

**Montgomery County – DHHS
Asian American Health Initiative (AAHI) Steering Committee Meeting
March 13, 2018**

Steering Committee	Present	AAHI Staff	Present
<i>Organizational Members</i>			
Ji-Young Cho		Sobia Ahmad	
Wilbur Friedman	X	Jennifer Chuong	
Yuchi Huang	X	Perry Chan	X
Michael Lin	X	Betty Lam	X
Hina Mehta	X	Karlie Leung	
Mayur Mody		Maria Lejano	X
Sam Mukherjee	X	Sanjana Quasem	X
Nguyen Nguyen (Vice Chair)	X	Alice Zic	
Thomas Tran	X		
Sovan Tun			
<i>Individual Members</i>			
Nerita Estampador	X	Dr. Travis Gayles	X
Meng K. Lee (Chair)	X		
Sunmin Lee			
Cynthia Macri			
Tho Tran	X		
Judy Wang			
<i>Affiliate Members</i>			
Anis Ahmed			

Welcome (Meng K. Lee, Chair)

- Meng K. Lee called the meeting to order at 6:10PM.
- Meng stated that the meeting will be recorded. There were no objections.

Approval of Agenda and Minutes (Meng K. Lee)

- A motion to approve the agenda and meeting minutes from the January 23, 2018 meeting was presented. Wilbur Friedman moved to approve and Nguyen Nguyen seconded the motion.
- Meng called for a voice vote to approve the agenda and meeting minutes. There were no objections.
- Steering Committee (SC) meeting minutes from January 23, 2018 were shared with SC members prior to the meeting.

ACTION: Meeting agenda and minutes approved with no objections.

Community Engagement Event Announcement (Tho Tran)

- Tho Tran announced that the Vietnamese American Society will be hosting a community engagement event specifically for Vietnamese seniors on Sunday, May 6, 2018 from 3:30PM – 5:30PM.
- The need for such an event was identified following a needs assessment conducted last quarter that found about 60% of seniors felt isolated from their family and community.
- SC members are requested to attend, and there is still a need for gift sponsors for the event. The goal is to raise about \$2,000 for gifts.

Conversation with County Health Officer and Public Health Chief (Dr. Travis Gayles)

- Meng K. Lee introduced Dr. Travis Gayles.
- Travis began his conversation by thanking the SC for giving him the opportunity to join the meeting, providing some background on his career, and addressing the following topics: future planning in promoting or improving minority health within Montgomery County, specific concerns about public health issues in minority communities, his thoughts and position about the use of complementary and integrative medicine in the community, and the County's plans in enhancing data for minority health issues.
- Travis stated that the County's public health efforts must be based off the most cutting-edge, evidence-based practices. In order to do this, the County needs to identify the root causes of what drives disparities in certain minority communities.
- For the first time ever, in April, the County will be publishing a report on the status of health in Montgomery County.
- The County is working to synthesize data in new meaningful ways by partnering with the University of Maryland and George Washington University. This partnership will allow the County to take advantage of the faculty, undergraduate, and graduate student resources by utilizing these academic resources to do more in depth analysis of data and identify underlying issues in minority communities. Further analysis of data will allow the County to tell a different narrative, specifying the disparities amongst the different zip codes and communities, and bringing attention to minority health issues.
- The County would also like to work more closely with the minority health initiatives to address public health issues. For example, the County is currently reframing how it addresses prevention and health promotion and is considering how to best incorporate the minority health initiatives in building a strategic vision.
- As for specific concerns about minority public health issues, Travis indicated that he would like to collect additional data to further develop priority areas, such as cancer, cardiovascular health, infant mortality, behavioral health, diabetes, and obesity. While statistics and data are important, continued dialogue with the community is also necessary to identify underlying issues and factors contributing to health problems.
- Travis emphasized the need to analyze and look at data in various ways to better identify the most pressing health disparities in minority communities. For example,

- Travis opened the floor for questions and further discussion.
- Nerita Estampador brought up the concern of food insecurity in Montgomery County.
 - Travis responded that food insecurity is a growing and large issue that needs more awareness to combat, especially given the fact that Montgomery County is often viewed as a “wealthy” county. Travis noted that the Montgomery County Food Council developed a *Montgomery County Food Security Plan*, which identifies pockets and subpopulations in the county that are disproportionately affected by food insecurity.
- Perry Chan approved of Travis’ approach to unpacking the data and looking at it from different perspectives to identify underlying issues, and he requested that Travis be an advocate for improving data collection at federal and state levels. Travis responded by asking for the SC to be proactive and continually bring issues to him that are not being adequately captured by the data.
- Travis thinks that there is room to include complementary and integrative medicine practices in programs to improve public health and it is important to create a platform to have conversations about this subject.
 - Meng questioned if the County has considered the benefit of incorporating alternative and integrative practices in preventative and general health programs. There are opportunities to explore how the County can do so. Coordination, collaboration, and improved data will enhance the County’s ability to identify these best practices and share them throughout the community.
- Yuchi Huang asked if there were any specific matrixes that recorded the alternative medicine approaches of Asian communities and recommended a benchmark approach for dissemination. Travis responded that sharing community assets is the current goal and the intention is to develop best practices based on the findings. To enhance data for minority health issues, the County is trying to grow its statistics team and increase its ability to provide more information to minority communities. Also, the County’s partnership with academic communities will help this effort.
 - Sam Mukherjee pointed out that there is a need to update the information being shared to the community regarding public health and that one of the best ways to share information with minority communities is through group talks. Sam also raised a red flag about the issue of mental health not being addressed in the Asian American community and requested that the County conduct a more comprehensive community health survey. A Community Health Needs Assessment is conducted every three years. The County is currently exploring how to make it more comprehensive and effective.
 - Nguyen asked what does Travis plan to do differently in the future to address health disparities within the community and how can the SC assist him going forward. Travis would like to analyze the data to address unidentified issues and tell different narratives to raise awareness. AAHI can collaborate with different groups to strategically work together to

streamline efforts and efficiently utilize and request additional public health resources.

Membership Application Discussion

- Wilbur requested that the SC go into executive session for this discussion.

ACTION: Tho Tran's membership as an individual is terminated. Tho will now serve as an organizational member on behalf of the Vietnamese American Services.

AAHI Program Update (Perry Chan)

- Perry announced Sanjana Quasem as the new Program Manager.
- Three positions are currently being processed by AAHI. Perry has conducted interviews for one of the positions and is in the process of determining which candidate to refer to the Office of Human Resources. Two positions are still in recruitment.
- Perry provided an update on the Blueprint project. A contractor has been identified and verbally agreed to work on this project. Using the public health social ecological model as a structure for the project was discussed a couple meetings ago.
- The SC will be instrumental in completing several milestones for the project, including overall planning of the Blueprint, identifying individuals for key informant interviews, participating in a focus group, and reviewing the final draft.
- Perry recommends the duration of the blueprint should be worked out after informant interviews and focus groups.
 - Michael Lin questioned whether the Blueprint would be considered an official instrument that AAHI must adhere to. The Blueprint will guide AAHI's work and help other Asian American groups identify priorities and coordinate with AAHI moving forward.
 - Michael asked if the focus group will give an opportunity for community organizations to provide feedback. There will be at least one focus group with the SC and possibly others if necessary.
 - Betty Lam shared that Blueprint project team should look at the latest needs assessment report and strategic plan which utilized several focus groups. Perry agreed that these reports would be taken into account as a part of the environmental scan.

ACTION ITEM: Perry Chan would like 1-2 members of the SC to help with the Blueprint project. If interested, please let Perry know by Friday, March 23, 2018.

- The outreach events are ongoing, but the anticipated number is reduced since there are several vacancies. Perry may request further support from the SC for reaching out to the community.
- AAHI is setting up procedures on how train others to use the Osteoporosis machine so that other organizations can deliver those services to the community.

- Perry shared some information on electronic translation devices. According to the preliminary information collected, there are currently no devices solely for the medical community.

Other Business

- Betty Lam noted that the County Executive will release his budget on the morning of Thursday, March 15, 2018. Betty will be happy to answer any questions SC members have about the budget.
 - Meng K. Lee stated that the patient navigation program should be a high priority for next year's budget

Adjourn (Meng K. Lee)

- Meng adjourned the meeting at 8:09 PM.

ACTION: Meeting adjourned at 8:09PM.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 8, 2018.