

## **New American/Foreign Born/Immigrant Advisory Board**

**Tuesday, August 25, 2020 – 3:00PM**

### **Meeting Minutes**

#### **Welcome and Mission**

- Mission of the NFI Advisory Board – Provide ongoing recommendations to the NDDoH
  - Allow the NDDoH to integrate NFI concerns into policies and interventions
  - Provide a platform for NFI leaders to elevate concerns from the NFI communities

#### **Attendance**

- Hamzat Koriko – Lives in Grand Forks and originally from Dogoa. NFI Advisory Board co-chair, works as the Artistic and Executive Director of the African Arts Arena
- Alicia Belay, Public Health Specialist, Health Equity office and NFI Advisor Board Co-chair
- Krissie Guerard – NDDoH Health Equity Director
- Ahmed Makaraan – Lives in Fargo. Works with the Somali community Development of North Dakota and interning with NDDoH, Health Equity
- Jordan Laducer, Health Equity COVID Special Population Coordinator, Health Equity Office
- Bini Kouadjo, Williston Lead, Information Security Officer
- Monica Soto- Lives in Dickinson and originally from Mexico. Represents the Hispanic community
- Precious Dweh – Women’s Initiative Network and lives in Fargo.
- Abbi Berg, Division of Disease Control, NDDoH, Influenza Vaccinations,
- Iredia (Ray) Osadolor--Representing the immigrant community in Minot
- Kim Mertz – Section Chief at the NDDoH and Maternal and Child Health Director
- Reggie Tarr – Director of United African Community and works for Lutheran Social Services in Grand Forks
- Iredia (Ray) Osadolor--Representing the immigrant community in Minot
- Sarah Weninger – NDDoH, HIV/STD/Hep Coordinator
- Nkolika Nwankwo - Lives in Fargo and originally from Nigeria. Master of Public Health at NDSU.
- Cynthia Shabb – Lives Grand Forks and with Global Friends Coalition
- Kirby Krueger – NDDoH Medical Services
- Tracy Miller – NDDoH State Epidemiologist
- Stella Jarua – Originally from South Sudan and lives in Fargo
- Melissa Bohl – Recently named lead for health analytics group for NDDoH
- Sahra Abdullahi – Lives in Grand Forks
- Abdishakur Mohammed – Soma Employment Solution, Fargo
- Antonio Rosell, NDDoT planning, Transportation Connection – lives in Saint Paul, Minnesota
- Baird Bream - Chicago, IL (NDDOT project team for Transportation Connection
- Lydia DeJesu, DLN Consulting Inc’s Program & Operations Manager, lives in Dickinson
- Sarah Weninger – NDDoH, HIV/STD/Hep Coordinator

## Agenda Items

1. Introductions (put your name/location in the chat box or text it to Alicia/Hamzat to save time)
2. North Dakota Department of Transportation planning [Antonio Rosell, NDDoT consultant]
3. Influenza Vaccinations [Abbi Berg, Division of Disease Control, NDDoH]
4. Update from NFI Advisory Board Communications Subtask force [Ahmed Makaraan, Health Equity Office, NDDoH]
5. Updates from NFI Advisory Board members, discussion of partnership opportunities
6. Assessment of NFI Advisory Board processes and function so far [Discussion, led by Hamzat Koriko]
7. Next meeting/adjourn

## Agenda Items & discussion

### 1. North Dakota Department of Transportation planning [Antonio Rosell, NDDoT consultant]

- WHAT IS TRANSPORTATION CONNECTION?
  - North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT) is responsible for periodically developing a statewide plan to guide transportation decisions across the entire transportation system. Since the last statewide plan was adopted in 2012 much has changed in North Dakota.
- Transportation Connection is NDDOT's current statewide transportation plan and will:
  - Consider all modes of travel including roads, rail, aviation, bicycling, walking, and even drones
  - Be informed by your ideas as well as input from residents, businesses, visitors, and state, regional, and local planning partners from across the state
  - Identify future policies, programs, and principles to help NDDOT deliver the transportation system that North Dakota needs today and tomorrow
  - Develop a guiding vision, goals, strategies, and performance measures to help NDDOT make decisions moving forward
- The goals of NDDOT is to coordinate and engage with all segments of the community including immigrants to collect their feedback and reflect on NDDOT's planning
  - Immigrants have special transportation barriers such as language and documentation etc. NDDOT understands immigrant's transportation gaps and is seeking immigrant's participation. NDDOT Previously worked with members of Spanish community in North Dakota.
- North Dakota DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTION WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU
  - Please visit [www.transportationConnection.org](http://www.transportationConnection.org) and fill out planning surveys on this website.
  - NDDOT is also coordinating with with NDDoh, health equity office, and Ahmed health equity intern is working with Antonio to liaison with Somali community in ND, to get their input on this planning. NFI members interested to create do same in

their ethnic community can reach to Alicia or Ahmed to get more instructions.

## 2. Influenza Vaccinations [Abbi Berg, Division of Disease Control, NDDoH]

Abbi Berg, NDDoH is working on Fall vaccination communication strategies. Now vaccination is more important than ever, particularly influenza vaccination because COVID-19 and influenza have similar symptoms. Immigrants and low-income groups are more susceptible to influenza and COVID-19 and they have low vaccination rates compare to the other groups. People who have flu and COVID-19 at the same time have serious outcomes. Since NFI members are experts in their communities, what ideas and strategies works well when it comes Influence and COVID-19 vaccinations?

- Ahmed, NDDoH health equity intern and Somali Community Development of North Dakota.
  - A lot of immigrants are so often uninsured, out-of-pocket health care costs are higher than those paid by the insured, making immigrants less able to pay for the care they need including vaccination. Other factors, like language barriers, also impair immigrants' access to and the quality of medical care they receive in general particularly immunization. So how NDDoH is going to address costs and health insurance issue?
  - Answer: There are several low-cost or free immunization programs in North Dakota for people want vaccination but there is administrative fee. If people cannot afford to pay this small administrative fee, they can go to the County Public Health facilities in their area to get free immunizations. COVID-19 will be federally provided immunizations so people will not need health insurance or to pay from their pockets.
- Question from Bini, can you share with us the data that says Immigrants and low-income groups are more susceptible to influenza and COVID-19 and they have low vaccination rates compare to the other groups in North Dakota?
  - Abbi will send this data to Alicia.
- The immunization level dropped down this year in the statewide. We need herd immunity which means when enough people get vaccinated, diseases do not spread.
- Question from Ray: Can people go to any clinic for vaccinations or is there specific ones? Is there mobile vaccination campaigns instead of going to the clinics because people are afraid of going clinics as they do not want to be infected by COVID-19 and other illnesses. And are there ways can be addressed documentation requirement and immigration statues inquiries at the health facilities?
- Answer: There are a lot of clinics people can get vaccinated, and people can go NDDoH website, clinic locator to see clinics nearby. If people do not have health insurances or money, they can go their county health facilities. When it comes mobile clinics, this year schools are closed but before we used to go schools to perform vaccinations. When it comes documentation, private clinics need them, but government run clinics we require minimum requirements.
  - Abbi will also send the clinic locator website and contact information to Alicia.
- Comments from Ahmed. As community interpreter, he thinks care providers and doctors can do better job by convincing their patients to get vaccinated because he did not saw

doctors doing that in Fargo, ND health facilities. Abbi agrees that the most important vaccination intervention.

- Comments from Sahra Jama, Spectra Health in Grand Forks offer sliding-fee discount program that benefits where qualified individuals and families, has a small fee required at each visit, and can be used with other insurance. So, people who do not have health insurance can go to this Clinic.
- Family Health Care in Fargo also offers same program.

3. **Update from NFI Advisory Board Communications Subtask force [Ahmed Makaraan, Health Equity Office, NDDoH]**

As intern of NDDoH, one of my tasks is to lead the NFI Advisory Board, Communication Taskforce. The current members of this task force Bini, Ray, Stella, Abdishakur and Ahmed Shil and Ahmed Makaraan. The first meeting of this group was 8/22/2020. We discussed the goal of this committee and identified some of the immigrant's communication barriers in ND. Taskforce members agreed to do more research and go back to our communities and come back findings in to the next meeting which will be held on Thursday, September 24, 2020 at 5:00PM.

NFI Advisory Committee Communication Task Force Goal:

The goal of the committee is to advise the NDDoH on communication strategies that would be most effective for conveying information to NFI communities in North Dakota. A proposal that includes strategies for both ongoing communication (e.g. current, real-time communication, such as press releases, etc.) and static resource provision (e.g. importance of immunizations) is recommended.

STRATEGY/TIMELINE:

The committee will meet monthly from August 2020 through July 2021 to develop a proposal for communication strategies. In addition, committee members will consult with their respective communities to develop the proposal. In addition to a proposal in July 2021, the committee will provide monthly updates and urgent communication needs to the Health Equity Office and Director of Communication.

OBJECTIVES:

Develop a proposal for reaching NFI communities that includes but is not limited to:

1. Website design
  - a. Content
    - i. Medical
    - ii. Resources for immigrants to receive non-medical services
    - iii. Etc
  - b. Strategies for keeping information up-to-date
  - c. Linked resources (e.g. CDC? Linked to local sites?)
  - d. Translation needs/strategy
    - i. Languages needed
    - ii. Which materials need to be translated
  - e. Visual/Location
    - i. Website location
    - ii. How should the page look so immigrants can find it

2. Other communication strategies

- a. How should the NDDoH reach communities in real time to provide updates in emergencies, or urgent information? (Video on the NDDoH YouTube channel)? Radio? TV?

The proposal should include the above items as well as some general description on which groups of people use the website for resources, what type of resources are accessed in North Dakota for NFI communities, etc.

**4. Updates from NFI Advisory Board members, discussion of partnership opportunities**

1. Grand forks immigrants' stakeholders update (Hamzat): immigrants in Grand forks are trying to bring many immigrants leaders together with to identify immigrants' challenges in Grand forks with the Mayor's office guidance. Hamzat will be leadings on this effort and this group wants to be inclusive so to brainstorm challenges and opportunities together in Grand forks.
2. Minot immigrants Stakeholders (Ray&Bini): Ray and Bini worked with Minot Chamber of Commerce to feature article on Minot Daily News, about immigrants community leader work on ERG grant.
3. Immigrants stakeholder in Fargo (Ahmed). Having helping immigrant's owned businesses to apply ERG grants, helped more than 50 businesses so far to apply this grant, thanks Alicia and Health Equity office for their advocacy.

**4. Assessment of NFI Advisory Board processes and function so far [Discussion, led by Hamzat Koriko]**

The NFI Advisory Board members discussed the scope, effectiveness, and attendance of the board's monthly meetings. This is ongoing conversations.

**Next meeting/adjourn**

Tuesday, September 25, 2020 – 3:00PM-5:00PM