

Massachusetts Special Legislative Commission on Postpartum Depression (PPD)
Wednesday, December 3, 2014, 5:30-7:30 PM
House Members' Lounge, State House, Boston

Minutes

Commissioners present: Representative Ellen Story (Chair); Khadeejah Ahmed (on behalf of Rep. James O'Day); Karen Crowley; Karin Downs; Dr. Lee Cohen; Gail DeRiggi (on behalf of Commissioner Thomas Weber); Mary Elizabeth Gamache; Dr. Janice Goodman; Dr. Gordon Harper; Erin Hearn (on behalf of Sen. Richard Ross); Dr. Monica Le; Kadie Maher (on behalf of Sen. Joan Lovely); Dr. Joshua Sparrow; Dr. Michael Yogman.

Commissioners absent: Sen. Thomas McGee (Chair); Kristin Alexander; Rep. Kimberly Ferguson; Sen. Jennifer Flanagan; Elizabeth Fluet; Liz Friedman; Dr. Julie Johnston; Peggy Kaufman; Kerry LaBounty; Dr. Claire Levesque; Sen. Richard Moore; Dr. Tiffany Moore Simas; Rep. Denise Provost; Rep. Tom Sannicandro; Nancy Schwartz ; Dr. Jayne Singer; Dr. Alison Schonwald; Eileen Terlaga; Lisa Waxman.

Subcommittee members present: Beth Buxton; Dr. Claudia Gold; Margaret Hannah.

Special guests present: Kathleen Biebel, Program Director, MCPAP for Moms; Divya Kumar, Southern Jamaica Plain Health Center; Dr. John Straus, Mass. Behavioral Health Partnership.

Commission staff present: Amanda Jusino, Aide to Rep. Story.

Members of the public and other state employees were also present.

1. Welcome; approval of minutes

Rep. Ellen Story welcomed Commission members and guests. All of those in attendance introduced themselves. The Commission approved the minutes from the September 10, 2014 meeting.

2. PPD awareness day planning

The group discussed logistics and the agenda for the upcoming PPD awareness day. Cynthia Lewis from Senator Tarr's office led a discussion about the event components (tables, speaking program, advocacy, etc.). Rep. Story reminded the group that legislators are the ultimate target audience for the event, since they are the ones who will choose to fund our initiatives in the budget.

Rep. Story, commissioners and others discussed the speaking program, including Dr. Claudia Gold as keynote, a survivor, and leaders from MCPAP for Moms and the Community Health Center pilot program. The group also talked about getting press coverage for the event, and about other potential names for the day that might be catchier and/or describe the issue more accurately (i.e., "perinatal" mental health). Representatives of the Commission's team from the Emerging Leaders Program at UMass Boston reported briefly on their work developing messaging for awareness day, as well as on potential next steps to continue that work.

3. Reports and discussion of other initiatives

Community Health Center pilot program: Divya Kumar from the Jamaica Plain site reported on the “9C” (mid-year) budget cuts to the program, which have ended her site’s program and may have the same impact on other locations. [Note: the Jamaica Plain program was able to continue with other funding.]

MCPAP for Moms: Dr. John Straus and others updated the group on the strong progress of this program. As of the meeting, they have served nearly 200 women and enrolled 26 OB/GYN practices. They are continuing to update their database of resources for moms, and will be finalizing a pediatric toolkit in early 2015.

DPH regulations: Beth Buxton announced that the Public Health Council has approved the new regulations for data collection on screening. The Department will make an announcement when the regulations are formalized.

Medicaid screening coverage: Dr. Monica Le reported that their working group on the issue has distributed a policy memo, and that they are looking at what other states’ Medicaid departments are doing on PPD. She expressed concerns about next steps with a new Governor, and reported that they have reached out to his transition team.

Other reports and announcements: Among other updates, Dr. Cindy Liu from Beth Israel talked about her groups for moms with bipolar and psychosis, and Susan Petcher from Postpartum Progress discussed their work on minority engagement.

4. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.