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Infant and Maternal Mortality Among African Americans Task Force (IMMT)

January 28, 2020

1:00 PM

Locations

Illinois Department of Public Health
69 W. Washington Street
35th Floor, Director's Conference room
Chicago, Illinois 60602

Illinois Department of Public Health
535 W. Jefferson St.
5th Floor Conference Room
Springfield, Illinois 62761

Minutes

1. Call to order- 1:00 pm
 - a. Members Present: Nelson Agbodo, Gloria Elam, Angela Ellison, Shirley Fleming, Cheryl Floyd, Catherine Harth, Stephannie James, Daniel Johnson, Virginia Julion, Latanya Law, Jeanine Logan, Jasmine Martin, Tamela Alexander, Pamela Roesch, Debra Wesley, Santina Wheat, Cheryl Wolfe
 - b. Members Absent: Richard David, Jerrilyn Pearson, Karyn Stewart
 - c. IDPH Staff: Juana Ballesteros, Amanda Bennett, Stacy Carreon, Director Ngozi Ezike, Trishna Harris, Abigail Holicky, Veronica Holloway, Kenya McRae, Assistant Director Evonda Thomas-Smith
 - d. Guests: Jo Ann Anninston, Ann Borders, Michele Brown, Rachel Cassidy, Shondra Clay, Jack DiMatteo, Donna Emmons, Ashley Fellows, Ruby Ferguson, Jill Frasos, Liz Glaslow, Joseph Harrington, Wandy Hernandez, Janine Hill, Tatiana Howard, Robin Jones, Barbara Julion, Patricia Lee King, Cindy King, Kelsie Landers, Mia Layne, Sandy De Leon, Bakahia Madison, Mica Madison, Ellen Mason, Gordon Meyer, Cindy Mitchell, Angelique Muhammad, Steve Ocher, Virginia Rising, Katie Thlede, Kathy Waligora
2. Welcome & Introductions
 - a. Moment of Silence
 - b. Current Task Force Federal Collaborations
 - i. Introduction of federal collaboration between IDPH Infant and Maternal Mortality Task Force and the office of Congresswoman Lauren Underwood.
 - c. Remarks by Director of IDPH, Dr. Ngozi Ezike
 - i. There is a lot of work to be done surrounding this issue and this Task Force needs to be as productive as possible and present actionable items.
 - d. Ice Breaker
 - i. Discussed the March of Dimes report where Illinois received a D+ prematurity grade.

3. Legislative Mandates

- a. Read by IDPH Assistant Director Evonda Thomas- Smith
 - i. Research regarding women's health before, during, and between pregnancies.
 - ii. Nationwide data on maternal deaths and complications, including data by race, geography, and socioeconomic status.
 - iii. Review data on social and environmental risk factors for women and infants of color.
 - iv. Identify best practices to improve quality and safe maternity care.
 - v. Identify effective interventions to address the social determinants of health disparities in maternal and infant outcomes.
 - vi. Produce an annual report based upon its findings, including specific recommendations.

4. Article Discussion

- a. Discussion of the IDPH Office of Women's Health Report
 - i. Report was described as sobering, but not surprising. The data is there, but the mission now is to move in a positive direction. Many organizations are doing this amazing work however the outcomes do not reflect that. Finding this disconnect will be key.
 - ii. Systems must change since there are programs in place surrounding this issue. There needs to be a trauma informed approach to this issue.
 - iii. The community lens is missing and must be included to make progress and help move the needle forward. There is a need for more people from the community to share their experiences.
- b. Black Maternal Historical Legacies of Slavery
 - i. Lack of cultural competency in healthcare is an issue. Overarching theme of lack of trust between black people and medical professionals. How does a mother establish trust if she is seeing a new medical provider every meeting, and then is not listened to?
 - ii. Inter racism and biases still occur between patient and doctor even though they may have the same skin color; each often have different shared experiences.
 - iii. Consideration of biases, for example: biases against doulas, women who go into their appointment with kids, a pregnant black woman who is not married etc.
 - iv. Notion of implementing cultural humility rather than cultural competence since no one is completely competent in the lived experiences of another human.
 - v. Black mothers being demonized over substance abuse creates a space that is untrustworthy for mothers.
 - vi. Dr. Ezike suggested identifying and hosting IMMT meetings in a community space where the population affected is already in, so we can directly hear what the community needs. EverThrive Illinois was suggested.
 - vii. The role of men was discussed and identifying further research and data on their impact.

- viii. The education of nurses and social workers should be at the forefront of this work. Nurses and social workers need guidance on what to do.
- ix. Considering a faith-based component is also important. Faith can be a bridge to heal trauma. Not all moms want a faith-based component, however it should be available for those that do.
- x. The New York Times' 1619 Project chronicled the movements of slavery and the topic of maternal and infant mortality came up. Looking at this issue through the lens of slavery is also important.
- xi. Other organizations to include in the conversation: The YMCA, Transportation, Chamber of Commerce.

5. Public Comment

- a. Public Comment by Jo Ann Anniston
 - i. Black mothers are not getting informed consent. A big reason is because of missing information in vaccine packages. Manufacturers of vaccines are to blame.

6. Strategy on Meeting Legislative Mandates in Four Meetings

- i. This must be a long-term commitment to leave a lasting impact regardless of who is in office.
- ii. Chairs of each committee can convene.
- iii. Community Health Workers are key and should be used as a focus group. They are willing to contribute and work together since they deal are dealing with this topic daily.
- iv. Tamela will focus on the community engagement.
- v. Subgroups to form in order to meet the end-of-year report with recommendations (see below for groups).

7. Vote for Chair or Co-Chair

- a. Motion to vote in Angel Ellison as Task Force Chair- Approved
- b. Motion to vote in Tamela Milan- Alexander as Co-Chair- Approved

8. Next Steps

- a. Formation of subgroups
 - i. **Programs and Best Practices**
Nelson Agbodo, Ann Borders, Gloria Elam, Gordon Mayer, Jasmine Martin, Kenya McRae, Michele Brown, Patti Lee King, Veronica Halloway, Cheryl Wolfe
 - ii. **Systems**
Kathy Chan, Glendean Burton, Angela Ellison, Bakahia Madison, Cindy Mitchell, Pastor Angelique Muhammad, Virginia Reising
 - iii. **Community Engagement**
Tamela Milan-Alexander, Shirley Fleming, Wandy Hernandez, Stephannie James, Virginia Julion, Jasmine Martin, Pamela Roesch, Debra Wesley

9. Adjournment- 2:46 pm

Next meetings:

- a. **IMMMT - 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM**
 - i. Tuesday, May 12, 2020

- b. **IMMMT – 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM**
 - i. Tuesday, September 22, 2020

- c. **IMMMT – 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM**
 - i. Tuesday, December 15, 2020