

**Minutes**  
**Communities Connect Membership Meeting**  
**Friday, October 9, 2009**

Present: Leanne Noren, Project Access Pierce Co.; Ralph DeCristoforo, Community-Minded Enterprises; Patty Hayes, WithinReach; Holly Greenwood, Katherine Palmer & Kristen West, CHOICE Regional Health Network; Molly Belozzer Firth, Community Health Plan & Friends of Basic Health Plan; Barbe West, Free Clinic of SW Washington; Diane Morton, Skagit Valley Hospital; Lisa Podell, Kids Get Care; Sallie Neillie, King Co. Project Access; Jackie Saul & Kerri Lenderman, Whatcom Alliance for Healthcare Access

## Meeting Objectives

- Clear understanding of Basic Health
- Identify opportunities to support Basic Health
- Elections of Officers

## Minutes

<i>Topic</i> (Desired Outcome)	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Leader</i>
<b>Introductions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agenda Review</li> </ul>	Info	Holly
<b>Monthly Hot Topic- Basic Health</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guest Speaker:  <b>Molly Belozzer Firth</b>  <i>Senior Government Affairs Analyst</i>  <i>Community Health Plan/Community Health Network of Washington</i></li> </ul> <p>Molly Belozzer Firth was invited to speak today about Friends of Basic Health Plan (BHP). Patty represents Communities Connect on the committee (as well as WithinReach); other members also participate on behalf of their organizations, including Ralph who Patty noted has been very active.</p> <p>Friends of BHP is made up of individuals representing clinics, hospitals, health plans and a number of different community groups. The diverse membership is helpful in illustrating the wide range of groups concerned about BHP as well as in obtaining different perspectives. This group originally organized in the early 1990's and was then reactivated when HCA faced a 40% budget cut in the current biennium budget.</p> <p>BHP covers people earning up to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). It is a public/private partnership. There are currently 83,000 people enrolled and 67,000 people on waiting list. Individuals do not give income information in order to get on the waiting list therefore it is unknown of the 67,000 how many will meet income guidelines for enrollment. The goal is to have 75,000 BHP enrollees in January 2010.</p> <p>BHP premiums will increase as much as 100-200% in January 2010. It is unknown how many people will continue to be able to afford premiums and how many will drop out of the plan. Many sponsorship programs are not able to pay this increase in the premium and have indicated they will be discontinuing sponsorships. There are currently 20,000 people in sponsorship plans. Molly does not know which sponsors may be discontinuing but will provide this information when available. Friends of BHP is encouraging BHP to accept multiple premium payments, from both the enrollee and the sponsor, so that sponsors can continue to pay at the current premium rate and enrollees can pay the difference.</p> <p>Molly shared several threats to BHP, including Ballot Initiative 1043. This proposal would cap state spending at the same level as this year's budget, with inflation and population growth increases (although the population growth increases do not account for seniors and children who are the largest users of social service programs). If approved, this ballot initiative would be devastating to state programs. Because the proposal includes reducing property taxes it has been polling well. Friends of BHP and other groups are spreading the word about how harmful this ballot initiative will be and are using a similar situation in Colorado as an</p>	Info	Patty

<p>example. Molly noted there are “No on 1043” phone banks set up and invited anyone to participate. Another threat to BHP is the current state deficit, which continues to increase. Molly noted potentially HCA could open the statute for BHP to add an asset test for enrollees. The danger in doing this is that it opens up BHP for review of other aspects such as FPL limits.</p> <p>Molly noted existing opportunities for BHP as well. Senator Cantwell has introduced an amendment to allow states the option to create plans similar to BHP with funds that would have been used for tax credits. This amendment has been approved by Senate Finance Committee. This is a good argument as to why BHP should not be dismantled in the short term, as it would then have to be reinstated in a few years. Additionally, Molly noted there is now recognition for a revenue package to support BHP.</p> <p>Molly listed things members can do to support Friends of BHP, including writing letters to the editor and story gathering. While not always easy to do, personal stories are very effective when communicating with legislators. Molly reminded members to get appropriate releases for using client stories and photographs.</p>		
<p><b>Member Spotlight</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Barbe West</b> <i>Executive Director</i> <i>Free Clinic of Southwest WA</i></li> </ul> <p>The Free Clinic of SW Washington has been a member of Communities Connect for just over a year, with Barbe serving as its Executive Director for approximately five months; she previously served on their board. The clinic offers a medical program, dental care (for adults and children) and operates a Project Access program.</p> <p>The Free Clinic’s medical program is its oldest program and continues to grow. In its last fiscal year the program served roughly 9,000 patients. The dental program provided services to approximately 1,500 individuals. Project Access began operating in November 2008 and has since enrolled 318 people. The Free Clinic has 9.7 FTE for all its programs and 515 volunteers (doctors, dentists, clerical staff and pharmacists) who provide the majority of the care on site. In the last fiscal year over \$500,000 in care was donated.</p> <p>Barbe noted that the Free Clinic partners with Project Access programs in Washington and Multnomah Counties in Oregon, through a program called Project Access Now, who does the majority of specialty care recruiting for the region.</p>	Info	Sallie
<p><b>2009 – 2010 Legislative Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Health Collaborative Grant Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ WAC changes</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Holly spoke to Jan Olmstead, HCA Program Manager this morning and learned that the Community Collaborative Grant Program announcement will go out no later than Monday. HCA plans to offer four competitive grants for up to \$100,000 over the biennium. The focus is to sustain programs that increase access to medical programs. There will be a \$2-1 match requirement, with no in-kind allowed for the match. The announcement Monday will include a notice of intent to apply with a one-week turn around. Holly will forward the announcement and encourages anyone not on the HCA mailing list to notify Jan if they would like to be added. Anyone who did not receive the WAC changes information from Jan earlier this week is most likely not on her mailing list. This is a competitive grant process open to anyone, not just prior grantees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with OSPI/HRSA</li> </ul> <p>Kristen, Holly, members of Children’s Alliance and the Hospital Association met recently with Superintendent Dorn and OSPI. Also present was Representative Jane Beyer, Representative Seaquist, Representative Chopp and Senator Marr. The group discussed the removal of the box on the Free and Reduced Lunch application that allowed parents to request a referral to a community collaborative. Holly noted that Rep. Beyer understands that community collaboratives can be an effective vehicle for working with schools and a small group is going to be formed to help this make this partnership happen. Kristen recommended Ralph be a part of this work group as CME received CHIPRA funding. Additionally, from this meeting Holly</p>	Discussion/ Decision/ Identify Next Steps	Holly  Holly/ Kristen

<p>learned that collaboratives do not need to have one year contracts with schools. Changing to ongoing contracts will alleviate some of the administrative burden on schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other Issues</li> </ul> <p>Communities Connect is a member of Communities Joined in Action and as such has been working with a group of collaboratives across the country regarding CCAQI, federal legislation similar to the state Community Collaborative bill. A new opportunity for Communities Connect has developed as a result of Kristen's work on this: the CCAQI legislation has been added to the House Healthcare Reform bill. Proponents are trying to keep the CCAQI legislation under radar while building receptiveness to it in the Senate. There is strong support from HRSA for this legislation.</p> <p>Kristen has also been contacted by the HRSA Office of Program Review regarding their plan to develop 50 pilot community collaboratives across the country. As this plan is flushed out, Kristen would like to see Communities Connect serve as a resource in training the federal employees who will be developing the pilot programs.</p>		All
<p><b>Administrative Issue</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elections of Officers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Slate of Officers</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Sue and Holly developed the slate of officers presented today:</p> <p>Chair – Patty Hayes  Past Chair – Jesus Hernandez  Vice Chair – Kristen West  Secretary – Sallie Neillie  Treasurer – Kerri Lenderman  Member at Large – Diane Morton</p> <p>It is expected that the Vice Chair will move into the Chair position next year. Holly also noted that it will be helpful for Kerri to serve as Treasurer as WAHA is already the fiscal sponsor of Communities Connect. The intent was to develop an Executive Committee that reflects the diverse members of Communities Connect and to ensure that both sides of the state are represented.</p> <p>It was moved, seconded and unanimously agreed to approve the slate of officers as listed above, effective January 1, 2010.</p>	Approved as presented	Sue/ Holly
<p><b>Review of Next Steps</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Next General Membership Meeting: Nov. 13, 2009</li> </ul> <p>The group discussed changing the meeting to an hour and a half, but agreed to keep it at one hour for now. Holly invited members to share ideas for the next "Hot Topic" presentation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjourn</li> </ul>		Jesus