it is an example of what could be done in Montgomery County as a pilot 	NA
<p>Recent County Council Proposals – Chair/Vice Chair/ All Members</p> <p>The Chair mentioned that there were three pieces of legislation relevant to the COH's work she wanted to discuss</p>	<p>Drafting of the testimony for the Maryland State legislation- Jessica Kronstadt, Crystal DeVance- Wilson and Jonathan Arias</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The first one, which had been previously discussed is a bill that was introduced last fall that would require vaccines of County employees. She noted that the COH already submitted testimony in support of the bill ➤ The second one, which was just recently introduced is the notion of a vaccine passport. She pointed out that this had just launched in DC, requiring proof of vaccination to be able to enter certain establishments or venues. She noted that there will be a hearing on Tuesday, and it is possible that a vote takes place at that time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Members express mixed feelings regarding this proposal and noted that while they are advocates of vaccines, they find that having a passport is not practical and is unenforceable. ○ There was also concern over the funding needed and how those funds could be put to better use. Linda McMillan explained that unlike other States or jurisdictions, there is no cost associated with the “vaccine passport”. She explained that this was a proposal the Council received from the County Executive, and noted the Council did not initiate it nor have they taken a position ➤ The third one, is at the State level and it has been introduced to both the Senate and the House of Maryland legislature. The bill would prohibit people from making or sending a threat to public health officials or hospital staff members with the intent of intimidating, interfering with, or impeding the public health officials or hospital staff members from performing official duties. The Chair mentioned that the email she sent in the morning included a link to an article that referenced Dr. Gayles specifically and the threats and racial slurs against him. The Chair wanted to know if there was an interest in taking a stand in support of this proposal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Members agreed on supporting this effort. There was also a suggestion about joining forces with the Commission against hate and violence. The Chair noted that this proposal is also being supported by the Maryland Association of Counties ○ The Chair volunteered to help write the testimony and asked if anyone else wanted to volunteer to help develop/draft the testimony. Jonathan Arias volunteered. • Rosemary Payne mentioned that she would like to have a discussion with the Commission about the uptick of violence specially in the Silver Spring area and the impact that it has linked to stress and health. She wanted the discussion to include what the County is doing and the health implications regarding the increase in crime. Linda McMillan pointed out that this past Tuesday, the Council got an update on crime statistics and talked to the police department about many of the same issues Ms. Payne was raising. Linda suggested going to the Council’s website (watch the Council) to see the staff report which includes the briefing with the County Council 	
<p>Workgroup Updates – Chair/Workgroup Leads</p> <p>Communicable Diseases Workgroup – Rosemary Payne</p> <p>School Health Workgroup – Desiree de la Torre The workgroup has not met, however, Desiree de la Torre noted that having the staff support to organize meetings outside of the Commissions meeting will help get them on task</p>	<p>NA</p>

<p>Equity Workgroup – Marcela Campoli</p> <p>Governance Workgroup – Jessica Kronstadt</p>	
<p>COH Liaison Updates – Chair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · BCC Liaisons Updates <p>African American Health Program – Crystal DeVance-Wilson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Vice-Chair informed the Commissioners that the program has been working with churches to conduct Covid-19 testing and vaccine clinics • She noted that the report she received from their last meeting in January included data showing that the SMILE program (infant mortality) has 109 active members • She also mentioned that the program had their first graduation from the diabetes program. • The program developed short videos to provide instruction for the Covid-19 test kits • The Vice-Chair pointed out that the program has screened over 100 people for mental health issues, they are conducting chronic illness screenings all over the County including the homeless shelters • She also informed the Commissioners of the “Holistic” program which is part of the African American Health program in conjunction with the black physicians’ network. She explained that the program is an educational series where participants get referred to different services <p>Veterans Administration – Rosemary Payne</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rosemary Payne mentioned that she had not been able to attend the last meeting, however, she noted that in December they reported that there was a unanimous passing of Senate Bill S.1813 Act for ALS and it is ready for President Biden’s signature <p>School Health Council – Alana Aronin</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alana Aronin pointed out that the School Health Council meets quarterly and suggested that if there are any specific issues they want to hear about, to let her know so she can look for it • She noted that mental health will be one of the topics that will be discussed at the March 2022 meeting • She also mentioned that they are looking into getting some of the 9-month positions changed to year-round. They can be used for other tasks such as food distribution among others 	NA
<p>Announcements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Rogers mentioned his team is planning to launch the primary survey data collection for the CHNA at the beginning of February. He noted that they have been 	N/A

<p>working with the contract management team as well as the Hospital partners to ensure that all documentation is in place to sign a contract with WESTAT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition, he mentioned that the qualitative portion of the CHNA has been completed as well as the Oral health capacity and demand environmental scan, and the environmental scan of organizational resources • Dr. Rogers noted that he anticipates producing a final report for the Healthy Montgomery Steering Committee to vote on sometime in the middle of the Spring • He pointed out that he will not have a clearer timeline until the contract with WESTAT is signed 	
<p>Adjournment</p> <p>The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.</p>	N/A