

Approved: February 15, 2012

## MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Representative Geraldine Flaharty, Ranking Minority Member of the House Health and Human Services at 1:30 p.m. on January 25, 2012, in Room 784 of the Docking Building. Members of the Senate Public Health and Welfare committee also attended the meeting in order to hear the presentation on Kansas Health Matters.

All members were present except:

Senator Chris Steineger—excused

Committee staff present:

Nobuko Folmsbee, Office of the Revisor of Statutes

Iraida Orr, Kansas Legislative Research Department

Melissa Calderwood, Kansas Legislative Research Department

Carolyn Long, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Dr. Robert F. St. Peter, Kansas Health Institute

Dr. Robert Moser, Secretary, Kansas Department of Health and Environment

Chad Austin, Kansas Hospital Association

Dr. St. Peter provided both committees with an overview of the Kansas Partnership for Improving Community Health. He indicated that this effort was important as it provided a true public/private partnership with public health and health care, and the private sector, government and non-governmental organizations. It addresses real issues, has custom-fitted solutions designed by users and partners and is action-oriented. In March 2011, the Kansas Hospital Association of Local Health Departments signed a joint resolution that encourages local health departments and hospitals to work together in conducting community health assessments and community health improvement plans. Kansas Health Matters supports the process of community health assessment/improvement, action-oriented in a one-stop source of information and data for counties, regions, and the state. It helps learn about important issues, identify possible improvements and provides collaboration for positive change. It is a fully configured and hosted website tailored to a community and will provide health and quality of life indicators, promising practices, local resources, news, event calendar, feature stories, surveys, and literature and educational materials. It is unique in that it is a true public/private partnership, and a one-stop data and resource repository for community health (Attachment #1)

Providing further insight into Kansas Health Matters, Dr. Robert Moser, Secretary and State Health Officer, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, said that Kansas Health Matters is a public website intended to help hospitals, health departments, community members and policy makers learn more about the health of their community and gather information on ways to improve it. This tool provides local health data, resources, best practices, news articles and information about community events related to important health issues. The partnership recently demonstrated this website to hospitals and local health departments for the

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Minutes of the Public Health and Welfare Committee at 1:30 p.m. on January 25, 2012, in Room 784 of the Docking Building.

purpose of supporting the development of community health assessments and community health improvement plans; however, the site's content is relevant for anyone interested in how to assess and improve the health of communities. Not only will the use of this tool help communities identify their most pressing health concerns or gaps in services, but as communities begin planning to address these needs, they will have access to evidence-based or promising practices that can be implemented to address the identified health needs.

These activities of health assessment and health improvement planning are also important to public health departments seeking accreditation. Public health accreditation is defined as the development of a set of standards, a process to measure health department performance against those standards, and reward or recognition for those health departments who meet the standards. Accreditation provides a means for a department to identify performance improvement opportunities, to improve management, develop leadership and improve relationships with the community. It will encourage and stimulate quality and performance improvement and will also promote greater accountability and transparency. According to a survey recently conducted by KDHE, about 70 percent of Kansas county health departments have indicated some level of interest in applying for accreditation while three of the largest departments reported they are on track to apply for accreditation. A majority of Kansas local health departments have either recently completed a community health assessment or have taken steps to begin that process.

This site is not just for health officials. It can benefit anyone interested in the various indicators contained in the Kansas Health Matters community dashboard. Indicators generated by this website include access to health services; children's health; exercise, nutrition and weight; heart disease and stroke; immunizations and infectious diseases; maternal, fetal and infant health; mortality data; prevention and safety; respiratory diseases; substance abuse; and wellness and lifestyle. In addition to health-specific data, the site includes other indicator categories such as Economy (Poverty) and Social Environment (Demographics).

The website contains county, regional and state health indicators, local resources and a wealth of other information in one user-friendly location. Hospital discharge data and the status on staffed hospital beds has been made available through this site, while KDHE's data contributions include Vital Statistics, the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey, the STD Program, the Immunization survey, the WIC Program, and the Environmental Public Health Tracking System. National data for Kansas Health Matters is made available by the U.S. Census. As the site develops it can tap into additional reports and data sources from the Division of Environment and Division of Health Care Finance and integrate them into the website. This will include reports on air quality and Medicaid insurance coverage. Dr. Moser stated that KDHE is a proud member of the Kansas Partnership for Improving Community Health and they look forward to continued success (Attachment #2).

## CONTINUATION SHEET

The minutes of the Public Health and Welfare Committee at 1:30 p.m. on January 25, 2012, in Room 784 of the Docking Building.

Chad Austin, Kansas Hospital Association, said that Kansas Health Matters (KHM) was your one stop source of data and information about community health in Kansas. Their website, [www.kansashealthmatters.org](http://www.kansashealthmatters.org) contains county, regional and state health indicators. In addition, the site provides tools and resources for community health assessment and community health improvement efforts.

The website is designed to help hospitals, health departments, policymakers, community planners and members learn about issues, identify improvements and collaborate for positive change. KHM website users can: compare their county's health with other Kansas counties, the nation and 2020 targets; create reports in the reports in the report assistant; learn about promising practices on a variety of topics that affect community health; access tools and resources in the CHNA toolbox; and upload local reports or ask local questions with the Ask the Expert feature.

The website also features resources in eight topic centers: health, economy, environment, public safety, transportation, education, government and politics, and social environment.

The Kansas Partnership for Improving Community Health includes:

- Kansas Association for the Medically Underserved
- Kansas Association of Local Health Departments
- Kansas Department of Health and Environment
- Kansas Health Foundation
- Kansas Health Institute
- Kansas Hospital Association
- United Way of the Plains, and
- University of Kansas Work Group for Community Health and Development

Mr. Austin then demonstrated features of the website to the joint committee (Attachment #3).

Senator Reitz asked Dr. Moser what steps were being taken regarding infant mortality in our state. A Blue Ribbon Panel has been established within the KDHE to determine areas of concern and what measures need to be taken.

The meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 26, 2012.

