



COMMONWEALTH  
NORTH

*Illuminating Alaska's Issues*

**HEALTH CARE ACTION GROUP**

**OCTOBER 1, 2009**

Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium

MINUTES

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Meeting was called to order at 7:05am by Co-chairs Duane Heyman and Tom Nighswander

**Members/Guests Present:** Brian Richardson, Matt Dupre, Regan Mattingly, Deb Erickson, Cathy Giessel, Pat Luby, Jenny Miller, David Driscoll, Jeff Ranf, Mark Foster, Jan Harris, Carolyn Heyman-Layne, Rosylnd Frazier, Curt Hebet, Shelley Hughes, Ward Hurlburt

**Staff Members Present:** Jim Egan, Josh Wilson

2. **Alaska Chief Medical Officer and Public Health Director – Ward Hurlburt**
  - The Director has great deal of experience in Alaska working on TB and has seen a lot of change since being Deputy Area Director in Alaska
    - Life expectancy has improved and infant mortality rates have gone down
  - A strong proponent of the flu vaccine
    - First doses of the vaccine will be divvied out by population based on 2-4 year olds
    - There will not be enough at first but more will come
    - The Center for Disease Control is using 5 manufactures to produce the vaccine
    - Seasonal Flu penetration in the United States is typically 5-10% of the population with 35,000 deaths a year
    - H1N1 now has only 800 deaths so to date it is a relatively mild flu probably due to the ramp up in preparation for the avian flu pandemic last year
  - There are many different groups throughout the state involved in health care reform right now including Legacy, ISER, The Alaska Health Care Commission and Commonwealth North
    - How do we bring our efforts together?
    - Alaska Health Care Commissioner should have a report out in January
    - Legacy's Health Care group, headed up by Cathy Giessel, should also come out with a report around the same time
3. **Southcentral Foundation Primary Care Clinic - Tom Nighswander**
  - Prevention can work, but there are a lot of piece that have to work together and this would have to be the case to bring down obesity in the US
  - Population Heath

- Many improvements to the standard of living come from infrastructure improvements, not health care professionals in rural Alaska
- Six Unhealthy truths that tell the story of the rise of chronic disease and its impacts on health and health care in the US
  - Truth #1 – Chronic diseases are the #1 cause of death and disability in the US
  - Truth #2 – Chronic disease accounts for 75% of the nation's health care spending
  - Truth #3 – 2/3 of the increase in health care spending (1987-2000) is due to increase prevalence of treated chronic disease
  - Truth #4 – The doubling of obesity between 1987 and today accounts for nearly 30% of the rise in health care spending
  - Truth #5 – The vast majority of cases of chronic disease could be better prevented or managed
  - Truth #6 – Many Americans are unaware of the extent to which chronic disease harms their health – and their wallets
- South Central Foundation has some good numbers for health in Alaska, but we also have a very young population
- It is important to look at what elements of the Native health care system we can adapt into the whole system to achieve some benefits

#### 4. **The Dutch Health Care Model – Matti Dupre**

- Health care is an unalienable right in the Dutch Constitution
- In 2006 the health care system was completely overhauled because under the socialist system there were no incentives for efficiency and there was a steep rise of cost
- Health care is not tied to an employer
  - \$150 a month is the cheapest plan and now over 30 insurance companies
  - Mandatory to have health care
- There are three compartments
  - Curative Care
  - Supplemental such as dental
  - Long term care (acute)
- 40% of the expenditures are paid for by the government through taxes which are much higher than here
- Only 1% are uninsured, mostly immigrants,
  - If you do not have insurance you have to pay 150% per month of the insurance you do not have
- There is a government general fund used to help insurance companies deal with the cost of health care because they are required to accept anyone who applies
  - The government develops a patient profile for everyone and companies get discounts for insuring high risk patients plus get reimbursed for low operation costs
- Regulated free market system

#### 5. **Adjourned: 8:55am**

#### 6. **Next Meeting: November 19<sup>th</sup>, 7-9am at the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, Board Room 521**