



Meeting Minutes - Joint Commission on Health Care

September 21, 2021 – 10:00 a.m.

House Committee Room

Members Present

Delegate Dawn Adams

Delegate Emily Brewer

Delegate C. Matthew Fariss

Delegate C.E. (Cliff) Hayes, Jr. (virtual)

Delegate M. Keith Hodges

Delegate Patrick Hope

Delegate Robert Orrock

Delegate Sam Rasoul (virtual)

Delegate Ibraheem Samirah (virtual)

Delegate Mark Sickles

Senator George Barker

Senator John S. Edwards (virtual)

Senator Barbara Favola (virtual)

Senator Jen Kiggans (virtual)

Senator Jennifer McClellan

Senator David Suetterlein

Secretary Daniel Carey

Members Absent

Senator Ghazala Hashmi

Senator Siobhan Dunnivant

Staff Present

Jeff Lunardi

Kyu Kang

Estella Obi-Tabot

Stephen Weiss

Agnes Dymora

Ashley Williams

Call to order and welcoming comments - Chairman Hope

Roll Call- Agnes Dymora

Executive Director Jeff Lunardi, provided an overview of the agenda and introduced our temporary staff member, Ashley Williams, from the Virginia Management Fellows program. Mr. Lunardi then introduced the first set of guest speakers, who addressed the topic of racial disparities in maternal and infant health outcomes.

Dr. Carol Sakala, Director for Maternal Health, National Partnership for Women & Families, spoke about the issues that are currently present in Virginia's maternity care for expecting and new mothers and ways in which they can be alleviated.

Ms. Stephanie Spencer, Executive Director from Urban Baby Beginnings, briefed the Members on how her organization provides care, support and supplies to women and babies in communities across the state. She discussed federal legislation created to end racial and ethnic maternal health disparities and asked the Members to fund programs in Virginia that would expand this kind of support to affected families residing in the Commonwealth.

Dr. Christian Chisholm, Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology in the Division of Maternal-Fetal Medicine at UVA, provided an overview of how the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) has been collaborating with other organizations to reduce maternal mortality and eliminate disparities since the early 2000's. He concluded by presenting policy solutions to further help reduce adverse outcomes in pregnancies.

Chairman Hope introduced the next set of guest speakers, to address the behavioral health workforce in Virginia.

Dr. Ben Miller, President of The Well Being Trust, briefed the Members about shortages of mental health clinicians and the causes behind them. He spoke about how task shifting of the current professionals and developing a greater capacity to recognize and address behavioral health issues in the community are potential solutions to the workforce shortages.

Dr. Gerard Lawson, LPC Professor of Counselor Education at Virginia Tech University, provided details on requirements for obtaining a counseling degree and becoming a licensed professional counselor in Virginia. He discussed the challenges that the new graduates face in obtaining their license to practice at the start of their careers.

Dr. Sherin Moideen, President of the Psychiatric Society of Virginia, referenced the 2020 JLARC report on Virginia's oversight of compliance with the Federal Mental Health Parity Law and the barriers that hamper compliance. She offered solutions to help with expanding access to psychiatric care.

The meeting concluded with Members' discussion of ideas for 2022 JCHC studies. These ideas included a review of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on health systems and providers, and an assessment of lessons learned for pandemic preparedness. Members also raised the idea of reviewing the capacity and effectiveness of Virginia's local health departments to meet the needs of their communities, and developing strategies to improve access to care in the local community to address health care needs and avoid costly hospital visits.

Meeting adjourned.

All presentations and a link to the archive of the video can be found on our website:

<http://jchc.virginia.gov/meetings.asp>