

State Health Commissioner's Advisory Council on Health Disparity and Health Equity (ACHDHE)

January 10, 2023, Meeting Minutes

James Monroe Building

101 N. 14 Street, Richmond, VA 23219

Main Conference Room (In-person and Televised Meeting) – 11:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.

In person attendance: **Colin Greene, MD, MPH, Sandra Serna, MPH, David C. Rose, MD, MBA, FAAP; George Worthington, MS; Nia Harrison, MPP; Linda Lee Redmond, PhD; Elvira De La Cruz, BS; Patti Kiger, M. Ed; El Hadji Djibril Niang; Karen O'Brien, BS; Maceo E. Freeman, D. Min; Antonio Villa, MD, MPH; Carolyn C. Turner, MS; Linnaya Graf, PhD, MCHES, CPH; Amy Christine Hodge, M. Div.; JohnJason Cecil, BA.**

Virtual Attendees:

Gordon Walker, MS; Melody Armstrong, MPA, BSN; Kate S. K. Bradshaw, Ph.D., FACHE, CPHQ.

Did Not Attend:

Kathryn Crosby, MBA; Radhika Thirunagari, MS; Zakia McKensey; Eleanor Woodson, BSN, RN;

Olugbenga O. Obasanjo, MBBS, Ph.D., MPH, MBA.

VDH Staff: **Augustine Doe, MS, MPA; Alvin Perlas, OHE Former Intern, Jasmine Martinez**

WELCOME

Ms. Nia Harrison, ACHDHE Chair Emeritus, introduced herself and welcomed the attendees. She then called the meeting to order asking the State Health Commissioner and ACHDHE members to introduce themselves.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Ms. Harrison provided an overview of the meeting agenda and asked if members had any suggested changes.

Meeting Agenda:

[Agenda](#)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The October 11, 2022, meeting minutes were approved with minor edits.

[Minutes](#)

ACHDHE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COMMISSIONER

Dr. Kate Bradshaw, ACHDHE Vice Chair presented the ACHDHE recommendation document from the October 11, 2022, meeting presentations to the State Health Commissioner, Dr. Colin Greene.

[Recommendations](#)

- Prior to the State Health Commissioner's updates, Ms. Nia Harrison, welcomed the new ACHDHE leadership team, Dr. David Rose and Dr. Kate Bradshaw and she turned over the affairs of the meeting to Dr. Rose, the new Chair.

STATE HEALTH COMMISSIONER UPDATES:

- In his updates, Dr. Colin Greene shared key priorities areas that are concurrent with the Governor's Office.
- **Behavioral health:**
 - The Governor proposed a three-year plan, "[Right Help, Right Now](#)" to increase access to mental health care. The plan will increase mobile health intervention

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teams that would reduce emergency room visits and increase availability in rural Virginia.

- The plan will also create additional crisis referral centers (for less than 24 hours) and crisis support units to increase admittance for up to three to four days. Dr. Greene recounted the integration of primary care in this process because family medicine training typically includes some mental health training. He shared about Virginia Mental Health Access Project that can be called by a practitioner for mental health professional consult in real time. <https://vmap.org/>
 - Substance use disorder, drug overdose, disproportionately impact communities. Virginia has opioid assessment funds that would make Naloxone more available including versions of Naloxone for over-the-counter access without a prescription.
 - Commissioner Greene cited violence prevention as one of his focus areas. Although there are more deaths in Virginia from drug overdose than suicide, homicide, and auto accidents combined, violent deaths are much higher up the death rate scale and it is disproportionately present particularly in the African American community and other communities as well.
- **Public Health:**
 - Dr. Greene recounted maternal mortality and infant mortality rates as key health disparities that are elevated not only in the African American community but also the Native American community. VDH is researching data to primarily understand the burden of the situation on rural residents.
 - **Note:** One of the findings of a recent study by the Office of Health Equity is leaning in that direction. According to the study, low birth weight was significantly higher in areas of maternal deserts, low poverty level and areas with low education and affordability, all of which are characteristics of rural communities. ([OHE Study](#))
 - Chronic disease prevention and health promotion is one of his priority areas. Dr. Greene emphasized the need to address chronic diseases from the root cause of the social determinants of health.
 - Dr Greene concluded his comments on the agency's surveillance of emerging infectious diseases, especially the Ebola outbreak in Uganda. Ebola, a viral disease with the range of between 30% to 70% case fatality rate devastates communities where there are not adequate health care systems and disease control. However, the Ugandan public health systems appear to have gotten the outbreak under control. The World Health Organization is expected to declare that the outbreak is over on January 11. This news is good for international travel policy update in northern Virginia and across the state.
[Ebola Outbreak Over in Uganda](#)

PRESENTATIONS:

- Presentation: "[Virginia's General Assembly Bills, 2023](#)", by Alexandra Jansson, MPP, Senior Policy Analyst, Governmental and Regulatory Affairs, VDH
- Presentation: "[COVID-19 Best Practices & Lessons Learned](#)" by Dwyne Roadcap, Director Office of Drinking Water, VDH

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- Presentation: "[Sickle Cell Disease Program Management](#)", by Shamaree J. Cromartie, MPH, Blood Disorders Program Coordinator & Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs Program, VDH
- Presentation: "[Respiratory Disease, \(COVID-19/Flu\)](#)", Elena Diskin, MPH, Epidemiology Program Manager, Office of Epidemiology, VDH

UPDATES:

Office of Health Equity (OHE) Updates

Ms. Sandra Serna, Director, Office of Health Equity shared the following updates:

- The Office of Health Equity has been providing related health equity programmatic legislative bill summaries at this year's General Assembly session. OHE detailed the difference between what is proposed in the Mental Health Reimbursement program legislation as currently written and the Behavioral Health Loan Repayment Program already in existence and administered by VDH. The OHE essentially administer every single health care workforce incentive program with waiving requirements for clinicians or physicians. The budget amendments that are tied to the \$55 million that was announced by the Governor would probably flow through OHE's amazing workforce unit to administer. The Division of Social Epidemiology is working on Health Opportunity Index (HIO) updates. The HOI presents the determinants of health across Virginia's communities. The revised version is expected to be available at the end of this month.

ACHDHE Members' Updates:

- No update was provided.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- No update was provided.

ADJOURNMENT:

The ACHDHE meeting was adjourned at 2:10 PM.

Next ACHDHE meeting: April 11, 2023.

Time: 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Host Site: James Monroe Building, 101 North 14 Street, 23219.

Kindly send your questions to augustine.doe@vdh.virginia.gov.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Augustine Doe, Division of Multicultural Health and Community Engagement (DMHCE)

Minutes Reviewed By:

David C. Rose, MD, FAAP, ACHDHE Chair

Kate Bradshaw, Ph.D., FACHE, CPHQ, ACHDHE Vice Chair