

**Office of Health Equity Advisory Committee
Quarterly Meeting Planning Subcommittee Meeting**

**Teleconference Minutes (Approved)
Wednesday, April 14, 2021**

Meeting ID: 844 2508 7196

OHE-AC Members Participating:

Jo-Ann Julien, Subcommittee Chair
Califia Abwoon
Angela Ball
Jessica Buendia
Sarah de Guia, AC Chair
Ana Gonzalez Seda
Nahla Kaylin
Shireen Malekafzali, AC Vice Chair
Yvette McShan
Nancy Rodriguez
Michael Witte

Members Absent:

Valentine Antony
Kismet Baldwin
Robin Carter
Lisa Folberg
Aaron Gardner
Simran Kaur
Patricia Lee
Vong Mouanoutoua
Hector Ramirez
Terra Russell-Slavin
Angelina Woodberry

State Officials/Staff:

Rohan Radhakrishna, OHE Deputy Director
Mark Starr, former OHE Acting Deputy Director, Deputy Director for Environmental Health
Amanda Hooker, Stakeholder Engagement Coordinator
Kimberly Knifong, Chief Business Operations Unit
Meredith Lee, Acting Assistant Deputy Director

Speakers from the Public:

No members of the public addressed the Subcommittee.

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9:30 a.m. Convene Meeting and Welcome | Roll Call | Agenda Review

Jo-Ann Julien, Subcommittee Chair, called the teleconference meeting of the Office of Health Equity (OHE) Advisory Committee (AC) Quarterly Meeting Planning Subcommittee to order at 9:33 a.m., welcomed everyone, and reviewed the meeting agenda. Roll call was taken; a quorum was achieved.

Amanda Hooker, Stakeholder Engagement Coordinator, reviewed the meeting protocols. She stated five new members have recently been appointed by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Director. An official welcome and induction is scheduled for the June 15th quarterly AC meeting.

Sarah de Guia, AC Chair, welcomed the new members and asked them to introduce themselves. She welcomed new OHE Deputy Director Dr. Rohan Radhakrishna and asked him to introduce himself.

9:35 a.m. Debrief Fourth Quarter AC Meeting

Presenter:

- Sarah de Guia, Advisory Committee Chair

AC Chair de Guia provided a brief review of the action-planning discussion from the March 3, 2021, AC meeting. She stated the AC begin to set agenda items for the rest of the year with the following priorities:

- Create standing agenda items including the following:
 - Time for a Q&A session with the unit chiefs on their reports, which will be submitted for AC Member review prior to meetings.
 - COVID-19 updates and key issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Focus each meeting on a particular issue in order to delve deeper including health and mental health care, housing issues, economic security, and education.

AC Chair de Guia asked for feedback on these priorities as the Subcommittee plans for the upcoming AC meeting.

Questions and Discussion

Subcommittee Chair Julien suggested reviewing the Health in All Policies (HiAP) Task Force's priority survey results to compare similarities.

Ms. Hooker stated the HiAP Task Force is scheduled to provide an update on their survey results at the June AC meeting.

AC Vice Chair Malekafzali stated the AC Members agreed at the March meeting to prioritize operationalizing racial equity and racial justice within and throughout all content areas. She noted that this priority was not included as a separate priority because it needs to be the foundation in all the work.

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9:50 a.m. Planning for Second Quarter June Advisory Committee Meeting

Presenter:

- Jo-Ann Julien, Subcommittee Chair

Define Theme and Goals for Second Quarter Meeting

AC Chair de Guia stated the June AC meeting will focus on the issue of housing. She asked for input on how to set up the June AC Meeting to address the issue of housing, including how to address structural racism within the issue of housing.

Plan Agenda for Second Quarter Meeting

Subcommittee Chair Julien suggested assigning homework to be done in advance of the meeting such as reading papers or reviewing resources that would put everyone on the same page going into the June meeting so everyone is prepared to add to the conversation.

AC Vice Chair Malekafzali shared links to two housing/health Issue Briefs from the Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative (BARHII) that will serve as good background reading prior to the June meeting: Housing Stability and Family Health and Housing Displacement. These documents can be found on the BARHII website under the Resources tab.

Ms. Abwoon agreed about assigning homework prior to the meeting. It is important to learn what is being done with the state funding and why it is not helping the housing issue.

Meredith Lee, Acting Assistant Deputy Director, stated the housing topic is broad. She suggested narrowing the scope so the right stakeholders can be at the table. She stated the need to be timely and actionable. She suggested recommending an infrastructure bill to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on housing/homelessness such as turning Project Room Key into a permanent program.

AC Chair de Guia agreed and stated some areas within the housing topic are affordability, housing stock, and quality of housing. She asked Subcommittee Members what they would like to know to help the Subcommittee make recommendations.

Ms. Gonzalez Seda suggested inviting Laura Ann Fernea, the Executive Director at City Heights Community Development Corporation in San Diego, which focuses on affordable housing and how to implement that in a way that the residents are engaged in the process.

AC Vice Chair Malekafzali agreed that homelessness and housing are large areas of focus. Having at least a sense of which of those two to focus on will be important. She stated, within housing, there is a segment of supportive housing versus general affordability and the policies and practices to achieve that. She suggested focusing on the larger affordability question.

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AC Vice Chair Malekafzali stated it is difficult for this small Subcommittee to make those discussions without the AC's direction. She suggested discussing the priority topic that will be discussed two meetings ahead so the AC can provide direction on narrowing the scope for each of these priority areas as they come up. The Subcommittee will then have an opportunity to make recommendations on the preferred narrowed scope.

Ms. Buendia stated the April 29th California Strategic Growth Council (SGC) meeting will include an agenda item on racial equity with updates from each of the agencies that are part of the SGC around their racial equity work, such as the Business and Consumer Services in Housing (BCSH). Driving health equity and partnering with the SGC on the various different programs might be a different lens to bring to the conversation around housing.

Dr. Witte stated many communities are now 50/50, with individuals who can afford to live in their homes and those who can never afford their homes. This is often seen in the Bay Area and most of the urban areas of California. He stated this destroys communities. He suggested looking at what affordable housing really is. Sometimes that phrase is thrown out without recognizing the structural racism that is behind it. The housing topic is huge and it incorporates the issues around homelessness. It is important to keep both these issues in mind during these discussions.

Ms. McShan noted that housing for the homeless is shelters. She stated there is a wide range of disparities in shelters that is never discussed. Individuals cannot begin to recover until they have stable housing, but stable housing is not a cot to rest on for a few hours. Funding for the homeless is never used to provide stable housing for the homeless. It is used to shuttle individuals to different hotels or to various programs, but a program is not housing. She stated jails and prisons are releasing many individuals but they have nowhere to go without supports in place to receive them. She suggested inviting representatives from the Bay Area Recovery Services in Alameda County and Father Joe's Project in San Diego to present at a future meeting on their current work.

AC Chair de Guia agreed with asking the AC for their direction on where to focus in this large topic. She suggested extending the focus on this issue to the next two meetings to delve deeper into housing to better understand the issues. She stated the need to discuss the pipeline for housing stability.

Ms. Ball stated the need to ultimately make recommendations that will address an issue that the CDPH is facing at that moment.

AC Chair de Guia stated AC Members have struggled with whether the role of the AC is with the CDPH or beyond. Part of the confusion is that the legislative language is broad. There is an ability for AC recommendations to reach beyond the CDPH through the HiAP Task Force. The HiAP Task Force sits within the CDPH and the SGC, which is a multi-agency body.

Ms. Abwoon stated the importance of getting the right information and coming up with good solutions that work for communities. It is important to have an end result.

Mark Starr, former OHE Acting Deputy Director, Deputy Director for Environmental Health, stated the AC is a part of the OHE but, by default, that includes the entire CDPH

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since the OHE addresses health equity issues across the entire Department and beyond. He stated the AC can invite other agencies and departments to present information or can offer their depth of expertise and experience in the field. Housing is a perfect example of where the AC can invite other state agencies to meetings. Although there is not a statutory mandate or charge to advise other state agencies, there is an opportunity to leverage on overlapping issues.

Dr. Starr stated the AC's role is not limited to what the CDPH or the OHE bring to the AC. The AC can identify issues, make recommendations, and give advice on issues that may be important to the Department. He gave an example of the letter the AC recently sent to the OHE regarding the sustainability of the California Reducing Disparities Project (CRDP) as something that stakeholders brought forward as important to the community. He encouraged the AC to continue to send the OHE and the CDPH letters on important issues to stakeholders.

AC Chair de Guia stated the upcoming meeting is not the only time that the Subcommittee will discuss this issue. The Subcommittee can define the agenda to say that this topic is large and that the Subcommittee wants an opportunity to weigh in on it according to the AC's direction and will require more than one meeting to allow for the necessary discussion and recommendations.

AC Chair de Guia suggested starting by asking the CDPH and the HiAP Task Force to present their work to date, programs they are focused on, and where they might find recommendations useful to help them go deeper into issues. She suggested specifically looking at issues such as unhoused persons, supportive housing, and affordability issues as high-level points to start the conversation. She suggested that housing and health organization advocates also present on issues or shortcomings.

Ms. Buendia suggested inviting the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to present their current work in this space. She stated they do not often hear about the housing issue from a health equity standpoint and suggested that it would be beneficial for the HCD to hear from AC and Subcommittee Members about what is being seen out in the field. She suggested sending questions to AC and Subcommittee Members that the HCD would like answers to prior to the meeting so Members can prepare their answers ahead of time.

Ms. Abwoon stated there are too many referrals in the homeless community, which do not get to the housing program. There are many obstacles with no results. This is not good enough. It needs to be addressed.

Ms. McShan suggested discussing the disparities of housing between racism and status.

AC Chair de Guia suggested inviting two representatives from the CDPH, the HiAP Task Force, and community-based organizations who are doing this work to discuss where they see opportunities, needs, and challenges from their perspectives. She suggested that each entity provide questions for the AC and Subcommittee Members and that the AC and Subcommittee Members provide clear recommendations and ask about additional information needed to continue this discussion.

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AC Vice Chair Malekafzali suggested asking the speakers to lift up either a specific recommendation or a place of feedback or inquiry for the AC and Subcommittee so Members can be more directed in how this topic will be addressed going forward rather than just presenting a wealth of information. Being precise and directive will help the AC and Subcommittee recommendations and input make a difference.

Subcommittee Chair Julien agreed and suggested asking the presenters one common question such as what is missing or what it will take to achieve housing equity.

AC Chair de Guia agreed and stated the Subcommittee will ask the presenters to present on one common question provided by the Subcommittee and to prepare one specific inquiry for the AC and Subcommittee Members to provide feedback on.

Public Comment

No members of the public addressed the Subcommittee.

10:55 a.m. Closing Comments and Adjournment

AC Chair de Guia asked Subcommittee Members to send any additional speaker suggestions to staff.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:59 a.m.