

**New York State Department of Health
Health Equity Council
March 1, 2024 - Meeting Minutes**

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| Attendees | <p>Council Members: Helen Arteaga-Landaverde, Rev. Diane Holt, Tandra LaGrone, Luis (Freddy) Molano, Daniel Carrion, Raul Vazquez, Rev. Diann Holt</p> <p>Partial Attendance: Ngozi Moses, Guillermo Chacon</p> <p>Council Members with an excused absence: LaRay Brown, Lenora Reid-Rose</p> <p>Council Members without excused absence: Mill Etienne</p> <p>New York State Department of Health Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities Prevention Staff: Wilma Alvarado-Little, Julia Vinagolu-Baur, Sheila Maddox</p> <p>New York State Department of Health Staff: Jamie Spina (Division of Legal Affairs), Tina Kim (Acting Deputy Commissioner Office of Health Equity and Human Rights)</p> |
| Topics | Discussion |
| <p>Helen Arteaga-Landaverde Presiding Chair</p> <p>Call to Order & Introductions</p> | <p>The meeting was convened at 10:15 A.M.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wilma Alvarado-Little, Associate Commissioner, Director Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities Prevention opened the meeting and introduced Ms. Arteaga-Landaverde in which she introduced herself and welcomed the fellow council members for this year’s first in-person meeting. Ms. Arteaga-Landaverde also welcomed Tina Kim, Acting Deputy Commissioner, Office of Health Equity and Human Rights. Ms. Arteaga-Landaverde thanked the public for their participation and reminded them to provide any suggestions, remarks, or information that they wish to share during the public comment period of the agenda. |
| Council Business | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Arteaga-Landaverde provided updates and an overview of the past year: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Finalizing the language around extraordinary circumstance policy in the December 8, 2023 meeting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ In April of 2022, Governor Hochul signed a bill amending Open Meetings Law (OML), making permanent the expanded use of videoconferencing by public bodies to conduct open meetings, under extraordinary circumstances, regardless of a state of emergency declaration. These extraordinary circumstances include, but are not limited to disability, illness (with documentation sent to the chair and commissioner), caregiving responsibilities (materiality or elder care), inclement weather (within reason, natural disaster, state/city emergency) and transportation delays or crisis as a result. A minimum number of members must be present to fulfill the Council’s legal quorum requirement in the same physical location or locations where the public can attend. The member appearing through use of videoconferencing will be counted as present when voting. ➤ The Council finds appropriate that extraordinary circumstances to be allowed by a Council member to join virtually and provide their location that would not be open to the public. The Council member would need to appear on video and their name would need to be presented on the screen in order to participate. |

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- Extraordinary Circumstances Policy were voted on December 8, 2023:
 - Guillermo Chacon made the first motion to approve the policy and Luis (Freddy) Molano made the second motion to approved.
 - Approve – Guillermo Chacon, Helen Arteaga-Landaverde, Luis (Freddy) Molano, Daniel Carrion, Ngozi Moses
 - Oppose – None
 - Abstain – None
- Helen mentioned a brief overview of the Council's 2023 activities.
 - Total of nine presentations
 - Preplanning of the meetings
- Approval of minutes – December 8, 2023
- December 8, 2023 meeting minutes were voted on:
 - Freddy Molano made the first motion to approve the minutes with a minor edit on page 3, 4th bullet and Guillermo Chacon made the second motion to approved.
 - Approve – Guillermo Chacon, Helen Arteaga-Landaverde, Luis (Freddy) Molano, Daniel Carrion, Rev. Diann Holt, Tandra LaGrone, Raul Vazquez
 - Oppose – None
 - Abstain – None
- Helen welcomed Tina Kim, Acting Deputy Commissioner reported on behalf of Johanne Morne, Executive Deputy Commissioner
- Tina Kim provided updates from the Office of the Commissioner
 - The Division of Chronic Disease Prevention staff updated the New York State Cancer Services Program data collection system to begin capturing sexual orientation and gender identity demographic information. The addition of sexual orientation and gender identity data collection in the program will support program efforts to offer a welcoming, safe, and respectful environment.
 - The New York State Women, Infant and Children Program continues to see successful outcomes from the Women, Infant and Children chatbot, called Wanda. Since the launch in April 2021 Wanda has grown into a reliable source of Women, Infant and Children program information and referral.
 - The Center for Environmental Health developed templates for public water systems across the state to document inventories of lead service lines. These inventories are required to be submitted to New York State Department of Health by October 2024 by both EPA's Lead and Copper Rule Revisions and by New York State Public Health Law 1114-b/Lead Right to Know Act. These templates have been shared with Local Health Departments and public water systems to document lead service lines. This is an important step toward replacement of lead service lines to limit New Yorkers' exposure to lead from their drinking water.

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- The Office of Science has redesigned the New York State Department of Health webpage navigation to facilitate accessing data, and upgrading the primary public health data page, making the upgraded dashboards and others more prominent.
- The Office of Science has migrated the Opioid Quarterly Report. This page is found at <https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/>. This report provides timely, provisional opioid epidemic data, from a static report to a new, interactive dashboard. This will enhance users' accessibility and use of the data, while speeding up the time for publication of this information.
- Several hospitals have announced their plans to close either services or their entire facility. The Department is actively listening to the community input regarding the importance of maintaining access to care and continuing to achieve health equity.
- At the State of the State address, Governor Hochul announced that to alleviate strain on both providers and the State and she will instruct the Department of Health to make necessary updates to the State's Certificate of Need (CON) program by raising the financial thresholds that qualify a project for more detailed review and streamlining the application and approval processes, including for now-routine services.
- Governor Hochul advanced legislation to make Emergency Medical Services (EMS) an essential service to ensure that emergency medical service providers are required to respond to emergencies. She built upon the progress made in last year's budget by directing the newly established Emergency Medical Service statewide taskforce to create five "Emergency Medical Services zones." Each zone will maintain its own Emergency Medical Service workforce to augment local Emergency Medical Services agencies where the workforce is insufficient and can be deployed to respond to emergencies statewide.
- The Governor signed into law Article 29-EE which creates an entirely new licensure category for the Certificate of Need Review for Program for All Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) program. It utilizes a coordinated model of care with an interdisciplinary team of health professionals. It provides for a comprehensive benefit package that enables members to remain in the community rather than receive care in a nursing home.
- The New York State Department of Health prepares for amendments to Public Health Law which goes into effect May 3, 2024. This requires a syphilis test during the third trimester of pregnancy in addition to syphilis testing at the time of first examination. The AIDS Institute within the New York State Department of Health is creating a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document for providers on syphilis screening during pregnancy, including all existing and new requirements for syphilis screening during pregnancy to ensure that there's a single comprehensive document for New York State providers.
- Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion conducted a training on February 13th of this year for Department of Health staff overseeing the various advisory boards and councils. The department oversees a convening of over forty advisory boards and councils that make key decisions that impact the health and well-being of New Yorkers. The objective of the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Training titled Enhancing the Department of Health Councils and Boards through Diversity and Inclusion is to provide boards and council liaisons and affiliates with knowledge and understanding of Diversity and Inclusion updates related to vetting processes.
- The Governor announced major expansions to combat gun violence in New York in her 2024 State of the State and executive budget proposal. She announced that the New York State Health Systems for Gun Violence Prevention Task Force and its establishment is underway. The membership will build support from leadership in hospital based settings to promote implementation of recommended solutions to address and mitigate gun violence in communities.
- The Office of Health Equity and Human Rights received a number of Health Equity Impact Assessments over the course of several months since the law went into effect June 22, 2023. The Health Equity Impact Assessment Unit continues to

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| | <p>review Health Equity Impact Assessments that come into the Department with Certificate of Need applications. Since the Governor signed legislation which requires consideration of impacts to reproductive health services in maternal health care Section 2802B of the Public Health Law was amended by Chapter 702 of the laws of 2023 on December 8, 2023, taking effect retroactively to the date of when the Health Equity Impact Assessment requirement went into law on June 22, 2023. The amendment expands the scope of the Health Equity Impact Assessment to include impacts to reproductive health services and maternal health care.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities Prevention has been working on formally transitioning from Strategic, Measurable, Ambitious, Realistic, Time-bound (SMART) to Strategic, Measurable, Ambitious, Realistic, Time-bound, Inclusive, and Equitable (SMARTIE). Goals as addressing racial and health equity and eliminating health disparities is at the core of the work we do and is supported by our legislative charge. Traditionally adding the I for inclusive and E for equitable ensures that racial and health equity are part of the process and provide additional steps to achieve a goal of health equity for all New Yorkers. and support efforts to continue to include our community partners and stakeholders who are experts with their communities and can provide guidance on how to keep their voices at the table. Wilma Alvarado-Little, Associate Commissioner, Director of the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities Prevention presented this at the recent internal Department of Health Advisory Committee on Health Equity and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to talk about what these Strategic, Measurable, Ambitious, Realistic, Time-bound, Inclusive, and Equitable Goals mean and how it can apply to the department's work. ○ The Mentorship in Medicine and Other Health Professions program supports activities and approaches designed to contribute toward the reduction of barriers, and increase the number of economically disadvantaged and underrepresented minority students who elect to pursue careers in medicine and health related professions. This program seeks to address health disparities among racial and ethnic minorities by supporting institutions focused on working with minority and disadvantaged students and increase their awareness and pursuit of careers in health care, including behavioral health, and to increase the availability of STEM programs. |
| Presentations: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Amanda Lothrop, New York State Department of Health Office of Health Insurance Programs, Isaac Kastenbaum, Vice President, Primary Care Development Corporation. Their presentation, titled, "New York Health Equity Reform (NYHER) 1115 Waiver Amendment Update." ● Wilma Alvarado-Little, Associate Commissioner, Director Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities Prevention. The presentation title "Presentation to the Health Equity Council on Sickle Cell Disease - S1839A / A2609". |
| 2024/2025 Council Charge | <p>Ms. Arteaga-Landaverde proposes the following three categories as the 2024/2025 Council charge.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Women's Health (Reproductive Health, which include prenatal, maternal, abortion, sexually transmitted diseases hypertension, cardiovascular disease, access to healthcare, cancer) 2. Artificial Intelligence and its impact in access to right to health care. 3. Sickle Cell - S1839A / A2609 - This was an act to amend the Public Health Law 245, under which the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities was created. The amendment is in relation to sickle cell disease detection and education to require the Health Equity Council to advise the Commissioner of Health on sickle cell disease and create recommendations to promote the screening and detection of sick cell disease. <p>The Council members will address at the next meeting.</p> |

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Meeting Recap, Feedback, Action Items and Next Steps

Recap, next steps, and action items:

- Recap
 - Reports from the Commissioner and Deputy Executive Commissioner with the handling of STEM
 - Strategic, Measurable, Ambitious, Realistic, Time-bound, Inclusive, and Equitable Goals
 - Women, Infant and Children updates
 - Maternal Health
 - 1115 Waiver
- Action items/Next steps.
 - Health Equity Assessment - How do you explain to colleagues about the Health Equity Impact Assessment and how they can it be applied. What are the next steps for the Health Equity Assessment.
 - 1115 Waiver - Frequently Asked Questions Tool – Where is the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) tool link located?

The Council will address the Health Equity Assessment and the 1115 Waiver concern at the next Council meeting.

Public Comment and Adjournment

Ms. Arteaga-Landaverde opened the floor to public and the following inquiries were sent via email from the webcast chat.

- *Comment:* Sara Rosenberger The American Red Cross in New York State has a Sickle Cell Initiative and has Medical Directors that would be appropriate SMEs on screening and detection as well as the importance of blood donation and a diverse blood supply to adequately treat individuals suffering from Sickle Cell Disease.

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 PM.

Next Meeting Date
June 7, 2024

Time
10:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Location
Albany, NY