

**State Health Commissioner's Advisory Council on Health Disparity and Health Equity (ACHDHE)
October 13, 2020 Meeting Minutes**

**Virginia Department of Health (VDH) Central Office Madison Building
109 Governor Street, Richmond, VA 23219
Mezzanine Conference Room (Televised meeting) – 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.**

Attended via Zoom/Phone: **M. Norman Oliver, MD, MA; Sable K. Nelson, JD; Melody Armstrong, MPA, BSN; Linda Lee Redmond, PhD; Nia Harrison, MPP; J. Elisha Burke, M. Div., D. Min.; Kate S. K. Bradshaw, Ph.D., FACHE, CPHQ; JohnJason Cecil, BA; Antonio Villa, MD, MPH; Eleanor Woodson, BSN, RN; Bonny K. Dillon, PhD, BCPC, LPC; Lauren James, MD; Lauren Powell, Ph.D, MPA; Radhika Thirunagari, MS; Maceo E. Freeman, D. Min; Keisha L. Smith, MPA; Elvira De La Cruz, BS; Lean Abdelaziz, BA; Gordon Walker, MS; Augustine Doe, MS, MPA, Jasmine Smith, Veronica Cosby, MAHS, MS**
Did Not Attend: **Patti Kiger, M. Ed; Daud Mohamed;**

WELCOME

Ms. Melody Armstrong, ACHDHE Chair, introduced herself and welcomed the attendees before calling the meeting to order.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The October 13, 2020 meeting agenda was approved as submitted.

Meeting Agenda:

https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/GetFile.cfm?File=meeting\58\30674\Agenda_VDH_30674_v1.pdf

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The ACHDHE January 14, 2020 meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

Meeting Minutes: <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/76/2020/10/ACHDHE-January-2020-Meeting-Minutes1.pdf>

ACHDHE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COMMISSIONER

Dr. J. Elisha Burke, ACHDHE Vice Chair, read the ACHDHE's recommendations from the January 2020 meeting presentations.

Recommendations: <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/76/2020/10/ACHDHE-January-2020-Presentation-Recommendations.pdf>

STATE HEALTH COMMISSIONER UPDATES

Dr. Norman Oliver, The State Health Commissioner, thanked the ACHDHE members for the recommendations and shared the following updates.

State Health Commissioner's Comments on ACHDHE Recommendations:

- Dr. Oliver told the ACHDHE members the recommendations were timely. He emphasized the need to continue to update the ACHDHE and the larger community about the legislative process particularly on bills that impact Virginia's communities,

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African American and Latino communities. Dr. Oliver shared with the ACHDHE he is looking into ways to make the recommendations more actionable.

- Further, Dr. Oliver informed the ACHDHE that the agency is expanding its efforts around diversity, equity, and inclusion and VDH supports the work of Dr. Janice Underwood, Director of Virginia's newly established Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

VDH Updates:

For the general VDH updates, Dr. Oliver provided a brief timeline of the agency's COVID-19 response efforts.

- Following Virginia's 2019 General Assembly, VDH continue to monitor COVID-19 in China and set up an Incident Command System (ICS) to respond appropriately should COVID-19 enter the country/Virginia.
- Virginia's initial COVID-19 case was March 7, 2019, which spread rapidly in March and April of 2019. The rapid spread took place within the most vulnerable population the African American and Latino populations in Virginia. Both groups accounted for over sixty percent of the total case count.
- COVID-19 later spread into the congregate settings, long-term care facilities, skilled nursing facilities, and assisted living facilities. Deaths in the facilities was extremely high. Dr. Oliver shared that the northern region experienced the initial wide spread of the disease and the eastern region experienced widespread as the pandemic spread in Virginia.
- To limit community spread of the virus, the Governor issued numerous executive orders, "Stay at Home," "Social Distancing," and "Mask/Face Covering." Following the executive orders, by late May 2019 there was decline in the case count in the state.
- Virginia is not yet free of COVID-19 Dr. Oliver emphasized. The continued adherence in Virginia to non-pharmaceutical interventions; washing hands, wearing masks, and social distancing to contain the spread of COVID-19 is critical. This process helps testing to identify those infected and/or exposed to the virus in order to limit community spreading of the disease.
- Efforts are on the way to develop a safe and effective vaccine that creates immunity from the virus that cause COVID-19. VDH has developed an extensive plan for vaccinating the majority of the adult population against COVID-19. To enhance the plan, VDH is developing a very broad advisory group to assist the equitable vaccine delivery and a communication campaign, which targets the most vulnerable population groups. There are tailored messages within the communication plan inclusive of targeted and trusted community leaders to serve as messengers.

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PRESENTATION:

- **Topic: "VDH Statewide Contact Tracing Overview"**
Presenter: John Ringer, Public Health Planning and Evaluation Director, VDH
Presentation link:
<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/76/2020/10/John-Ringer-Advisory-council-presentation-8-13-20-revised-1.pdf>

- **Topic: "Virginia COVID-19 Update"**
Presenter: Dr. Parham Jaber, Chief Deputy Commissioner, VDH
Presentation link:
https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/76/2020/10/Dr.-Jaber-ACHDHE_Testing-Update_Oct-13-2020.pdf

- **Topic: "Examining Health Equity Across Virginia"**
Presenters: Hannah Furstenberg-Beckman, Jackson Miller, Colleen Narlock, Harvard University Fellows, Harvard University
Presentation link:
https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/76/2020/10/Harvard-Fellows_ACHDHE-Presentation.pdf

ACHDHE Election Nominations:

The ACHDHE members were reminded to submit nominations per the 2021-2022 leadership election timetable.

UPDATES:

Office of Health Equity (OHE) Updates

Sable K. Nelson, Acting Director, Office of Health Equity (OHE) shared updates of the three Divisions within the Office of Health Equity.

OHE presentation: <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/76/2020/11/Advisory-Council-Oct-2018-Justin.pdf>

OTHER UPDATES:

- The ACHDHE members shared the following updates:
 - John Jason Cecil – Anthem Healthcare – due to the pandemic, there is no disenrollment from Medicaid by Anthem. Anthem has behavioral health and mental health support for Medicaid members.
 - Resource: <https://mss.anthem.com/va/benefits/medicaid-plans.html>

Public Comment

- No public comments:

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The ACHDHE meeting was adjourned at 1:40 pm.

Next ACHDHE MEETING: Tuesday, January 12, 2021.

Time: 11:00am – 2:00 pm

Location: Mezzanine Conference Room, VDH Central Office, 109 Governor Street, 23219 or via zoom request.

Respectfully submitted by:

Augustine **Doe**, Health Equity Specialist

Minutes reviewed by:

Melody **Armstrong**, Chair

Dr. J. Elisha **Burke**, Vice Chair

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