

**KING COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH**  
999 Third Avenue, Suite 1200  
Seattle, Washington 98104-4039

Carolyn Edmonds, *Board of Health Chair*

**BOH Members:**

Richard Conlin  
George Counts  
Jan Drago  
Carolyn Edmonds  
Ava Frisinger  
Larry Gossett  
Steve Hammond  
David Hutchinson  
David Irons  
Kathy Lambert  
Frankie Manning  
Bud Nicola  
Julia Patterson  
Alonzo Plough  
Tom Rasmussen

**BOH Staff:**

Kathleen Uhlorn

**King County Board of Health**

**Friday, October 21, 2005**

**King County Council Chambers**

**MEETING PROCEEDINGS**

Members Present: Richard Conlin; Ava Frisinger; David Hutchinson; David Irons; Kathy Lambert; Frankie Manning; Bud Nicola; Julia Patterson; Tom Rasmussen; Carolyn Edmonds

Members Absent: George Counts; Jan Drago; Larry Gossett; Steve Hammond

Staff: Dorothy Teeter and Jane McKenzie

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 9:34 AM by Chair Edmonds.

**2. Announcement of Alternates**

No alternates were present.

**3. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes for the September 2005 meeting were adopted.

**4. General Public Comments**

Mr. Rob Johnson, Policy Director, Transportation Choices Coalition, testified in favor of the Overweight Prevention Resolution.

Ms. Linda Schwartz, Vice-Chair, Leadership Team, STEPS to Health King County, testified in favor of the Overweight Prevention Resolution on behalf of STEPS to Health King County and The Bicycle Alliance of Washington.

Ms. Margaret Kitchell, Feet First, testified in favor of the Overweight Prevention Resolution.

**5. Chair's Report**

Chair Edmonds reported:

- The Joint Health Conference (sponsored by the Washington State Department of Health, the Washington State Public Health Association, and the Washington State Board of Health) was held in Yakima from October 10<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup>, 2005.
- The Third King County Overweight Prevention Initiative Forum took place on October 14<sup>th</sup> at the Tukwila Community Center.

## 6. Board Member Updates

Board member Rasmussen reported that presentations on walkable communities and transportation safety will be held on October 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Rainier Community Center and the Uptown Neighborhood Center and on October 24<sup>th</sup> at the Seattle Central Library. These presentations are sponsored by Feet First. More information is available at [www.lesstraffic.com](http://www.lesstraffic.com) or [www.feetfirst.info](http://www.feetfirst.info). Board member Rasmussen suggested that the Board request the Health Department and the jail to work together to develop a system to regularly report the health of jail inmates, including jail deaths, and present their work to the Board in December meeting.

Board member Manning reported that the State Board of Health was briefed on revisions to WAC 246-366, a code dealing with the Public Health for schools and environmental conditions at schools which has not been revised since 1971. The State Board of Health asked the Washington State Department of Health to establish committees to set minimum standards for schools. These committees have been working since 2003 and recommendations are expected in December. Board member Manning attended the Governor's Diversity Health Summit held on September 30<sup>th</sup> in SeaTac. The Summit spawned five task groups to investigate ways to improve the health status of diverse populations within the State.

## 7. Director's Report

Greg Kipp, Chief Administrative Officer, reported:

- The Influenza vaccine is presently available. High risk groups will be given first priority (i.e. babies, pregnant women, children, adults with chronic medical conditions, and the elderly); the vaccine will be made available to the general public on October 24<sup>th</sup>.
- A business forum on pandemic flu was held on Monday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> at Safeco Field. The forum was co-hosted by the Seattle Mariners and was well attended by Seattle's business community, especially large private employers and governmental entities. The forum's focus was to educate the business community on the likelihood of pandemic flu and to plan for the impact of the flu's arrival, anticipating things like very high absentee rates, the possible need to limit social gatherings, planning for continuity of service delivery and the overall economic impact on our region.
- Ten local childcare centers were recognized for raising their level of preparedness to respond to disasters. In an effort co-sponsored by the Department and the City of Bellevue's Fire Department, recipients were recognized for developing emergency plans conducting drills in preparation for disaster response to protect the health and safety of children in childcare programs throughout the area. The recipients were: Creative Child, Seattle; The Discovery Center, Kirkland; Enatai Childcare, Bellevue; Early Learning Family and Childcare Center at the Bellevue Community College, Bellevue; Imagination Station, Snoqualmie; Salvation Army Little People, Seattle; Little Anchor, Seattle; Pinehurst Childcare Center, Seattle; Teeter Tots Montessori, Kenmore; and the University of Washington's Children's Center on the West Campus at the University of Washington, Seattle.

## 8. Administrator's Report

Kathy Uhlorn, Board of Health Administrator, presented an overview of the meeting for the viewing public and Board members. Ms. Uhlorn announced that November's Board meeting was cancelled and that the next meeting will be December 9<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Uhlorn indicated that most Board

members had signed a letter urging members of Washington State's Congressional delegation to reauthorize the Ryan White CARE Act. Hard copies will be circulated for those who had not yet signed and would still lend their support.

#### 9. Legislative Update

Tom Bristow, Government Relations Associate for King County updated the Board on current legislative activity. Board member Lambert requested that the Board write a letter to the State Board of Health urging the continued production of pamphlet related to potential factors in preventing SIDS.

#### 10. Pandemic Influenza Funding Resolution

David Randall, Council Staff, briefed the Board on County activity surrounding preparedness for a pandemic flu. Mr. Randall presented a resolution (Resolution 05-07) that expresses the Board's support of a King County Council motion, proposed by Chair Edmonds and Councilmember Jane Hague and adopted by the Council, respectfully urging the U.S. Congress to provide full funding to conduct an exercise to prepare for a flu pandemic.

The Board adopted Resolution 05-07.

#### 11. King County Overweight Prevention Initiative Resolution

Kirsten Wysen, a Policy Analyst for Public Health – Seattle & King County, briefed the Board on the King County Overweight Prevention Initiative, a coalition sponsored by Public Health – Seattle & King County. The coalition has broad representation, with membership across the sectors of nutrition, physical activity, land use and transportation. Ms. Wysen presented Resolution 05-08, which includes action items for the Initiative and a directive to report back to the Board in one year.

The Board adopted Resolution 05-8.

#### 12. Briefing: Revision of Personal Health Services Fees

Marcy Maurer, Assistant Division Manager for Community Health Services Division, Public Health Seattle and King County briefed the Board on proposed revisions to Title 3, Personal Health Services Fees and Charges. (The Board will be asked to vote on the proposed revisions at its December 9<sup>th</sup> meeting). The fees were last modified in 1999. Changes are needed at this time to comply with federal program requirements to establish a cost-based fee schedule. (The Department has already been cited for its failure to comply with this requirement). In addition, increased fees will help offset the cost of the medical visit. The proposed regulation:

- Is simpler in language and structure.
- Retains language granting the Director of Public Health the authority to waive fees for services to avert or control Public Health problems or for communicable disease control.
- Allows the Department to contract with third party payors at higher rates than those set by Medicaid.
- Authorizes the Director of Public Health to charge minimum fees when legally or contractually permitted and when administratively feasible.
- Sets minimum fees, a practice consistent with other safety net clinics.
- Provides a mechanism for an annual review and adjustment of fees.

Board member Rasmussen asked how the various publicly funded clinics compliment or support each other. Ms. Maurer responded that a report with this information had been developed a couple of years ago. Ms. Uhlorn clarified the report was in response to a City of Seattle budget request. Board member Rasmussen requested a copy of the report be forwarded to each member of the Board.

Chair Edmonds asked Board members to forward any questions to Ms. Uhlorn, if possible via e-mail, in order to facilitate the review of the proposed regulation.

13. Briefing: Prescription Opiate Use and Misuse Trends in King County and Washington State  
Caleb Banta-Green, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Institute, University of Washington, briefed the Board on drug use and drug abuse trends in Washington State, particularly related to opioids. Mr. Banta-Green discussed the increase in opiate-related deaths in the County. Mr. Banta-Green was careful to point out that the increase in opioid use, particularly methadone, is not related to its use in replacement therapy for those addicted to heroin; rather the increase is related to an increased rate of prescription for the treatment of chronic pain conditions. Mr. Banta-Green continued by saying that further investigation into the source of these drugs in instances where death results is needed. Mr. Banta-Green also added that the State Board of Pharmacy is proposing legislation similar to what has been enacted in other states, instituting a prescription monitoring program.

Dr. John Matthew Lacy, King County Medical Examiner's Office, presented data gathered over the last 10 years for drug-related deaths. (These findings are detailed in the King County Medical Examiner's Office 2004 Annual Report). Dr. Lacy summarized by saying that drug-related deaths in King County are increasing. Deaths due to cocaine and ethanol are relatively stable and heroin-related deaths have decreased. However there has been a substantial increase in deaths related to methamphetamine, methadone and oxycodone. In regard to methadone and oxycodone, it is unclear whether the source of the drugs is prescription pain management and methadone treatment centers or diversion from other legitimate sources. Additional research investigation will be required to resolve this question.

Mr. Ron Jackson, Evergreen Treatment Services, pointed out the increasing tendency to use analgesic medications to treat pain. As a result, the distribution of methadone to pharmacies that is then routed to patients for pain management has increased significantly over time. This is one of two ways that methadone makes it into the community. The other is through methadone treatment clinics, which are tightly controlled environments where patients come to a clinic to get medication and ingest it there in front of a nurse. While there may have been an expansion in methadone treatment, there is no correlation to the expansion of the distribution of methadone to hospital and community pharmacies that physicians can prescribe. The increase in the prescription of methadone for the treatment of pain is a trend across the nation even in states where there are no methadone clinics.

Ms. Uhlorn added that the Medical Examiner's Office is planning to do some enhanced death investigations in cases of opiate-related deaths during the next few months and will share the results of this study with the Board. Dr. Richard Harruff, The King County Medical Examiner, will also be writing to the medical community via a Public Health publication about the increased rates in opioid prescription and increased opioid-related deaths in an effort to increase awareness to physicians in our community.

14. Adjournment

Chair Edmonds adjourned the meeting at 12:18 PM.

KING COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

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CAROLYN EDMONDS, CHAIR

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DATE

