

# N.C. Child Fatality Task Force

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Chair: Tom Vitaglione

Executive Director: Selena Berrier

## Perinatal Health Committee Conference Call

5/21/07

10:00 – 11:00 am

### Participants

Belinda Pettiford, Anna Bess Brown, Steve Kandall, Tom Vitaglione, Sarah Verbiest, Gerri Mattson, Joe Holliday, Selena Berrier, Brook Colgan, Sara Smith, Janice Freedman, Karina Volodka, Jan Lowery, Miriam Labbok

### Legislative Updates

#### CFTF 17P and Safe Sleep

S81/H200 Funds to Address Infant Deaths originally asked for \$300,000 non-recurring funds to provide 17P medication to women at risk for recurring preterm birth. In addition the bill requested \$300,000 recurring funds for the creation and implementation of a safe sleep awareness campaign. The appropriations were not included in the Governor's or House budgets. In April 2007, NC Medicaid agreed to fund 17P. In response to that development and also to the budget constraints, the appropriation request for 17P was reduced to \$97,000 non-recurring (to cover uninsured women). The Safe Sleep awareness campaign request was also reduced to \$150,000 non-recurring (will still allow for creation of messages, but a smaller scale media campaign than the originally planned).

#### March of Dimes, Anna Bess Brown

The House included \$200,000 (new money) in the budget for the Birth Defects Monitoring Program. The March of Dimes is working with Sen. Purcell and others on having it included in the Senate budget as well.

#### Healthy Start Foundation, Janice Freedman

The House included \$275,000 non-recurring funds in their budget for the NCHSF. These funds are in addition to their annual recurring funds. Work is being done to secure funding on the Senate side.

#### Health Disparities, Jan Lowery

The Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities had requested \$750,000 to expand existing efforts to reduce health disparities. There may be some change in the language about the funds, including setting aside some for operational funds. They may also shape \$500,000 into a memorial fund in honor of NC Senators and Representatives who have passed in the last six months and who were leaders in reducing health disparities. The focus of the fund might expand to address improvements in physician/patient relationships. Funds may also include prevention efforts around Sickle Cell, Cardiovascular Disease, and others beyond the current focus areas the Office is addressing. Janice Freedman shared information about a Healthy Start Foundation report that has relevant and current information on these issues that is almost finalized.



Our Children, Our Future, Our RESPONSIBILITY

### Perinatal Quality Care Collaborative of NC, Selena Berrier/Sarah Verbiest

CFTF/Perinatal Health Dean's Office at UNC gave almost \$700,000 over three years to the Dept. of Pediatrics at UNC-CH to fund the effort which brings together clinical professionals to work toward improving perinatal care. This is good news, as the program will have funding regardless of General Assembly decisions. This bill was moved to the Education Committee. Advocacy efforts are being led by the NC Pediatric Society.

### **Other Legislative News**

#### Breastfeeding Study Group, Tom Vitaglione

Senator Basnight sent an official letter to the CFTF requesting that they study the issue of breastfeeding and its link to infant mortality. A letter from Speaker Hackney's office has not yet come through, but the letter from Sen. Basnight's office is enough to move forward in the next study session. The Perinatal Health Committee is logically the group within the CFTF who will be charged with follow up.

#### Induced Abortions and Premature Birth, Tom Vitaglione

Rep. Stam continues to be interested in the possible link between induced abortions and premature birth. There is no proposed legislation this session, but as a legislative study commission we may need to take this up as a study issue, and organize the research and position statements from key groups. Tom and others have done some literature review on the topic but studies on both sides tend to be driven by ideology which is not constructive.

### **17P Project Update**

Sarah Verbiest reported on the 17P Project, which is launched and active. There is much hard work going on to meet the needs that have been generated as education efforts have successfully reached their targets. Examples of efforts include:

- ♦ educating over 250 nurses in public health departments,
- ♦ developing and distributing health education information to providers and patients,
- ♦ developing through office protocols,
- ♦ presenting information about the project at major conferences for health care professionals in North Carolina,
- ♦ answering frequently asked questions,
- ♦ monitoring the dispersment of the medication (hundreds of women are being served), and
- ♦ implementing evaluation mechanisms to gather lessons learned from this important statewide exercise in translational research.

The 17P medication is moving quickly now that more health care providers across the state have received training and information about the opportunity. **The importance of reaching the uninsured and meeting the need, which has been created through outreach efforts, can't be stressed enough.**

This summer, Brook Colgan is working with Sarah Verbiest to write a paper capturing the process and lessons learned from launching this effort. Joe Holliday praised Sarah Verbiest for doing an excellent job getting the project going. "Sen. Purcell asked us to prime the pump and Sarah has, and the project is "running on 12 cylinders" right now." If you haven't see the 17P Video or other education materials please visit [www.mombaby.org](http://www.mombaby.org) website in the health care professional section.

Gerri Mattson will see what she can do to reach the family practice doctors.

Miriam Labbok would be happy to share information about the project if there is a flier that can be shared. Sarah is working on printing materials, which should be ready in the next few weeks.

### **Preconception Health Initiative**

Sarah Verbiest reminded participants that there has and continues to be many working to reframe infant mortality – focusing on the improving the health of women in NC. A planning committee has formed to think through first steps including identifying partners and a timeline for an action planning effort for preconception health. Anna Bess Brown recommends review of the new publication Looking Back, Moving Forward: North Carolina's Path to Healthier Women and Babies. Hardcopies are available through the March of Dimes for distribution, (please help get the materials out to your groups by contacting Anna Bess Brown [abrown@marchofdimes.org](mailto:abrown@marchofdimes.org)). The publication is also online on [www.mombaby.org](http://www.mombaby.org) on the preconception home page. Currently partners over 60 partners have come to the table. Leadership is being provided by the Division of Public Health, March of Dimes, Folic Acid Council, and the UNC Center for Maternal and Infant Health. If you would like to get involved please contact Anna Bess Brown at 919-781-2481 or Sarah Verbiest at 919-843-7865.

Save the date! The **NC Preconception Summit is scheduled for November 8, 2007 in Greenville and is sponsored by the March of Dimes**. More details to be announced.

Belinda Pettiford shared that the **National Preconception Health Summit is scheduled for October 29-31, 2007 in Oakland CA**. Sarah Verbiest will have information about national efforts posted on the [www.mombaby.org](http://www.mombaby.org) website soon. Workgroups at the national level include (but are not limited to):

- ♦ Health and Health Care Clinical Issues
- ♦ Public Health Workgroup (Belinda Pettiford is a member)
- ♦ Consumer Workgroup (Sarah Verbiest is a member)

### **Other Updates**

#### SIDS/Safe Sleep efforts

Janice Freedman reports that Chris O'Meara is pulling together a larger group meeting on June 4 that will provide more data about SIDS/Sleep-related deaths in NC. The meeting will include a professional facilitator to lead discussion around messaging and help develop consensus about messages.

#### Period of PURPLE Crying

Gerri Mattson reported on efforts to address and change culture and norms around crying. The project is focused on child maltreatment prevention (more specifically shaken baby prevention). So far, efforts have been focused on applying for funding and grants to implement and evaluate a mass media campaign to share information about the Period of PURPLE Crying. The group has been awarded a grant from the Doris Duke Foundation. The Duke Endowment has also agreed to provide funds, contingent on CDC funding. The CDC should announce awards in July.

#### Maternal/Neonatal Transport and Regionalization

Joe Holliday noted that Dr. Michael O'Shea and a group of other physicians have recently become interested in reviewing the state's system of regionalized perinatal care. In particular, this issue focuses on the transfer of high risk pregnant women and their infants from low risk to tertiary care centers, insuring that moms and babies receive the appropriate level of care for their conditions. The transfer system set up in the 1970's has worked well until the last several years. At times, the Neonatal Bed Locator Call Center

has been experiencing some difficulties in locating appropriate facilities for high-risk women and their infants.

### Breastfeeding and Maternal and Infant Health Outcomes in Developed Countries

Miriam Labbok reported that in April 2007 a definitive national research study was released. Miriam is working now to integrate with NC data. If you would like to read more about the study, you can find it online at: <http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/tp/brfouttp.htm>

### 2007 Baby Love Conference, August 27 & 28, 2007

Baby Love is North Carolina's Medicaid program for pregnant women. Their bi-annual conference, to be held at the Sheraton Imperial Hotel and Convention Center in Durham, will celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the program. The attached information includes a call for presenters and workshops (deadline June 11, 2007). Workshops will be focused on evidence-based practice and promising strategies, and will meet the needs of a wide audience. Conference partners include the Division of Public Health, the Division of Medical Assistance, and the March of Dimes.

### Healthy Start Foundation Publications

There are several new or revised publications being released in coming months including:

- ♦ *Taking Care of Me* revision
- ♦ *Mujer Total* (Total Woman)
- ♦ *Choices*
- ♦ *Healthy Mom/ Healthy Baby* revision

Visit the catalog link on their website for a complete list of publications. [www.nchealthystart.org](http://www.nchealthystart.org)

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Symposium on Breastfeeding and Feminism

Miriam Labbok shared information about the September 24 & 25, 2007 event at the Friday Center in Chapel Hill. The goal of the symposium is to create and activate a coalition around the concept of breastfeeding as a reproductive right. In the rare event that feminism has considered breastfeeding, it has been considered it a social choice issue – not a right. Much of the international support for women's rights has also ignored the rights and importance associated with women's roles as mothers. Many scholars have conceived of breastfeeding as a practice that constrains women from achieving social and economic gains. This symposium aims to re-position the issue such that society's inadequate support of the breastfeeding woman is what constrains her from optimal functioning in all realms of her existence--not simply work *or* home.

You can register on-line by visiting:

[http://www.sph.unc.edu/mch/symposium\\_on\\_breastfeeding\\_feminism\\_5130\\_4470.html](http://www.sph.unc.edu/mch/symposium_on_breastfeeding_feminism_5130_4470.html)

**Next Perinatal Health Committee meeting date: Monday, August 20, 2007, 10:00am – 12:00 noon, location TBA. The meeting will be held in person.**

Footnote: Dr. Tim Monroe, Director of the Forsyth County Health Department, made his presentation on *Race, Poverty and Health* to the Public Health Management Team (Section, Branch and Unit Managers within the Division of Public Health). If you have not see it, you can find Dr. Monroe's presentation online at: <http://www.mombaby.org/index.php?c=4&s=45> (follow the link under "January 29, 2007).