

**Mayor's Committee on Health Reform Implementation
Subcommittee on Communication
Minutes, Meeting of June 6, 2012**

1. The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m. by Dorinda White, the Chair of the Subcommittee.
2. Dorinda opened the meeting with introductions. The following individuals were in attendance:
 - Acacia Salatti – Guest Speaker, Deputy Director, Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
 - Dorinda White – DHCF
 - Susan Walker – DC Coalition for Long Term Care
 - Joanne Williams – The Crider Group
 - Ron Swanda – Volunteer advocate for AARP DC
 - Rekha Ayalur – DHCF
 - Tanya Bryant – DISB
 - Lucy Drafton-Lowery – DISB
 - Nancy Allen – DHCF
 - Atiba Madyun – Pfizer
3. Dorinda then provided a few updates to the group:
 - The nominations for the Health Benefit Exchange Executive Board have been made and nominees will be announced through a press release this week.
 - The first edition of the “For Your Benefit” newsletter, designed to showcase Health Reform related activities, was emailed on May 7, 2012, and can be accessed on the [health reform website](#). Dorinda asked for feedback on that newsletter. Susan Walker stated that she believed the newsletter was helpful and suggested that printed copies be placed in community centers and other locations where they can be accessed by the general public. Dorinda White made the point that stakeholders, agents, brokers and other District staff is the intended audience for the newsletter.
 - The guest speaker for this meeting was Acacia Salatti, Deputy Director for the Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Ms. Salatti joined the Center in September 2009, and previously served in the Office of House Majority Whip James E. Clyburn, where she was the lead staffer for the House Democratic Faith Working Group. Ms. Salatti holds a Master's in Divinity and a certificate in black church studies from Chandler School of Theology at Emory University.
4. The next portion of the meeting was dedicated to the guest speaker, Acacia Salatti who discussed the current initiatives of the Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

Acacia Salatti's presentation is summarized below.

Overview of The Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships

- The White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (OFBCI) was originally established by former President George W. Bush and re-named the Office of Faith Based and Neighborhood Partnerships by President Obama. Located in the Executive Office of the President and directed by Joshua Dubois the Office now focuses more fully on building community collaborations and building civic partnerships that leverage or maximize community efforts.
- The Office coordinates the activities of 12, agency-based Federal Centers for Faith-based and Community Initiatives. Each Center forms partnerships between its agency and faith-based and neighborhood organizations to advance specific goals.
- Currently, the Centers are focusing on:
 - Fatherhood
 - Public Health Outcomes
 - Health Disparities

Ms. Salatti emphasized the importance of identifying the “Gateways” [information pathways] within each faith-based denomination with the goal being to have at least one healthcare “Ambassador” within each church. The strategy helps to ensure that communities work in partnership to improve health outcomes by having a handle on each community’s specific health care assets. A prime example of how communities can collaborate and work together is the “Let’s Move” program initiated by First Lady Michelle Obama to reduce childhood obesity, in specific, along with improving health outcomes and improving health disparities, in general.

Let’s Move Initiative

- Ms. Salatti discussed the staggering rates of chronic disease in southern states and the lack of information on health care and health foods.
- The Let’s Move Initiative, created by Michelle Obama, sets challenges to help children become more active. The program hopes to disseminate information on healthy food and behavior choices so that obesity can be reduced within a generation.
- The message of Let’s Move was “tweaked” to encourage involvement by faith-based and community groups.
- “Let’s Move” is inclusive of community initiatives already in place to help the community make better health decisions and maximize community resources.

Health Disparities

- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has developed a major initiative designed to narrow the health disparity gap among ethnic populations. Plans

call for developing collaborative strategies to address this challenging issue with a major focus on involving faith-based communities, nationwide.

- A National Partnership for Action (NPA) has been established to focus on increasing the effectiveness of programs that target the elimination of health disparities through the active involvement and coordination of partners, leaders, and stakeholders committed to action. An example is the formation of Regional Health Equity Councils which operate under NPA. Each Council's objective is to find workable, collaborative and coordinated solutions to improve access to quality health care within their respective regions. Ms. Salatti also mentioned the Federal Interagency Health Equity Team (FIHET) charged with developing an overall strategic plan.

Affordable Care Act

Ms. Salatti discussed the intended purpose and growing value of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and how faith-based communities are considered key components in the Administration's efforts to make quality health care accessible. In her concluding remarks, Ms. Salatti mentioned:

- The importance of having a website where individuals (or community organizations) can look up primary care centers based on a zip code.
- Understanding the value of "credibility" as defined by community members.
- Conveying a mutually understood definition of "partnerships" The term should mean a joint effort to educate individuals on the message.
- Presenting a consistent ACA message. The Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships uses the following messaging in its outreach on the ACA:
 - It protects you from the worst insurance company abuses;
 - It makes health care more affordable;
 - It gives you better access to care;
 - It strengthens Medicare.

Following Ms. Salatti's presentation, Subcommittee members posed questions and briefly discussed the best methods for educating District residents on the ACA and health care.

Before ending the meeting, Dorinda White announced that the next Communications Subcommittee meeting is scheduled to be held on July 11, 2012.

The meeting adjourned at 3:03 P.M.