



Overview of the Maternal and Child Health Advisory Task Force

March 2008

Purpose:

The Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Advisory Task Force was created by the Minnesota Legislature in 1982 (MN Stat 145.881) to advise the Commissioner of Health on:

1. The health care needs of Minnesota's mothers and children;
2. The type, frequency and impact of MCH services provided under existing MCH care programs administered by the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH);
3. Program guidelines and criteria considered essential to providing an effective MCH care program to low-income and high risk populations and fulfilling the purposes of the state and federal MCH statutes;
4. The use of federal and state MCH funds administered through MDH;
5. Priorities for funding the essential MCH services in statute; and
6. The process to distribute, award, and administer the federal MCH block grant in Minnesota.

Membership:

Fifteen members, five each representing MCH professionals, MCH consumers, and Community Health Boards (MN Stat 145A.02) are appointed by the Commissioner of Health to four year terms. Eight of the terms are coterminous with the governor's term (ending in early January) and seven end one year later. Applications are made through the Secretary of State's Office of Open Appointments.

Due to the expansive scope of maternal and child health services and the need to assure representation from key partners with specific expertise, the Task Force also has a number of ex-officio task force members. Currently, the members represent the Minnesota Department of Human Services, the Minnesota Department of Education, the University of Minnesota School of Public Health, the University of Minnesota Department of Pediatrics, Medica, and the Minnesota Chapter of the March of Dimes.

Meeting Schedule:

By statute the full Task Force must meet four times a year. The calendar of meetings is established at the beginning of each calendar year. Work group meetings may also be scheduled, depending on the work plan. Generally, the full Task Force meetings are scheduled from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm.

Meeting Reimbursement:

Lunch is provided to members. Expenses members incur to attend these meetings are reimbursed; however, no per diem is provided.

Staffing/Support:

The Task Force is staffed by DeeAnn Finley, MCH Principal Planner, and supported by MaryPat Egan, Administrative Assistant in the MCH Section. Agendas, along with minutes of the previous meeting, are mailed to members and other interested parties approximately ten days prior to each meeting.

Agendas:

The agenda for each meeting generally includes remarks by the Commissioner of Health or her designate, such as the Assistant Commissioner, a report from the Community and Family Health Division Director's Office, and reports from Task Force work groups and related committees. Updates on MCH-related activities at the Minnesota Department of Human Services, the Minnesota Department of Education, and the University of Minnesota's School of Public Health are also included. Topical and program presentations and discussions offer members the latest information on programs and an opportunity to member to provide input on program development.

Annual Work Plan:

The Task Force annual work plan includes activities specific to maternal and child health priorities of current year. Each year the Task Force and the Commissioner of Health also award the Betty Hubbard MCH Leadership Awards to individuals for work of statewide significance and work at the community level.

Annual Report:

Each year the Task Force presents a brief annual report of activities, projects and concerns to the Commissioner of Health. The annual report is based on the work plan and includes suggestions for future Task Force involvement. Other reports may be prepared on specific topics as requested by the Commissioner of Health and/or determined necessary by the Task Force in consultation with MDH staff.

More Information:

For more information about the Maternal and Child Health Advisory Task Force visit the Task Force website at: www.health.state.mn.us/divs/fh/mchatf/.

You can also contact DeeAnn Finley, MCH Planner at 651/201-3874 or deeann.finley@health.state.mn.us.

Federal Title V (MCH Block Grant) Application and Annual Report:

The Maternal and Child Health Block Grant

application is Minnesota's application to the federal government for federal Title V Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant funding. It contains a report of expenditures and activities conducted in the current year, and budget and activity plans proposed for next year. The report and plan components are organized by 18 federal performance measures and 10 state discretionary performance measures. Data tables demonstrate the progress Minnesota is making toward its performance measures. The document also describes the process, data, and priorities of a five year needs assessment, which will guide administration of the program for the next five years. The MDH will provide a progress report on the Title V Block Grant to the Task Force annually.