

Public Health Council

STATE OF WISCONSIN

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF DECEMBER 12, 2008

EPIC SYSTEMS HEADQUARTERS, 1979 MILKY WAY, VERONA, WISCONSIN

Council Members Present: Ayaz Samadani, (Chair); Dr. Gary Gilmore (Vice-Chair); Mary Jo Baisch; Bevan Baker; John Bartkowski; Bridget Clementi; Susan Garcia Franz; Terri Kramolis, Corazon Loteyro; John Meurer; Deborah Miller; Douglas Nelson; James Sanders; Lynn Sheets; Julie Willems Van Dijk

Council Members Absent: Catherine Frey; Charles Post (Excused); Thai Vue (Excused)

Division of Public Health (DPH) Staff: Deputy DPH Administrator Tom Sieger; Jane Conner; Patricia Guhleman; Margaret Schmelzer; Traici Brockman; Kevin Wymore

Guests: Kristine Freundlich, DHS; Matthew Stanford; DHS Deputy Secretary Mark Thomas; Barb Pevytoe; Gary Hollander; Kathryn Jones; John Easterday; Jeff Nelson

Call to Order

Council Chair Dr. Ayaz Samadani convened the meeting shortly after 9 a.m.

Minutes

The Council reviewed the minutes of the October meeting. The Council moved to approve the minutes without correction; the motion passed.

Administration

Dr. Samadani provided an overview of the October meeting evaluation results. Overall, the Council gave the meeting a 4.0 effectiveness rating. New members were introduced. Three of the four new members attended the meeting: Deborah Miller, James Sanders, and Mary Jo Baisch. Charles Post sent word that he would not be able to attend the meeting.

Drunken Driving Issue

At the October meeting, the Council received an overview of information related to the problem of drunken driving in Wisconsin. Kevin Wymore updated the group on numerous important developments since the October meeting, including a series of articles and online resources by the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel newspaper. Wymore indicated the Journal Sentinel published a front-page editorial, *Time to Stop Enabling the*

Tragedy, on October 23 that lays out an agenda for policy change, including approaches to curtail drunken driving. Wymore indicated the newspaper hoped to keep the issue in the public eye by publishing a daily *Sobering Reminder*, which would re-cap drunken driving fatalities for each of the 72 counties.

John Easterday, DHS Division Administrator for the Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, said that Wisconsin statistics lead in a number of negative drinking-related categories.

In November, UW Health announced it would lead a coalition, Wisconsin Alcohol Risk Education (AWARE), to change policy and legislation on alcohol abuse. The coalition listed combating drunken driving as its first priority. The Council reviewed its draft letter requesting coalition membership in AWARE. Council discussion included concerns about the need for AWARE to recognize the importance of prevention in addressing alcohol abuse issues. Julie Willems Van Dijk moved and Gary Gilmore seconded a motion that the Council join AWARE, with modifications to the draft letter.

These modifications included:

- 1) Adding a reference to the State Health Plan Committee recommendations approved by the Council earlier in the year that referenced law enforcement measures;
- 2) Adding a reference to the Ad Hoc Finance Committee report recommendations on increasing taxes on alcohol to finance public health;
- 3) Asking that the coalition broaden its drunken-driving goals to include health promotion, prevention, screening and treatment; and
- 4) Asking the coalition for a roster of its membership and a copy of its mission statement.

Bevan Baker said he was troubled that the AWARE coalition did not individually approach the Council to invite its membership and said that he would like further discussion of the issue at the next Executive Committee meeting.

Public Health Financing Discussion

Department Deputy Secretary Mark Thomas responded to the Council's public health financing report. He lauded the Council for its work and said the Department will continue to explore "connectivity" with public health partners. However, Thomas noted that the state's revenue base is shrinking, and that is why the Department did not include the report's financing recommendations in the Department's biennial budget recommendations. Julie Willems van Dijk said she understood that the recommendations for more state funding may not be feasible under current conditions. She asked that, in light of the report's findings, we request that current public health funding be preserved, and that the report be "kept on the shelf" to be implemented when economic conditions improve.

Emergency Preparedness Committee

Emergency Preparedness Committee Chair Bevan Baker reported from the committee. He indicated that Wisconsin's preparedness officials received a perfect score of 10 out of 10 preparedness indicators in a report by Trust for America's Health. The Council received a news release describing the achievement.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned shortly after 10:30 a.m. in order for Council members to join with members of the Wisconsin 2020 State Health Plan Strategic Leadership Team and the Wisconsin Minority Health Leadership Council to address the 2020 State Health Plan.

Catherine Frey, Secretary

DATE