



Department of Public Health and Human Services

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Steve Bullock, Governor

Richard H. Opper, Director

Public Health System Improvement Task Force Minutes

June 22, 2016

1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Task Force Attendees:

- **Todd Harwell** (DPHHS, PHSD) – Co-Chair
- **Lora Wier** (MPHA Representative) – Co-Chair
- **Kristi Aklestad** (Toole County Health Department — Small County Representative)
- **Melanie Reynolds** (Lewis and Clark Public Health — Large County Representative)
- **Heather Jurvakainen** (Park County Public Health Department – Medium County Representative)
- **Joe Russell** (Flathead City-County Health Department — AMPHO Representative)

Other Attendees:

- **Tony Ward** (University of Montana)
- **Terry Ray** (System Improvement Office, PHSD)

Excused Task Force Members:

- **Bonnie Lovelace** (DEQ — Ex-officio member)
- **Jean Curtiss** (County Commissioner — MACo/Local Boards of Health Representative)
- **Craig Molgaard** (University of Montana — Montana University System Representative)
- **Janet Runnion** (Rocky Boy’s Health Board — Tribal Health Department Representative)
- **Kathy Moore** (Lewis and Clark Public Health — MEHA)

Review of Previous Meeting Minutes

- No comments on previous minutes. Minutes were approved.

Announcements

- Todd Harwell announced that the Governor’s office created the Office of Indian Health which is headed by Mary Lynne Billy Old Coyote.
- Heather Jurvakainen noted that she received short notice on the meeting and asked if the meeting announcement could be sent out earlier. Todd Harwell discussed scheduling meetings throughout the year. Agenda and other meeting information out earlier. Todd asked if there is a better day of the week to have the meeting to increase participation. Melanie, Joe, and Kristi noted that Thursdays are not the best day to have the task force meetings.
- Todd Harwell noted that Bonnie Lovelace will be leaving the Task Force due to retirement. Bonnie is working with her director to identify a replacement.
- Todd discussed the Public Health Summer Institute and the Public Health in Montana course on Monday and Tuesday (July 18-19). Todd is researching the history of public health in Montana. If the members have interesting historical documents please send them to Todd. Greg Holzman will teach the Public Health History class during the Summer Institute. There will also be individuals from various local health departments that will present during the PH in Montana course. Melanie asked that the instructors connect any clinical discussions to public health.

Maternal and Child Health Block Grant Update

- Terry Ray announced that by July 15th the MCHBG annual report and work plan will be completed and members will be sent the documents for review. At the next meeting in August Blair Lund will review the plan with the PHSITF for comment.

Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant (PHHS) Discussion

- Terry Ray announced that the PHHS BG work plan reviewed at the last meeting of the PHSITF was approved by CDC.
- Terry Ray announced new activities related to workforce development and training that will be added to the work plan for this year. The funding comes from other activities that came in under budget.

Certificate of Public Health Classes

- Todd Harwell discussed the CPH and the support the PHSD will provide. Todd asked for feedback from the Task Force on the class selection. Todd interviewed a number of PHSD staff who are graduates or completing the MPH now. Todd recommended the following courses: Intro to Epi., Health Policy, Social and Behavior Sciences in PH, Program Evaluation and Research Methods, Environmental and Rural Health, and Community Partnerships. Todd recommended Intro to Epi., Health Policy, Social and Behavior Sciences in PH as required and then the others would be elective.
- Melanie Reynolds asked about Social and Behavior Sciences in PH. Why would this course be chosen over Program Evaluation for example?
- Tony Ward noted that the course is taught by Kerry Harris in the fall and is not focused on designing a program such as you would find in the Program Evaluation class. Social and Behavior Sciences in PH focuses on interventions and can be adapted to the students. Todd Harwell noted that the Social and Behavior Sciences in PH would be useful to multiple staff positions. Anyone that is in health education and program managers would benefit in using the tools to help people move in the right direction.
- Melanie Reynolds noted that there is a potential that a student would not take any PH science or skills classes. Melanie asked if the course is just offered to State employees. Todd pointed out that it will be offered to State employees and local employees similar to the UW PHMC program.
- Todd Harwell noted that if students wish to continue on, the classes and credits will apply to an MPH but the students would have to take the GRE. Tony Ward discussed how many of their current students take the CPH and continue on to get their MPH. The CPH is like a trial run. Todd Harwell discussed biostatistics and the justification for not including it in the selection. Joe Russell noted biostats class is not too important if only 4 classes are offered. It is not used in the day to day work.
- Joe Russell asked why not just let students chose 4 of the 5 in the list (or actually 6 since there are 6 on the list). Todd noted that it could be an option. Joe noted that an environmental health practitioner would avoid Social and Behavior Sciences in PH would not apply as much. Joe asked to open the selection broader, more choice.
- Todd Harwell stated that the community partnerships course is not on the table of recommended classes since it is a special course. Todd received good feedback on the course. Joe recommends 4 of 6 selections.
- Todd asked Tony to discuss environmental health class. Tony explained that the class covers air quality, water quality, etc.
- Todd recommended that members have a week or two to provide feedback after further reviewing the list. Todd wants to lay-out a plan for a way ahead. Tony asked about the start date which is fall 2017.
- Todd asked if the members could review their employees' skills and what skills could use strengthening.
- Todd announced that the PHSD will be drafting an agreement with UM Public and Community Health Sciences School that will cover training, practicums, and guest instructors. The PHSD will be working on this agreement. MPHA is working on placements for practicums also.
- Scholarships available for CPH. Between 20-30 individuals could be partly covered with 50% of total cost covered by the PHSD. Looking at book costs also. Melanie asked when we will roll-out information on the scholarships. Once we receive feedback, Todd announced the plan will be distributed for feedback. Todd announced that the kick-off will be early next year. Similar process as the UW process for the PHMC. Terry noted that the PH System Improvement Office will be working UM on the applicants. UM has the final decision for

who they accept into the program. Todd noted it is a great way for the public health community to build a relationship with UM.

- Terry Ray noted that the next due date would be the application submission date to UM.
- Todd Harwell noted the options for the future. A workgroup is looking at what to offer into the future. PHMC is focused on management and the CPH will focus on core PH skills. Todd noted that we will be discussing options with the PHSITF.

MMA Tobacco Bill Proposal Update

- Todd discussed an initiative by MMA to move the minimum age for purchase of e-cigarettes to 21 years of age.

Addressing opiate use and abuse, CDC Coop agreement

- PHSD applied for a CDC grant to assess the problem and create a plan to address the issue.
- Todd noted the PHSD should know by August if the grant is approved. The State is moving forward either way to form a state planning group.

Quality Improvement Training

- Terry Ray discussed the budgeting of \$25,000 each year to professional QI training. Extra funding is available to cooperate with the MPHA to carry-out a post conference training event on Thursday, September 29th. Grace Gorenflo will teach the class. The training will be all day. The training is free. MPHA will handle the registration and the stand-by list. Training is at the basic or refresher level, covering the process and the tools. Todd noted that the course will benefit just about anyone in public health. Lora noted that she is identifying how many individuals can participate in the class. In the past the limit is around 25 students. Terry noted to use 25 as a planning figure until we get an exact number back. Todd commented on the collaboration between MPHA and the PHSD.
- Melanie Reynolds noted that the day conflicts with a local planning session. Terry noted that we are trying to get more value out of existing training events and conferences.
- Todd stated that the PHSD will send out messages on the class offering and Terry noted the PHSIO will synchronize efforts with MPHA.

Workforce Survey Follow-up Activities

- Terry Ray discussed the resourcing of a workgroup meeting planning session on the way-ahead for the workforce survey recently completed and the group will be developing a long-range training plan, up to 5 years. The workgroup will be looking at ways to combine workforce surveys so individuals are not being asked the same question on different occasions over a year.

Sponsorships to the MPHA Conference

- Terry Ray asked for the PHSITF's feedback on funding expenses associated with the MPHA conference. The PHSIO will work with MPHA to fund lodging up to 4 days, per-diem, travel, and registration fees. The sponsorships/scholarships will be allocated to PH Officials, PH students, and special group. Terry asked if there are any comments or concerns from the Task Force.
- Melanie Reynolds asked if we could ensure we advertise it well.
- Todd Harwell said the PHSD would send information to Tony to market it at the UM.
- Terry Ray asked if there are any special communities that we should market to. Janet sent a note asking to slice off some of the sponsorships to the tribes.
- Lora Wier said she will be discussing the sponsorship opportunity with Kerry Pride this week. Lora asked if we could decrease the amount to \$750 per sponsorship. Based on Lora's computations we should offer the sponsorship to more individuals by reducing from \$1000 to \$750 per individual. Melanie Reynolds noted that \$1000 would not be needed that much. Distance will determine the travel cost. Todd noted that we will look at lowering the amount.

Montana Public Health Association (MPHA) Updates

- Lora Wier noted sponsorship application release date is July 25. The MPHA website will receive applications until August 8th. Participants will be judged using a system similar to the judging of abstracts. Participants would be notified on August 15 whether they were awarded a sponsorship.
- Registration opens August 8th for the MPHA conference.
- 27th-28th MPHA conference in Billings, Crown Plaza. Power of Story is the theme. Keynote speaker will lead us on how to share your stories on what we are accomplishing in public health.
- Lora met with Senator Tester and he asked if we could help with stories.
- MPHA has a members' only Facebook collaboration site.
- MPHA continues to partner with UM to establish a student section in MPHA. Continuing to connect students with local health departments for practicum.
- MPHA will publish a newsletter next month. Send articles to Emily.
- MPHA will be involved in the APHA PHAC- Public Health Action Campaign. Focus area include reauthorization federal nutrition program, protect public prevention fund, appropriations to public health agencies including, clean air act, and gun laws.

Follow-up Items

- The PHSIO will collect information from members on the Certificate of Public Health class options.
- The PHSIO will send out calendar appointments for the scheduled PHSIO meetings. The PHSIO will also send out the work plan for the task force.
- The PHSIO will send the Task Force the plan for the professional program (CPH) near the end of this year.

The next meeting will be a conference call on Wednesday, August 24, 2016. 1:30pm-2:20pm.