

# Community Solutions Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

FEBRUARY 4, 2020, 3:00-6:00 PM, HALLIE Q. BROWN COMMUNITY CENTER

## Attendees

**CSA Council Members:** Betty Emarita, Brook LaFloe, Chong Thao, Etonde Awaah, John Poupart, Dr. Kenneth Turner Jr, May Losloso, Sommer Green, Ying Lee

**MDH Staff:** Blair Harrison (Child & Family Health), Bridgett Pouladian (Center for Health Equity), Genelle Monger (Center for Health Equity), Helen Jackson Lockett-El (Center for Health Equity), Kou (Bruce) Thao (Center for Health Equity), Mohamed Hassan (Center for Health Equity), Ramya Palaniappan (Center for Health Equity), Sara Chute (Center for Health Equity)

**MDE Staff:** Amanda Varley

**DHS Staff:** Charles Dickson, Nikki Kovan, Tracy Roloff

## Action Log, February 2020

Action	Person Responsible	Due Date
1. Send out Conflict of Interest document, Reviewer & Scoring PowerPoint, DHS scoring criteria	Ramya	02/14/2020
2. Send calendar invitations for additional meetings	Ramya	02/07/2020
3. Send out implicit bias test	Helen	02/14/2020

## Agenda

Welcome and Introductions

- Facilitated by Helen Jackson Lockett-El (Center for Health Equity)

## Updates

- Conflict of interest update, response from legal and guidance was sent to the council
- Helen is following up with council members that have been unable to attend recently
- Adding a hour to the future meetings to allow enough time for discussion and decision making

## Selection of Co-Chair/s

- Betty is the only person who has expressed interest in serving as the council chair
- Still looking for a co-chair

## Timeline Update and Potential Review Process

- Facilitated by Ramya Palaniappan (Center for Health Equity)

## Site Visit Criteria Discussion

- Nikki (DHS) reviewed the criteria that DHS used to determine which sites would receive a site visit
  - Top scoring applicants from written criteria (2/3)
  - First time applying for state funding (1/3)
  - Left room for geographic and race/American Indian priority
- After the site visits it was decided there was not enough organizations that served the African American population
- One of the reviewers found the site visit experience to be traumatic
- The final decision makers needed to be on the site visits as well
- One of the reviewers advised that caution is taken when asking community members questions and state employees learn about the relationship the state currently has with the community prior to the site visit
- Be realistic with the timeline
- Due to factors out of the reviewers control, it was unnecessary to cram the site visits in such a short timeline
- It is difficult to convey the messages and stories that are experienced to others during a site visit
- One reviewer expressed they would participate in site visits again under specific circumstances
- Site visitors should thank the host sites for allowing them to be in their space
- Site visitors should also reciprocate gratitude
- The site visitors had a hard time separating self from the experiences
  - Keep in mind: What it takes for organizations to accommodate a site visit
  - Also acknowledge that organizations that are serving communities of color and American Indians are operating and maintain in two different structures concurrently
  - Community organizations have a lot to offer and employees may also contribute their time and treasures outside of business hours
- Make sure the site visit does not add additional financial burdens to the host site
- Create a site visits protocol to help balance
- Send the host sites as much information as possible ahead of time
- Understand the importance of relationship building
- Make sure to acknowledge historical trauma when conducting site visits
- Make sure you are aware of and acknowledge your biases
- Really take into account what the stakeholders have to say

- Ask questions that will help you report the information back to them after the site visit is completed
- Instruction bulletins- figure out a way to build awareness among MDH and the different cost structures
- Have to ensure that the communication is clear of who the sites will be working with if they are funded
- Ensure that the state understands when the conversation is coming from community and state employees
- Have to establish the messaging that council members can share during the site visits
  - Process
  - How will council members be able to provide support
- Were the site visits helpful?
  - Yes, the site visits were helpful but they were also challenging
- How much flexibility do we have? How can the department help?
  - It is difficult to build relationships on the spot. It is also important that the site visitors are transparent about their role in the management of the grants
  - Witness building
- How can the council contribute resources, incorporate a warm tone, and other elements to help build the relationship?
- How can the council make sure the CSF site visits are not traumatizing?
- Ensure that the organizations that usually have grant writers are not the only ones getting funding
- Really emphasize the importance of relationship building and how the site visit can help build that relationship
- There needs to be a different scoring mechanism for the site visit and the written applications
- Make sure the communication is clear during the site visits and we are not under or over promise
- Build in time to follow-up if there are additional questions after the site visit
- Plan time for the reviewers to decompress after the site visits
- Do not try to do three site visits in one day
- Understand that different communities have perceptions of time and do not operate in the same way that the state does
- Change the way we think about scoring, top level opportunities and challenges, for trying to make sense of qualitative data
- Focus more on the process
- Be clear who is the project manager
- If you do not have a number associated with the site visit scores, create a system that that can help make and justify the decisions made
- Make sure the site visit scoring is done in a way that makes sense
- Power dynamics can be challenging
  - Note who holds the power during the site visits (is the staff facilitating the meeting, volunteers, etc)
  - How are direct community members involved in the process?

- What role do the community members play?
- Make sure that everyone on the site visit is on the same page, ensure there is balance, and make sure the information is clear
- The site visitors suggested that the criteria that the balance team have to take into account for final decisions is shared with them

### Reviewer Training/Scoring

- Presented by Bridgett Pouladian and Mohamed Hassan (Center for Health Equity)
- Implicit bias quiz will be shared with the group

### Upcoming Meetings

- **Tuesday, February 11**, 3:30-4:30 pm WebEx  
Update on applications
- **Tuesday, February 18**, 3:00-6:00 pm at Hallie Q. Brown Community Center  
Finalize criteria for site visits
- **Tuesday, March 3**, 3:00-6:00 pm at Hallie Q. Brown Community Center  
Finalize which applicants are receiving site visits and site visit procedures

### Meeting adjourned at 6:00 PM

02/11/2020

*To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-201-5813.*