

State Health Commissioner's Advisory Council on Health Disparity and Health Equity (ACHDHE)
January 11, 2022 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: **Kathryn Crosby, MPH; Henry Murdaugh, MPH; Linda Lee Redmond, PhD; Nia Harrison, MPP; 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; Maceo E. Freeman, D. Min; Keisha L. Smith, MPA; Carolyn C. Turner, MS; Gordon Walker, MS; Elvira De La Cruz, BS; Melody Armstrong, MPA, BSN; Barbara Board, PhD; George Worthington**

Did Not Attend: **M. Norman Oliver, MD, MA; Radhika Thirunagari, MS; Daud Mohamed; Lauren Powell, Ph.D, MPA; Lean Abdelaziz, BA; J. Elisha Burke, M. Div., D. Min.; Patti Kiger, M. Ed;**

VDH Staff: **Augustine Doe, MS, MPA; Veronica Cosby, MAHS, MS; Kandi Chamberlain, MPH; Jasmine Martinez, Sonia Salmon**

WELCOME

Ms. Nia Harrison, ACHDHE Chair, introduced herself and welcomed the attendees before calling the meeting to order. The ACHDHE members' roll call was conducted later during the meeting.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Ms. Harrison provided an overview of the meeting agenda.

Meeting Agenda: <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/76/2022/01/ACHDHE-January-2022-Meeting-Agenda.pdf>

ACHDHE October Meeting Update:

Ms. Harrison reiterated that some changes are required to this meeting because of the public health emergency, which allowed the workgroup to meet virtually, has expired. The Appropriations Act of the Virginia General Assembly's 2021 Special Session allows the workgroup to continue meeting virtually as long as no formal votes are taken and no formal recommendations are presented. However, members can provide recommendations on a post-meeting survey for presentation during the next in-person meeting. The ACHDHE leadership team decided to hold the meeting virtually, despite these restrictions, due to the high number of COVID-19 cases at the time and concerns about the ability to get a quorum assembled in person. Ms. Harrison reassured the members that the regular meeting formats will be adopted as soon as the situation permits physical attendance for the group to take votes or make recommendations during the meetings.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The approval of the ACHDHE October 12, 2021 meeting minutes were postponed to the next ACHDHE in-person meeting, which will potentially be in April 2022. This postponement was due to current restrictions on the ability to make recommendations during virtual meetings. Ms. Harrison asked if members had any changes in the interim. None were shared.

ACHDHE draft October 2021 meeting minutes:

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<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/76/2021/10/ACHDHE-October-12-2021-Draft-Minutes-NH-Feedback-10.21.21-REV.docx>

ACHDHE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COMMISSIONER

The presentation of the ACHDHE recommendations from the July 13, 2021 and October 12, 2021 meetings was postponed to the next ACHDHE in-person meeting. This postponement was due to current restrictions on the ability to make recommendations during virtual meetings.

STATE HEALTH COMMISSIONER UPDATES

There were no updates from Dr. Norman Oliver, State Health Commissioner because he was unable to attend the meeting. Dr. Oliver will leave the Virginia Department of Health as State Health Commissioner on Friday, January 14, 2022. His replacement is not yet announced.

PRESENTATIONS:

- **Topic: “Leveraging Localized Data to Drive Community Level Solutions”**
Presenters: *Nancy Bell, Population Health Manager & PIO, West Piedmont Health District, VDH & Clarissa Noble, Division of Primary Care, OHE*
Presentation link:
<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/76/2022/01/Leveraging-Localized-Data-to-Drive-Community-Level-Solutions.pdf>
- **Topic: “Virginia’s 2022 General Assembly Updates”**
Presenters: *Joe Hilbert, Deputy Commissioner for Governmental and Regulatory Affairs, VDH*
Presentation link:
<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/76/2022/01/Legislative-Update-to-ACHDHE-Jan-2022.pdf>
- **Topic: “VA Health Assessment and Improvement Plan”**
Presenter: *Khalida Willoughby, VA Health Assessment and Improvement Plan Manager, VDH*
Presentation link:
<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/76/2022/01/State-Health-Assessments-presentation.pdf>

NEW BUSINESS:

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Officer Program Overview:

Kathryn Crosby, VDH DEI officer shared that the goal of the DEI Program is to develop an equity mindset across all the agency’s processes, practices, and policies, both internally and externally. They will create new efforts while leveraging the really incredible work that has already been done. She would like the agency to establish and maintain, in a very public way, various sustainable paths to foster change through honesty, collaboration, trust, and open discussions. Kathryn said that, in order to be effective in its mission and vision, the Virginia Department of Health really has to embrace and commit to this paradigm shift.

Her priority areas include organizational infrastructure, organizational culture, and community engagement and partnership. She listed her priority topics as the following:

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- Workforce health;
- Fostering better communication between the state, regional, and local offices;
- Inclusive language;
- Language translation;
- Culturally and linguistically appropriate services (CLAS);
- Access and functional needs;
- Evaluation of resource effectiveness;
- Understanding underlying factors that contribute to health inequity; and
- Defining success.

Ms. Crosby asked for member feedback. Ms. Harrison volunteered to serve as a resource in these efforts, and shared a related term she recently learned that better includes people with disabilities: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA). Ms. Linda Redmond recommended that the efforts address ageism, particularly in employment and healthcare. Dr. Vargas-Jackson asked that migrant workers be included, noting they are often overlooked. Mr. JohnJason Cecil said that the "Accessibility" reference in the DEIA term could also address geography, which is so important.

UPDATES:

Office of Health Equity (OHE) Updates

Mr. Henry C. Murdaugh, Acting Director of the Office of Health Equity introduced himself and shared about the new reporting structure of the office. He provided these comments:

- Health Equity is not a destination; it is a journey.
- OHE is emphasizing three critical pillars: Accountability, infrastructure development, and partnerships.
- OHE received the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) health disparity COVID grant. The office has allocated funding to the local health districts
 - to hire Health Equity Specialists who provide, among other things, culturally and linguistically appropriate services (CLAS);
 - to hire social epidemiologists in 15 districts; and
 - that are designated as rural health districts.
- Overall, they are looking to make OHE efforts sustainable.

ACHDHE Members' Updates:

Nia Harrison, Virginia Board for People with Disabilities

- To encourage targeted vaccination of people with disabilities as well as people in their support networks, VBPD recently awarded CDC funding to the Endependent Center of Northern Virginia (ECNV). The organization is using the funding to provide pop-up vaccination sites in the area. This is an innovative way to bring the vaccine to people who are still having difficulty accessing the vaccine because of transportation challenges or other barriers. The pop-up vaccination sites are currently underway. People interested in participating are invited to reach out to ECVN.

JohnJason Cecil, Anthem Health Keepers

- For those who work with the Medicaid-eligible population, it is a good time to prepare them for eligibility renewal in order to retain coverage. During the public health emergency, automatic

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renewals were the standard operating procedure for people with Medicaid. Now that the public health emergency is ending, however, eligibility renewals will no longer be automatic.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- No public comment

ADJOURNMENT:

The ACHDHE meeting was adjourned at 1:46 PM.

Next ACHDHE meeting: Tuesday, April 12, 2022.

Time: 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM

April 2022 meeting link:

<https://zoom.us/j/94170521199?pwd=cIBZOFdad2VuRVd0b3RtMGN0L3Qvdz09>

Host Site: The Office of Health Equity, Virginia Department of Health Central Office, 109 Governor Street, 23219 (potentially via zoom video conference, to be determined). Please send your questions to augustine.doe@vdh.virginia.gov.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Augustine Doe, CLAS Program Manager & Acting Director, Division of Multicultural Health and Community Engagement (DMHCE)

Minutes Reviewed By:

Nia Harrison, Chair

JohnJason Cecil, Vice Chair