

To: Colin M. **Greene**, MD, MPH, State Health Commissioner, Virginia Department of Health:
From: Nia **Harrison**, MPP, Chair, Advisory Council on Health Disparity & Health Equity (ACHDHE),
Virginia Department of Health (VDH)
Date: July 12, 2022:
Subject: **ACHDHE Recommendations for Program Enhancement:**

In response to the April 12, 2022 presentation on “Virginia’s 2022 Rural Health Plan Overview” presented to the ACHDHE by Heather **Anderson**, Director, Division of Primary Care and Rural Health and Clarissa **Noble**, Division of Primary Care, VDH, we respectfully present the following recommendation:

- The Virginia Department of Health educates rural localities on existing health disparities within their communities and ways to address the disparities. Education could occur through supplemental rural health reports, targeted technical assistance, or other means. The analysis of health disparities could consider social, economic, or environmental factors including but not limited to race and ethnicity, disability status, and gender.

In response to the April 12, 2022 presentation topic, “An Overview of VDH Resources for Healthy Schools,” presented to the ACHDHE by Joanna **Pitts**, School Health Nurse Consultant, VDH, we respectfully present the following recommendation:

- The Virginia Department of Health continues its efforts to promote the hiring and retention of school nurses, including the provision of related funding.

In response to the April 12, 2022 presentation on “Virginia’s COVID-19 Data Updates” presented to the ACHDHE by Rexford **Anson-Dwamena**, Division of Social Epidemiology, VDH, we respectfully present the following recommendations:

- The Virginia Department of Health conducts any feasible retrospective analyses of the impact of COVID-19 on people with disabilities and releases a report summarizing the findings.
- The Virginia Department of Health expands its public health surveillance system to include people with disabilities so that they are monitored during future public health crises, in accordance with the Affordable Care Act and the Healthy People 2030 objectives.

Signed: Nia **Harrison**
Nia Harrison, MPP, & Chair, ACHDHE