

Maternal Child Adolescent Health Advisory Board Minutes

October 3, 2024

Members	
Present	Absent
Dr. Renée Alger	Lara Magnúsdóttir**
Dr. Elizabeth Vermilyea	Rocio Monter
Gina Cuclis	Dr. Jeff Miller*
Annie Nicol	
Erin Reed	
Melissa Apuya	
Allison Murphy	
Catherine Barrisford	
Stephanie Montez	
Dr. Michael Perry**	
Flora Henningsen**	
Dr. Milana PeBenito**	

*Excused absence

**Pending Approval by Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

Staff Present Janette Allee, Administrative Aide, Emily Gonzalez Demont, Health Information Specialist, Tobacco Prevention Program.

Guest Assemblymember Damon Connolly

Call to Order Dr. Renée Alger called the meeting to order at 12:36 p.m. and introductions were made.

Meeting Minutes Catherine Barrisford motioned to approve the minutes. Allison Murphy seconded the motion,

Dr. Renée Alger-Abstained

Dr. Elizabeth Vermilyea-Abstained

Stephanie Montez-Aye

Gina Cuclis-Aye

Catherine Barrisford-Aye

Allison Murphy-Aye

and the minutes were approved.

Assemblyman Connolly Introduced himself to the membership and reported that he recently finished his first two-year term and is now back in his district stating that his office is very near to this location at 50 D Street. He added that he appreciates the work that this board is doing. In his first term he has introduced thirteen new bills signed into law which is a great start in a tough budget. He is working to advocate to continue to have adequate resources for all necessary programs. Asm. Connolly wanted to highlight some specific bills such as AB 935 which relates to the DOJ's enforcement of the flavored tobacco ban, and AB1109 relating to teen suicide prevention via sodium nitrite used as a meat preservative. This bill has banned the ability to purchase in high concentrations. This year the assembly has focused on balancing the budget. He was also involved in enacting the largest climate bond which will be Proposition 4 on the ballot particularly around wildfire prevention, nature-based solutions and sustainable agriculture. His concerns are disparities in healthcare access mental health care services, and he is in close contact with community clinics, and wants to take this time to listen to this board and hear how he can be of service.

Flora reported that in her work she consistently sees three barriers to care that the women she serves encounter. One is access to free health care it is hard for them to get in to be seen in a timely manner. The second is insurance. Medi-Cal is great if you qualify for it,

but not everyone does. If you find out you're pregnant in June, you may need to wait for open enrollment period in October, which really means you won't be seen until January. Another barrier to care is they don't have enough people working at Medi-Cal because when you call you have to stay on the phone for three hours to get help. Pregnancy should be a qualifying event. We really need universal health care. If you don't qualify for the poverty income level which is unbelievably low, you also can't afford to pay for insurance. This is all exacerbated by the fact that Sonoma County also closed three birth centers in the last year and a half.

Dr. PeBenito steered the discussion towards postpartum leave by stating that paid family leave and FMLA leave was intended to set the bar as a minimum for what employees have access to when it really defines the maximum everywhere as no employer goes beyond that. The standard needs to be set much higher. California has recognized that the postpartum period lasts a year. Medi-Cal was extended to 12 months postpartum, but disability is set for 6 weeks. No physician would state that a woman would recover in 6 weeks and a C section takes 8 weeks. Many countries offer much longer family bonding times such as a year and include paternity time. After birth the woman needs someone to support her to recover.

Poverty directly impacts everyone's health, and it can impact stress levels and from that we can make a direct correlation to child abuse. We want to support the family unit and prevent them from reaching the child welfare system.

Another issue that Dr. PeBenito brought up is that they receive funding for Medi-Cal and Partnership for mild to moderate mental illness, so they are not supposed to care for those who have severe mental illness, those patients need to be served by the county who receive funding to serve those patients, and it fractures their care. These patients are the ones who most need continuity of care. This has been an ongoing issue. Currently there is mold in the building, and they have been routed to the ER and video consulted with a doctor.

Correspondence None received.

Announcements Dr. Alger announced First 5 is hosting a free screening on the film "It's Basic" followed by a paneled discussion featuring Michael Tubbs former Stockton Mayor, this film is about guaranteed income, a pathway to income equity, this will be shown on Thursday, October 10th at 5:30-9:30 pm at the Glaser Center and you must RSVP, light refreshments and drinks provided.

Public Comment None.

Meeting Adjourned The meeting adjourned at 1:23 p.m.

Passed Motions			
Minutes from September were approved.			
Handouts			
Action Items			
2022-2023 Meeting Dates			
November 7	Thursday	12:30-2:00	625 5 th Street, City View Rooms
December 5	Thursday	12:30-2:00	625 5 th Street, City View Rooms
MCAH AB Website			
https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/health-and-human-services/health-services/divisions/public-health/maternal-child-and-adolescent-health/maternal-child-and-adolescent-health-advisory-board			