

**American Indian/Alaska Native Health Research Advisory Council (HRAC)
Quarterly Conference Call
August 6, 2012**

HRAC Tribal Delegates and Alternates

- Jay Butler, Alaska Area Alternate
- Dan Calac, California Area Delegate
- Jim Crouch, California Area Alternate
- Elizabeth Neptune, Nashville Area Delegate
- Madan Poudel, Navajo Area Delegate
- Cara Cowan Watts, Oklahoma Area Delegate
- Tom Anderson, Oklahoma Area Alternate
- Steve Kutz, Portland Area Delegate
- Chester Antone, Tucson Area Delegate
- Michael Peercy, National At-Large Delegate
- Paul Allis, National At-Large Alternate
- Christina Daulton, National At-Large Alternate

HRAC Federal Partners

- Wendy Perry, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality
- Elijah Martin, Health Resources and Services Administration
- Liz Carr, Office of Intergovernmental and External Affairs
- J. Nadine Gracia, Office of Minority Health
- Elizabeth Perez, Office of Minority Health
- Wilbur Woodis, Office of Minority Health

Other Attendees

- Ric Bothwell, Gana-A'Yoo Services Corporation
- Marie Miller, Gana-A'Yoo Services Corporation
- Kendra King Bowes, Native American Management Services, Inc.
- Pat Parker, Native American Management Services, Inc.

Meeting Minutes

- A quorum was reached on the call.

Call to Order and Introductions

- Introductions and facilitation: Councilwoman Cara Cowan Watts, Co-Chair.
- Councilwoman Cowan Watts asked that each individual briefly introduce themselves since there were new members participating on the call.
- Vacancies were noted for the Albuquerque Delegate, Billings Delegate and Alternate, and the National At-Large Alternate to Andy Joseph, Jr. Councilwoman Cowan

Watts asked that the Office of Minority Health (OMH) and Native American Management Services, Inc. (NAMS) work to fill these positions. Kendra King Bowes noted that Dear Tribal Leader Letters had gone out in the fall for three Area Delegates, but vacancies for Albuquerque and Billings still remained. These will be sent out again and also shared with the HRAC to encourage colleagues in those areas. Councilwoman Cowan Watts requested that a list of all Tribes by area be provided at that time.

- Councilwoman Cowan Watts also asked that Wilbur Woodis look at federal partner vacancies including the Indian Health Service (IHS) Delegate and to confirm the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Delegate and Alternate. It was noted that Bud Nicola recently retired and Delight Satter would be taking his place.

1. OMH Welcome and Updates

OMH Updates

- Dr. J. Nadine Gracia, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Minority Health (Acting) and Acting OMH Director, welcomed the HRAC members to the call and noted that she supports the work and guidance that the HRAC members provide. She will be speaking at the National Indian Health Board (NIHB) Conference in September and looks forward to meeting the HRAC members in-person at the conference and learning more about the work of the HRAC.
- Dr. Gracia shared with the HRAC the three strategic priorities that she has set forth for OMH:
 1. Affordable Care Act
 2. HHS Action Plan to Reduce Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities
 3. National Partnership for Action (NPA) to End Health Disparities
- Dr. Gracia announced that the OMH will have a new Deputy Director, CDR Jacqueline Rodrigue. She will be joining OMH later this month and is coming from the Health Resources and Services Administration's Division of Nursing and Public Health.

2. HRAC Meeting Schedule

HRAC Face-to-Face Meeting

- Wilbur Woodis announced that there are funds available for the next HRAC Face-to-Face meeting and that September 24 in Denver, Colorado is proposed as a pre-meeting to the National Indian Health Board's Annual Consumer Conference. Travel for one representative from each area will be covered to attend the HRAC meeting, which will include travel to and from Denver, CO and lodging for two nights and appropriate per diem. However, for those individuals who are interested in attending the NIHB Conference, in addition to travel to the HRAC meeting, registration to the NIHB conference will be covered, along with two additional nights of lodging and appropriate per diem.
- Paul Allis offered to send a conference agenda-at-a-glance so that it can be shared with HRAC members.

- Councilwoman Cowan Watts asked if there would be an opportunity to provide a HRAC workshop. Wilbur Woodis noted that HRAC had presented at NIHB events in the past and that this could be discussed.
- A roll of the HRAC members was taken with anticipated attendance at the HRAC meeting. HRAC members not on the call will be contacted to ensure the meeting will be well attended.

3. Agency and Other Updates

HHS Secretary’s Tribal Advisory Committee (STAC) Update

- Councilman Chester Antone reported that at the last STAC meeting the group prioritized their issues which included: Head Start funding; Affordable Care Act; and Language preservation and cultural programs. He noted that there were two other priorities and that he could provide at a later date.
- Councilman Antone said that HHS is working to finalize a matrix of HHS grants with all possible funding opportunities that identify eligibility for Tribes. If Tribes are not eligible, the matrix will note why, such as a legislative reason.
- There will be a meeting at the end of the month in Albuquerque for a State-Tribal Relations Workgroup.
- The next STAC meeting is September 11-12.
- Councilwoman Cowan Watts asked Councilman Antone if he would go back to the STAC to see what they would like HRAC to address or questions they may have. She also noted that on the HRAC Face-to-Face agenda that the HRAC should identify what items to advance and prioritize to the STAC for discussion and resolution.

Proposal to Improve Rules Protecting Human Research Subjects Status Update

- Wilbur Woodis reported that a Federal Register notice was published last year with a notice of proposed rulemaking that requested comments. This has not been updated since 1991, but is needed due to advances in technology and multiple sites outside of universities that are now doing research. Jay Butler noted that the reason this is of such interest to the Alaska Tribal Health System is that their Institutional Review Board (IRB) estimates about 50% of the proposals coming through would be exempted under the proposed rule. Wilbur Woodis said that he spoke with the Office of Health Research Protections and that they received over 1,000 comments and they are still working to review and revise the rules.

NIH Guidance on the Implementation of the HHS Tribal Consultation Policy

- Kendra King Bowes provided a brief update from Dr. Hunter that no comments were received by the May 30 deadline, so they extended the deadline to June. They are working to incorporate the comments into the draft. Councilwoman Cowan Watts shared that she had submitted comments originally and they said they didn’t receive them, so she sent them again. Councilman Antone said that he had relayed to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to allow sufficient time for Tribal comments. Wilbur Woodis noted that NIH would be providing an update at the September STAC meeting.

AI/AN National Partnership for Action (NPA) Report

- Pat Parker reported that as part of the NPA there were 10 Regional Health Equity Councils (RHECs) created. The purpose is to bring together the regions, federal staff, local individuals, insurance companies, small businesses, foundations, and other stakeholders interested in reducing health disparities. These are independent entities, some of which may consider pursuing 501(c)(3) status so they can become their own organization and seek funding to keep operational. Pat Parker had been asked by OMH if there should be an AI/AN Health Equity Council, but her initial thought was that Tribal leaders would not want to spend the time or resources putting together a 501(c)(3), but that they should be at the table with the regional groups. Pat Parker said she would like for the HRAC to consider this and to provide feedback at the face-to-face meeting. OMH has been working to get two AI/AN representatives on each RHEC.
- For the AI/AN Plan, all the comments received from HRAC members, National Indian Health Board, National Congress of American Indians, and others have been incorporated. The report is being brought up to date with a focus to capture all communities including reservation, off reservation, rural, and urban. The report has also been updated with 2010 Census data and includes information from the HHS Action Plan to Reduce Racial and Ethnic Disparities. The revised report will be sent out before the HRAC meeting so feedback can be provided.
- Councilman Antone said that he appreciates the report. He brought this up at the STAC meeting and to Secretary Sebelius while Dr. Gracia was in attendance. He wants to make sure that AI/ANs are included in the Secretary's HHS Action Plan to Reduce Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities and the NPA. He is also interested in what the RHECs are doing and how they are making an impact.
- It was requested that the draft AI/AN Plan be sent out to the HRAC to give some background for new members.

4. Wrap Up

- Councilwoman Cowan Watts asked that HRAC members and federal partners review the contact list sent out before the call and reply back with any updates. She requested that the federal partners also look to fill any vacant positions.
- She asked that Wilbur Woodis relay to Dr. Gracia that the HRAC appreciated her participation and updates on the call.
- The group should check their calendar and confirm participation for a September 24 meeting.
- Please provide Kendra King Bowes with any updates or bullet points that should be shared with the group.
- The meeting was adjourned.