

Health Access Coalition

Meeting Minutes, 4/11/06

Present: Aimee Chitayat, Mary Ann Ferrera, Barbara Sheehy, Paula Hines, Lorena Martinez-Ochoa, Rachel Berry-Millett, Michelle Williams, Tiombe Mashama, Wanda Session, James Acuña, Sue Martini, Lola Ejiwunmi, Christina Reich, Ana Araujo, Paul Branson, Nilda Perez, Marianne Balin, Patricia Snyder, Martha Fuentes, Phyllis Johnson, Sandra Padilla, John Greitzer, Tom Harais.

Welcome and Introductions: Lorena welcomed the group and members introduced themselves.

Steering Committee Report: Christina Reich announced the two candidates for the HAC co-chair and the HAC recording secretary, Aimee Chitayat and Lola Ejiwunmi, respectively. Aimee, the executive director of the Community Clinic Consortium, and Lola, of the Community Housing Development Corporation of North Richmond, each gave a brief background of their work, involvement with the coalition, and interest in the position. The group then granted a simple majority consensus to approve their positions.

Updates:

- Christina announced her promotion to the coalition, and introduced Ana Araujo, who will be taking over her work on health access and her involvement in the health access coalition.
- Paula announced her retirement, and introduced Michelle Williams, who will be taking over the majority of her duties for the Child Health and Disability Prevention Program (CHDP).

Presentations:

Transportation Update –

- Wendy Cervantes, from the CCHS Healthy Neighborhoods Project, gave an update on the Town Hall meeting on transportation in Bay Point. The meeting included representatives from the Transportation Action Team, including six youths. The group has been working with TriDelta Transit to identify transportation-related issues, including language barriers, route changes, and lack of respect and rapport between youth and bus drivers. The Latina Action Team in Bay Point has been working to provide Spanish booklets for transit employees that include phonetic translations and useful phrases.
- The TEACH Project has been working in Bay Point for approximately 18 months in coordination with the Latina Action Team to identify other transportation issues, including bus stop shelters for rain and sun, route changes, translation needs, transit employee/resident relationships, and obtaining resident feedback. The Community-Based Transportation Plans in Bay Point are set to begin implementation in May 2006 and will continue through December 2006.
- Sandra Padilla gave an update on the P.A.T.H. Report and outlined the TEACH Working Groups' accomplishments and needs assessment. In the Monument, the group will be applying for a Lifeline Transportation Grant, the funds from which would provide an expedited shuttle service to link several healthcare sites, including the county hospital in Martinez. Paul Branson encouraged the Health Access Coalition to write a letter of support for the grant proposal.
- John Greitzer discussed the budget cuts to Route 200 in East County. Effective May 1, 2006, the route will lose county funding and experience changes and reductions. County passes will no longer be accepted. Starting the route out of Bay Point BART and cutting the route's extension in far East County has also been a consideration. This would significantly affect populations in far East County, including Los Medanos College and La Clínica. Public hearings to discuss this issue are to be scheduled shortly.

Board of Supervisors Public Hearing –

Aimee distributed copies of the proposed budget cuts for health services, totaling \$12.8 million. The cuts would most drastically affect Alcohol and Other Drug Services, the Enterprise Fund, Mental Health, and Public Health. Aimee also handed out a draft testimony to be presented at the April 25 Board of Supervisors Hearing. HAC members reviewed the testimony and gave feedback. Aimee encouraged coalition members to attend the hearing as representatives of the Health Access Coalition and to support the testimony. Lorena reminded members that the county employees could only attend the hearing on personal or vacation time, and not on county time.

EHSD Business Practices –

Sandy Baldwin discussed recent changes to the Medi-Cal processing unit. The two primary changes included the implementation of an online case record system in Spring 2005, and the recent implementation of the Automated Eligibility Determination System, CalWIN. These changes have been shocking to the system, and have had an impact on workers, actions, and programs, including intake and caseload management. Business practices have been rethought, and the changes are still settling into the system.

Reprogramming of the CalWIN system is set to occur in July 2006 after Fresno County goes live with CalWIN. Within Contra Costa, by the end of 2006, it is expected that all case discrepancies will have been addressed and rectified, despite the growing caseload.

In November 2005, the Medi-Cal Service Center was opened in Antioch. The center includes 12 units, with 9-11 workers per unit. This has given clients greater access to eligibility workers; however there has been a loss of staff, as many workers are unwilling to commute to Antioch. The center is in the process of hiring and training more staff. Eligibility workers can make appointments with clients to meet face-to-face at the intake office closest to the client.

Announcements –

Rachel distributed the new Federal Income Guidelines, effective April 2006.

Pat Snyder announced an event sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley: Curing the Health Care System: Reform for California, on Tuesday April 25.

Paula emphasized the need to get upcoming fairs posted on the HAC Events Calendar as early as possible.

The next HAC meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 9, 2006, from 10am – 12pm at 2425 Bisso Lane in Concord.