



**Multnomah County Public Health Advisory Board  
Ethics Committee Minutes  
May 2018**

**Date:** Thursday, May 24, 2018

**Time:** 3:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

**Location:** Multnomah Building, 501 SE Hawthorne, Room 126

**Purpose:** To advise the Public Health Division on several areas of work with a strong focus on ethics in public health practice and developing long-term public health approaches to address the leading causes of death and disability in Multnomah County.

**Desired Outcomes:**

1. Provide Multnomah County framing for grant decision discussed during last ethics deliberation

**Members Present:** Suzanne Hansche, Tyra Black, Audrey DeCoursey, Chuck Tauman, Berthan Ferran, Lisa Saunders, Veronica Leonard, Andrea Cano, Becca Brownlee, Debra McKissack, Alicia Junker, Baher Butti

**Public Health Division staff:** Jessica Guernsey, Christina Brown, Hilary U'Ren, Kim Toeys, Sarah Fast

Item/Action	Process	Lead
Welcome & Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome &amp; introductions around the table</li> <li>Stakeholders/guests: Lisa Saunders from Self-Enhancement, Inc. (SEI), Veronica Leonard from Latino Network (plus Kim Toeys and Sarah Fast from MCHD).</li> <li>Reviewed last meeting's minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requests to expand two acronyms: CCO (Coordinated Care Organization) and CBAC (Community Budget Advisory Committee)</li> <li>Unanimously approved</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Christina Brown
Review of April Ethics Committee Meeting & Stage Setting with Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At the April Ethics Committee meeting, we discussed hypothetically whether or not the county should take the opportunity to apply for "sexual risk avoidance" funding from the federal government.</li> <li>Shortly after this practice deliberation, a grant very similar to this hypothetical grant was announced, and Multnomah County (in conjunction with their community partners) decided to apply for the grant.</li> <li>SEI is an African-American culturally-specific organization represented in this decision. They're probably the most conservative of all the community partners involved in this group. That said, SEI is still not comfortable promoting abstinence-only curriculum, and they are not comfortable as an organization having their curriculum stipulated and parsed by the federal government. What seems right is being provided all of the necessary options and being able to hone the curriculum according to their community's specific needs.</li> <li>Latino Network is planning to adapt the curriculum for their community needs, as well, but that means they're worried the federal government will be able to say their methods work when they return results. This organization wants to ensure that they continue to provide youth access to information that is difficult for them to receive in other places so that they can be autonomous and make their own choices.</li> <li><b>Questions from MCPHAB Members:</b></li> <li>Are there consequences if you don't follow the stipulations of the grant? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The grant provides two options: one is more geared toward abstinence-only, while the other is more comprehensive around sharing information but still asks that that approach has language around it that we promote. The end goal is to have us telling youth to stop having sex for optimal health outcomes until they're married. However, it's not our place as a government agency to say that, just as it's not an educator's place to say that in a school. How do we approach that with the language of our application? Do we call it out explicitly as against our values and risk the points in the application? Do we not do that but risk revoked funding if we were funded and the project officer visited and saw that we were teaching something else?</li> </ul> </li> <li>How will the grant be evaluated, what are the metrics? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If we were to receive the grant, it's possible they would also give us specific evaluation tools we'd have to use with it, but so far we have not received indication that this is a factor. As such, we'd be able to create</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Jessica Guernsey

	<p>our own evaluation plan with our own Research and Evaluation Analysts. Ideally, we would examine both quantitative and qualitative data around teen birth rates and STIs, as well as doing pre- and post-tests on groups of youth for change in knowledge. We would like to involve youth in articulating what questions we should be answering. Essentially, if we say we'll teach evidence-based curriculum to a certain number of students, we would need to demonstrate output – that we did teach evidence-based curriculum to the number we said we would. Part of what's positive about the chance to create our own evaluations is the opportunity to work outside of the existing system wherein a lot of quantitative, evidence-based work is rooted in white patriarchy. If we design our evaluations, we can account for multiple perspectives and a wide range of experiences as opposed to narrow definitions set by people not involved in these communities specifically.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is it possible to have two separate programs take on the two parts of the grant, such that one more comfortable with the abstinence-only curriculum can tackle that? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ While our community partners recognize that abstinence is an important part of the spectrum of curriculum, what's important is that it's a part of a spectrum – a range of choices and options. The stakeholders would be uncomfortable embarking in a partnership with other organizations whose missions are strictly abstinence-only, or who shame youth interested in learning about sex. The ultimate question is, what is the healthiest way for us to support our youth? Is the program we're putting forth going to help them have the healthiest life possible? We do not want to be party to providing them harmful information.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• What about the matter of confidentiality in these evaluations of youth? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ In similar research among the stakeholder organizations (SEI, specifically), they did evaluation as part of the after-school program, with written permission from parents. The surveys were numbered, but had no names or other identifiers for the students, so that their identities could be kept confidential. Additionally, the questions are less about personal behaviors and more just about measuring change in knowledge, so even if parents were to discover their child's answers, they would just reveal how much the student had learned in their curriculum, not which behaviors they were practicing in their personal lives.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Do we track abortion rates? Is that a statistic we can use for evaluations? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ We have not used that statistic as an indicator, though it would line up with other pieces we have mapped like teenage births and STIs. Births and abortions together would likely be a good representation of unplanned pregnancy.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• When you write the grant application, does it help to include some of the state guidelines, like what the state was thinking in terms of the education process? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ In the past, we've had some ability to push back against guidance that was too narrow and said that that's not what our community considers competent or in alignment with our state laws, which has led to some allowances. Now, however, it's difficult to tell with this administration whether it would be helpful or harmful to elucidate how our norms deviate from the federal government's.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Can the federal government claim that their abstinence-only program led to success if we take the grant money but continue teaching our own curriculum our way? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Yes, they could say that the statistics reflect that x work done under this program was successful.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
Deliberation with the 5Ps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Topic:</b> How do we address cessation support balanced against potential risks of the grant score being affected? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ How might communities of color be traumatized/retraumatized by this issue/decision area?</li> <li>◦ What are the barriers to doing equity and racial justice work?</li> <li>◦ How are we meaningfully including or excluding people (communities of color) who are affected? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How does it make kids feel to tell them to stop doing what they're doing?</li> <li>▪ How does this undermine overarching trust in authority</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Group Work

	<p>figures?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ This would take away our ability to choose what we do, how we teach and converse, and how we form relationships with youth.</li> <li>▪ In community partner organizations, we have a strong dislike when any federal government tells us how to do things, whether it's on the liberal <i>or</i> conservative end of the spectrum – it's best to give us all of the information and let us determine how to proceed with our specific communities from there. To commit to cessation practice would be in conflict with that, so we need to not be bound by our government.</li> <li>▪ Community organizations have spent years building trust with their communities, and if they come in with a new federal grant and new messaging that contradicts their previous work, those relationships will be ruptured. Telling people that the only way to engage in sex is via marriage alienates those who have chosen to be young parents, many of those in the LGBT community, and other members of the community. It also reinforces much of the past trauma when government has told people how, when, and why to get married.</li> </ul>	
Framing for the County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highlight in some messaging that our communities are more important to us than this money. We're applying for the grant in order to be able to continue doing this work with a social justice and racial equity lens, not just to get money. It is not worth compromising years of social capital and relationships built over money.</li> <li>• Important to acknowledge publicly that we recognize that forcing any one option on our communities is not culturally responsive. Though abstinence may be the ideal option for certain communities, having the government force curriculum on them is not, regardless of the message itself. We want to affirm the agency of people who exist in all of our communities: say yes to a healthy life, and move away from fear-based work.</li> <li>• For those who are behind a more abstinence-focused curriculum: padding comprehensive curriculum doesn't preclude anyone from having abstinence-first in their education; it can still be included and discussed as an option.</li> <li>• <b>Point agreed-upon by all participants in the room:</b> it's important to say that while we recognize the importance of abstinence and the members of the community who endorse it, we also want to provide a more robust view of other options available and be more comprehensive in our curriculum.</li> </ul>	
Wrap-up and meeting evaluation	<p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o In the 5Ps document, under People, consider changing point "Consider physical, spiritual, emotional, and contextual effects" to also include "cultural."</li> <li>o It would be helpful to provide MCPHAB members with background research about the question being posed and language of the grant in advance so that they can bring knowledge to the discussion. That way they can also apply the 5Ps on their own prior to coming to the meeting so they can have that foundation prepared.</li> </ul> <p><u>Likes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Worked well to have the phone available for participation</li> <li>o Many people enjoyed having the community partners/stakeholders present to provide information, perspective, and context to MCPHAB.</li> <li>o Everybody was a good and active listener.</li> <li>o Going through the 5Ps as a large group went well – people enjoyed hearing how other people handled and thought about the questions as we moved through them. It will be good to do both small group and large group analyses moving forward so that we get those perspectives but also so that people are individually comfortable using the tool moving forward.</li> </ul>	<p>Jessica Guernsey, Christina Brown</p>