

Children/Youth Health Advisory Committee

Monday – March 24, 2003

Meeting Minutes

Present:

Rajiv Bhatia, Dept of Public Health
Stan Bissey, San Francisco Medical Society
Frances Culp, Dept of Public Health
Pat Evans, Dept of Public Health
Jean Fraser, San Francisco Health Plan (SFHP)
Iman Nazeeri-Simmons, Dept. of Public Health
Janet Shalwitz, Adolescent Health Working Group
Rowena Tarantino, SFHP
Cam Tran, San Francisco General Hospital

Regrets:

Barbara Garcia, Dept of Public Health

1. Introductions

- Jean Fraser began the meeting with introductions.

2. Minutes

- The minutes from December's meeting were approved with one change suggested by Pat Evans. The second recommendation on page 2 was changed to read:
 - *"SFHP should consider capitating DPH's MCH unit to do case management."*

3. Presentations: Nutritional Counseling and Obesity Services for Children/Youth

Cam Tran, MD, San Francisco General Hospital (SFGH)

Cam Tran presented on weight and health issues in pediatrics and the Healthy Lifestyle Clinic at SFGH. This clinic began in August 2001. The goal is to provide close follow-up and an educational program to increase physical activity and healthy nutrition intake for pediatric patients who are or are in danger of being overweight. Dr. Tran listed the obstacles to healthy lifestyle changes:

- Unsafe neighborhoods;
- Limited after-school programs;
- Unhealthy school lunches;
- Families lack time to prepare meals; and
- Lack of routine meal times

Unfortunately, the clinic has not had as much success with patients as they would like to see. There has only been a small change in the biochemical profile of the patients and little change in the amount of activity and in food choices. They hope to make a number of changes in order to improve compliance.

Rajiv Bhatia, Dir., Environmental Health, SF DPH

Rajiv noted that the problems with SFGH's Healthy Lifestyle Clinic are not surprising given that the National Institute of Health has spent millions to reduce problems of overweight and obesity in the general American public and has failed. Rajiv pointed out that fast food and diet products are a huge business. It would be wise to target these businesses to initiate change. For example, a tax on unhealthy food to pay for exercise programs in schools. Rajiv said that this problem needed to be addressed on many levels to be impactful - individually, socially and politically.

The group discussed the fact that there were a number of task forces being organized in the City to address these issues. However, the usefulness of this was debated as there are already good recommendations made to confront the issue that should be followed up on—rather than initiating more discussion. Iman pointed out that DPH does nothing around physical activity and this is one obvious area where DPH could help reduce overweight/obesity.

Rowena Tarantino, Mngr., Health Education, Cultural and Linguistic Services, SFHP

Rowena discussed the fact that SFHP had seen from a needs assessment that both SFHP providers and members want more information on physical activity and nutrition. About one year ago, SFHP reviewed CHDP records to see the prevalence of the problem among their pediatric members. This study showed that 38% of children and teen members (n=11,407) between 2 and 19 years of age were overweight or obese. Some populations showed a higher rate than others (ex. 62% of Latino boys in the Mission were overweight or obese). Obesity rates were highest in the Mission and Bayview Hunters Point neighborhoods.

SFHP had convened a provider group from different practice environments and locations to discuss these issues. All of these providers expressed an interest in and a need for resources, specifically a compendium of activity programs in San Francisco. These programs would need to be accessible and neighborhood focused. Consequently, SFHP has undertaken several projects. These include:

- Screening tools;
- Growth charts;
- List of programs in the City; and
- Exercise program in collaboration with YMCA.

The group discussed working with the schools and that this was more challenging now with budget difficulties and layoffs. Dr. Tran said that the schools frequently request help from her staff, but that they cannot provide it at the school sites. Janet said that it would be worth contacting each school's Health Liaison and sharing resources. A Health Liaison is a teacher who takes on this additional role and is able to disseminate health information at the school site.

4. Discuss and Develop Recommendations

Recommendations:

- Put existing recommendations in practice, specifically those made in the article "*Halting the Obesity Epidemic: A Public Health Policy Approach*" from 2000, written by Marion Nestle, PhD, MPH and Michael F. Jacobson, PhD.
- Ask SFHP's trade association (Local Health Plans of California) to track legislation regarding physical activity and nutrition and actively support and lobby for this legislation.
- Ensure that the City is taking an active stand on legislation related to physical activity and nutrition.
- Partner with the medical society. According to Stan Bissey, the San Francisco Medical Society has young doctors interested in community projects.

The next Children/Youth Health Advisory Committee will be held on April 28, 3-4:30pm, at 101 Grove, Room 302.