

NORTH CAROLINA COUNCIL FOR THE DEAF AND THE HARD OF HEARING
Quarterly Meeting Minutes
November 6, 2020
9:00 am – 12:00 pm
Virtual Meeting

Members Present:

Linda Amato
Craig Blevins
Antwan Campbell
Kathy Dowd
Kevin Earp
Rebecca Freeman
Erika Gagnon
Pattie Griffin
Meredith Kaplan
Mike Lupo
Lorita Xaver Moore
Denise Nelson
Robert Nutt
Claudia Pagliaro
Daphne Peacock
Laurie Ann Rook
David Rosenthal
Judy Cummings Stout
Donald Tinsley, Sr.
Brad Trotter

Ex Officio:

Jan Withers (Present)

Liaison:

Kimberly Harrell (Present)

Members Absent:

Rep Hugh Blackwell
Timothy Boyd
Rep. Carla Cunningham
Megan Pender
Senator Bill Rabon
Elizabeth Strachan

Introductions, Announcements, Approve Minutes from August 7, 2020

August 7, 2020 minutes were approved.

Motion: Moved by Donald Tinsley to approve the minutes from the August 7, 2020 Council meeting; Motion Seconded by Antwan Campbell. Motion passed.

None of the members acknowledged having a conflict of interest or appearance thereof on matters listed on this agenda

NC Institute of Medicine Task Force Report

David Rosenthal, Co-Chair Task Force
Ben Money, Deputy Secretary for Health Services, DHHS
Jan Withers, Director, DSDHH

The NCIOM task force was established to study the issue of communication access in healthcare settings and hearing health care for Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and DeafBlind North Carolinians. The task force met several times in 2019 and developed 14 recommendations. Among the recommendations, there is an emphasis on educating the healthcare workforce and deaf and hard of hearing consumers. One of the recommendations is that a report be provided annually to the NC Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing on progress in carrying out the recommendations.



NCCDHH

Presentation 2020-11

Accessible Testing and Contact Tracing

Lee Williamson, Communication Access Manager, DSDHH

During the State's efforts to combat COVID-19, the initial focus was to flatten the curve, making sure that our healthcare infrastructure wouldn't be overwhelmed with people coming in sick. A major part of the effort to contain the spread of the COVID-19 virus include testing and contact tracing. .

DSDHH's focus is on ensuring the information and services provided by the Department of Health and Human Services to combat the pandemic is accessible to Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and DeafBlind North Carolinians. This includes the development of videos in American Sign Language and with captions and resource materials that assist

healthcare providers in making their services accessible. All this information is available on the division website.

DSDHH has partnered with Community Care of North Carolina, which works with the local health departments provide support with contact tracing, to develop training for their Community Health Workers on accessibility.

DSDHH also partnered with the Division of Emergency Management and Division of Social Services in updating their guidelines for shelters, which are being used now for COVID-19 as well as part of the response to hurricanes.



NCCDHH
Presentation 2020-11

DSDHH and NC Office of Rural Health Collaboration on Communication Equity

Tony Davis, Accessibility Resources Coordinator, DSDHH
Robyn McArdle, Rural Telehealth Specialist, ORH
Nick Galvez, Rural Hospital Manager, ORH

DHHS's Telehealth Education Resource Workgroup focused on telehealth education equity for many different populations. The workgroup collaborated to develop a webinar that assists community health workers to understand how to work with deaf, hard of hearing and deaf/blind patients across the state. The webinar also assisted community health workers to understand how to identify a hard of hearing person.

The NC Office of Rural Health received a grant, which will be used starting next year, through Appalachian Regional Commission. This is a federally funded organization that receives money every year and the money is distributed to grantees. This grant will allow implementation of the recommendations made based on data found last year. One of the big goals is to make sure everybody has equal access to care.

Some examples of how telehealth was implemented during the pandemic in some rural areas:

- North Carolina State Telepsychiatry Program (NC-Step), funded by the North Carolina General Assembly since 2013. The program offers telepsychiatry services in some hospitals.
- Some communities don't have access to a Psychiatrist so video conferencing telehealth program offers free services to hospitals who would like to use the service.



NCCDHH

Presentation 2020-11

NC Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing: Role, Function, Priorities

David Rosenthal, Council Chair

We are a forward-facing council and I want to make sure roles are delineated and clear.

- Purpose of NCCDHH
 - To recommend needed changes or additions to state services for North Carolina citizens who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing and to make recommendations for cost-effective coordination of services
- We do this by:
 - Making recommendations to the Secretary of DHHS for cost-effective provision, coordination and improvement of services
 - Creating public awareness of the specific needs and abilities of people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind and to consider the need for new state programs
 - Advising the Secretary of DHHS during planning and implementation of services being provided with respect to the quality, extent, and scope of these services
 - Advising the Secretary of DHHS and the Superintendent of DPI regarding planning, implementation, and cost-effective coordination of State programs providing educational services for persons who are D, HOH or DB
 - Responding to the request of the Secretary of DHHS for advice or recommendations pertaining to any matter affecting D, HOH or DB citizens of NC
- Council Member Responsibility
 - Attend and participate in the meetings of the Council
 - Be knowledgeable of Council positions and activities regarding issues of concern to people who are D, HOH, or DB and effectively represent the Council to the public
 - Actively participate on assigned committees through regular attendance and discussions
- Standing Committees
 - NCCDHH shall develop committees to identify issues, make recommendations for policy or action and, as appropriate, to participate in the implementation of decisions and activities affecting persons who are D, HOH, and/or DB
 - NCCDHH currently has two standing committees; Education and Community

- A review of minutes from the past two years reveal the following topics were discussed:
 - **Education Committee**
 - Interpreters
 - Need for interpreters at Public/Deaf school events for Deaf parents and community members attending them
 - Educational Interpreter/EIPA Task Force results and implementation
 - Educational interpreter programs
 - DPI Concerns
 - DPI recruitment of Deaf staff members - *Letter was written to DPI Superintendent re: NCCDHH concerns regarding additional hiring of deaf staff and teachers at NCSD*
 - Support staff members who deal with communication support for Deaf Plus, language deprived and/or behavior needs
 - Spoken language facilitators
 - Sex education/sexual assault training for Deaf students
 - Pre-K Education
 - Early Childhood Action Plan - *Letter was written requesting/petitioning the State Board of Education to change teacher licensure requirement*
 - HAT system for pre-school students
 - Other Concerns
 - Statewide ASL classes for families
 - ASL instruction in all schools and community colleges
 - Security questions re: live streaming of DeafBlind classroom at ENCSD
 - Accessibility to internet services in rural areas
 - Update on UNCG Master Program
 - Vision screening as part of IDEA
 - Long Term Care Hearing Screening - *Letter was written to DHHS Secretary Cohen re: SLPS in long term care may not be doing hearing testing*
 - **Community Committee**
 - Uneven accessibility in rural areas
 - DeafBlind

- More training and better pay for SSPs
- Increase accessibility for people who are DeafBlind
- Increase SSP services for people who are DeafBlind
- Gaps in services for people who are DeafBlind
- Outreach at high schools for students joining the military after graduation
- Resurrection of CODA group(s) in NC
- Broadband access: Urban vs. Rural
- Medicaid interpreter access
- Support services for inmates who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- DSDHH curriculum on accessibility for aged Deaf
- Congenital CMV - *Letter of support was written and sent to legislators*

Adjourned 12:00 noon

Future Meetings: February 5, 2021, May 7, 2021, August 6, 2021, November 5, 2021

<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/dsdhh/councils-commissions>