

**Montgomery County – DHHS
Asian American Health Initiative (AAHI) Steering Committee Meeting
401 Hungerford Dr., Rockville, MD
September 7, 2010**

Steering Committee	Present	Steering Committee	Present
Harry Kwon (Chair)	X	Meng Lee (Vice Chair)	
Anis Ahmed		Ji-Young Cho	X
Nerita Estampador	X	Wilbur Friedman	X
Karen Kar-Yee Ho	X	Lewis Hsu	X
MunSu (Moses) Kwon	X	Sunmin Lee	X
Michael Lin	X	Alvin Madarang	X
Sam Mukherjee	X	Wendy Shiau	X
Sovan Tun	X		

AAHI Staff	Present	AAHI Staff	Present
Perry Chan	X	Atyya Chaudhry	X
Betty Lam	X	Karishma Dhru (Intern)	X
Jamie Weng	X	Shaiza Khalil (Intern)	X
Sanjana Quasem	X	Kristina Yee (Intern)	

WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS

Committee Chair Harry Kwon called the meeting to order at 6:16 pm. He welcomed all in attendance, noting that several new members had joined the Steering Committee since the May meeting. Attendees briefly introduced themselves.

MAY MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL

Harry Kwon asked attendees to review the May meeting minutes and offer any additions or corrections. Dr. Sam Mukherjee suggested an addition to the Advocacy Committee Update section on page 3, changing “Dr. Mukherjee thanked Alvin Madarang and Lewis Hsu for their efforts” to “Dr. Mukherjee thanked Alvin Madarang, Lewis Hsu, and the entire advocacy committee team for their efforts.” The committee approved the revised May meeting minutes.

AAHI PROGRAM UPDATES

Health Promoter Training

- Perry Chan provided an update of the health promoter orientation, which took place on August 14. Fourteen new health promoters attended the training and will be assisting AAHI with its activities in the future. AAHI was able to hire 15 new health promoters, bringing the number of health promoters currently on its team to 31 in total. AAHI has a list of event scheduled for September and October, some of which are Asian American-specific and others of which are targeted to the general public.

Social Media Outreach

- AAHI is using social media to update the community and Steering Committee members about AAHI activities more easily and effectively. AAHI now has a presence on

Facebook, and Mr. Chan encouraged attendees to connect with AAHI on Facebook through the link he will email Committee members.

Storybook Release Conference

- Mr. Chan provided an update on the storybook AAHI is compiling, which includes 16 stories from Asian American residents of Montgomery County featuring their struggles, health concerns, and survivor stories. The storybook is meant to serve an advocacy tool to educate the community and dispel the Model Minority Myth, which led to the idea of holding a Storybook Release Conference.

Hepatitis B Screening Partnerships

- Mr. Chan informed the Committee that AAHI is working with several partners, including OCA-DC, HBI-DC, BMS, and University of Maryland student groups, and CCACC on Hepatitis B screening. AAHI is providing technical assistance for this project and working with those partners to organize Hepatitis B events that provide education, screening, and vaccination, as well as treatment referral, in order to reduce health disparities by targeting Hepatitis B among the Asian American community. Mr. Chan responded that the OCA-DC and the University of Maryland student groups will mainly provide manpower. The vaccines and screening will be provided by HBI-DC and BMS. These partner organizations have asked AAHI to share its experience and lessons learned. AAHI will also help identify outlets for individual with positive test results. In response to a question from Dr. Mukherjee, Mr. Chan said that the physician involved is Dr. Mo Ping Chow.

Program Manager Position

Betty Lam reported that the paperwork has been filed to request to fill the program manager position. AAHI has not yet heard back from the Office of Management and Budget. She will update the committee as soon as AAHI receives any information and let the members know how they may help facilitate the process.

Other Updates

Dr. Kwon reported that Mr. Meng K. Lee and Dr. Mukherjee met last week with Crosscultural Infotech, which has a new owner of the company on board. Dr. Mukherjee added that Crosscultural Infotech is interested in continuing their work with AAHI.

- Wilbur Friedman asked whether this program would serve the needs of the African American Health Program, to which Ms. Lam replied affirmatively, explaining that it would be a multilingual line equipped to serve anyone calling Montgomery County care clinics. Mr. Friedman asked whether a program targets African American community would apply, and Ms. Lam said that it was possible.
- Dr. Mukherjee mentioned that he had been contacted by CASA de Maryland, which is potentially competing for the same RFP as Crosscultural Infotech and was seeking AAHI Steering Committee's support. He asked whether the Steering Committee was authorized to provide support, and if so, what the Steering Committee's stance was.
 - Dr. Kwon provided context to the new members, explaining that Montgomery County is seeking to consolidate Patient Navigator services under one roof with a multilingual phone line. The main competitors for the grant are Crosscultural

Infotech, the main contract provider for PNP for the Asian American community for AAHI, and CASA de Maryland, a large organization that provides similar services for the Spanish-speaking community in Montgomery County.

- Ms. Lam responded that the competitive bid process may not have a venue for providing community input through a letter of support. However, if the bidder feels that they wanted to submit any particular document to support their case, it can be taken into account to support their case.
- Mr. Chan added that the Steering Committee, as a voice from the community, can decide whom to support and how.
- Dr. Mukherjee said that Crosscultural Infotech had provided excellent services for AAHI, and he commented that CASA would need a lot of training and equipment to be able to provide the same services. He urged the members to focus on efficiency and obtainment of service. Dr. Mukherjee noted that there is no recording of the calls at CASA, whereas Crosscultural Infotech has a database of call recordings.
- Mr. Friedman suggested that the members of the Steering Committee who are not employed by Montgomery County write a factual statement of Crosscultural Infotech's past provision of services.
- Dr. Lin asked whether Crosscultural Infotech has the ability to serve all languages within the county. Dr. Mukherjee said that Crosscultural Infotech has a broader range of linguistic capacity than CASA, including capabilities for Spanish and French.
- Dr. Estampador and Dr. Lin asked whether CASA was entering a new area of service to the Asian community in addition the Latin American community. Mr. Chan replied that CASA has been providing Patient Navigation services mainly targeting the Spanish-speaking community.
- Dr. Lin commented that if no one organization is capable of serving the whole community, it would seem logical to do a joint proposal.
- Dr. Mukherjee expressed a concern that the final decision would be political rather than factual. Ms. Lam affirmed that Montgomery County understands that this issue is highly sensitive. The committee that would review the proposal would only be approved by Uma and would be very sensitive as to the makeup of that particular committee.
- Ms. Lam announced that the RFP was scheduled to be released to the public very soon. Once it is released, she will be able share it with the committee, which would be welcome to circulate it with other vendors. The RFP would clearly list eligibility in terms of services and qualifications.
- Dr. Kwon commented that the steering committee could possibly send a strong letter of support with the proposal, but he advised first determining what opportunities exist to provide a letter of support, if any, and then taking a vote on the matter. Dr. Kwon concluded that AAHI would inform the Steering Committee members when the RFP is released and move into discussion of options of how AAHI could provide support either with the Steering Committee or with the organizations represented by the Steering Committee.

FY 2011 STEERING COMMITTEE GOALS/ACTIVITIES

Dr. Kwon thanked the Steering Committee for a wonderful retreat, which was a jumping point for the next phase and allowed the members to come together and meet the new members. A major component of the Steering Committee's work is advocacy. At the Retreat, members reviewed the budget timeline, which starts at the end of September and ends when it is voted on in May. The Steering Committee needs to keep mindful of how to work with AAHI to advocate for its priorities and stave off budget cuts. The past year was challenging, though AAHI was able to maintain some of the budget, and the coming year will be just as challenging.

- On September 23, the Montgomery County Council will hold its annual breakfast with all of the steering committees and boards within Montgomery County. The breakfast is the kickoff of the budget advocacy season, and each committee is asked to report on two of its priorities for the fiscal year. Last year, Dr. Kwon reported on three priorities: (1) maintaining the PNP, (2) support for the ongoing efforts of the Hepatitis B screening and education program, and (3) greater parity in county representation on AAHI.
- Dr. Kwon said he would send out a list of priorities via email seeking the members' thoughts on informing the County Council of AAHI's priorities. Dr. Kwon suggested two priorities: (1) alternate funding sources and (2) education of decision-makers, which are critical correlates to one another. Community leaders are aware that AAHI's program works, but they may not be aware of the tremendous impact it has made in the community since its inception. For this coming year, AAHI must put a tremendous effort on its educational outreach, which is interrelated with the Steering Committee's workgroups and standing committees.

COMMITTEES AND WORKGROUPS

Dr. Kwon asked members to review the descriptions of the standing committees and consider in which one they would like to participate to help move AAHI's mission forward. The Steering Committee recently voted that all members must participate in at least one but no greater than two standing committees. Dr. Kwon led the Steering Committee through an overview of the work of the standing committees.

- Dr. Kwon noted that the Membership Committee's work was coming to a close and thanked Dr. Alvin Madarang, Mr. Friedman, and Dr. Lewis Hsu for their service on that committee.
- Dr. Kwon also explained the workgroups, noting that they are open to non-Steering Committee members, though they must be led by a Steering Committee member. Dr. Kwon said his goal was to have the list of working group members ready by early next week for the initial launch of the workgroups, which are now part of the organizational structure.
- Ms. Ho asked when the standing committees meet. Dr. Kwon said it would be up to the group when they would like to meet, be it in person, in a conference call, or via email. He will seek to provide an opportunity in Steering Committee meetings for standing committee members to report on their work. Once some of these groups are formed, Mr. Lee and Dr. Kwon will work to form specific, tangible priorities and goals for these groups. Mr. Chan added that the AAHI office would work to support the working groups as much as possible in terms of finding meeting places, setting up conference calls, and providing information.

- In response to Dr. Estampador's inquiry as to whether committee members should seek AAHI's permission to start private workgroups, Dr. Kwon emphasized the importance of workgroup activity be driven toward the mission of AAHI. Mr. Chan said that the workgroup is ad hoc-based, so communication can go in two directions. Working groups may receive requests from AAHI staff, but on the other hand, AAHI can set up set up a workgroup for whatever topics committee members find important as long as they are in line with AAHI priorities.
- Dr. Estampador expressed her interest in preparing a prevention piece on child safety, which Mr. Chan suggested could take place within the Program Committee.
- Dr. Mukherjee suggested that a formal method of receiving AAHI and Steering Committee approval be established to ensure adherence to the AAHI mission.
- Dr. Estampador recommended establishing a project coordination committee.

STORYBOOK RELEASE CONFERENCE

In order to leverage the storybook as a strong advocacy tool that the Steering Committee can utilize to educate decision-makers and the community in general, Dr. Kwon, Mr. Lee, and Mr. Chan are considering conducting a storybook release conference. The storybook release conference would be one of the projects members can work on in a workgroup committee. The goal of the release conference is to provide a platform for storytellers to tell their story directly to the decision-makers. AAHI will thus have a platform to voice opinions and health concerns to decision-makers by using this document. The document will be available electronically on AAHI's website. The preview version would be available prior to the release conference. AAHI's goal is to open up discussion to the floor for feedback, opinions, interest, and more information. Dr. Kwon explained that the storybook provides a context and an alternate way of understanding the health disparities and issues within the Asian American community of Montgomery County.

- Mr. Chan said that the launch would last two hours or less and likely be held in the Rockville area on a weekday evening to facilitate the attendance of committee member and decision-makers. AAHI intends to invite the County Council and County Executive. The event could be hosted at the public library or Executive Office Building. Mr. Chan said that AAHI hopes to hold the event in October or early November.
- Dr. Tun suggested that AAHI organize a formal presentation of the document to the County Executive and publish hard copies of the documents. Dr. Hsu suggested that AAHI prepare cover booklets contained CDs of the document. Mr. Chan said AAHI would look into printing hard copies and burning CDs for meetings with key leaders.
- Mr. Friedman asked how the ordering of the stories was decided upon. Mr. Chan said that the editor who worked on the document suggested the current order, which she thought was the easiest for the reader to follow the flow of the whole document.
- Ms. Ho recommended that AAHI take advantage of the richness of the document to maintain the community's interest and drawn out new audiences by issuing a series on each individual topic, either by organizing an event or featuring a different story each month on the website.
- Dr. Cho expressed her support for allowing the storytellers the opportunity to speak, and Ms. Ho suggested that if they did not want to, someone else could narrate their story on their behalf. Mr. Chan said that AAHI has built trust with its storytellers and can arrange interpretation as necessary.

- Ms. Lam said the Department of Public Information Office and Legislative Liaison could be helpful in suggesting how to get the elected officials to come to the event and what would make sense for the media.
- Dr. Kwon said that a press conference could be incorporated into the event, along with a reception. He will send a follow-up email to the committee.

LIAISON REPORTS

Dr. Kwon explained that some of the Steering Committee members serve on other committees and board with the county. Dr. Mukherjee sits on the Asian American Advisory Group formed by the County Executive. Anis Ahmed sits on the Governor's Commission for Asian and Pacific Islanders, which is a state-level advisory group. Dr. Kwon sits on the Montgomery County Commission on Health. The Steering Committee also used to have a liaison with the Community Health Improvement Process, which has gained momentum in the past year and initiated a whole data collection. The CHIP program has its own steering committee. Dr. Kwon will gather more information on liaison opportunities and send it out to the group.

- Mr. Friedman attended a meeting of the Commission of Women, which has seen its staff reduced from seven to three members.

FUTURE MEETING DATES

- Due to Election Day, the meeting originally planned for November 2 will be postponed. Mr. Chan and Dr. Kwon will send alternate dates and reschedule the meeting as soon as possible.
- Dr. Kwon led the committee in a discussion of meeting dates beginning January 2011. Committee members agreed that their meetings, beginning in January 2011, would be held on the second Tuesday of the odd months at 6:00 pm. The first meeting of next year will held be January 11, 2011. AAHI will send out a new meeting schedule with the full parameters, and Mr. Chan will search for alternate spaces in the Rockville area available for future meetings.
- Dr. Cho requested that committee members' organizational affiliations be included on the tent cards.
- Dr. Kwon reminded attendees of Chan's emailed request that members submit their updated biographies.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 pm.