



Hawaii Climate Change & Health Working Group Meeting #10
Department of Health Room, First Floor Board Room
May 18, 2016

Attending

Virginia Pressler (Chair), Nancy Partika (Co-Chair), Judy Kern, Maxine Burkett, Tom Eisen, Matthew Reeve, Krista Jaspers, Victoria Keener, Holly Kessler (HPHA)

Welcome

Virginia Pressler welcomed and thanked everyone for attending. Meeting notes from April 21, 2016 were available for review.

Interactive Discussion - with Working Group members regarding Hawaii State specific recommended next key steps/actions relating to the following identified health-related risks:

- A. Extreme heat/droughts
- B. Worsening air quality
- C. Rising sea levels/flooding
- D. Vector-borne diseases (Dengue, Zika, Chikungunya, other)
- E. Rainfall pattern, water quality, water-related infections
- F. Food security, food-related infections
- G. Mental health, displacement, impacts
- H. Other

Dr. Pressler thanked everyone for participating in the working group and especially to Nancy and HPHA for facilitating the meetings. Governor Ige proposes to address environmental issues and climate change within a new state strategic plan. Scott Glenn (OEQC) is working closely with DOH on the strategic plan. There is a state administrative retreat scheduled for June 28th with the Governor on the matter. Pressler is part of the "Healthy and Safe Hawaii" section, which currently has climate change within it.

The lead on Climate Change will most likely be Suzanne Case, Director of DLNR and Scott Glenn, with many other departments weighing in. DOH will proceed with a health in all policies approach. Within the Governor's newly-developing strategic plan, the deputy levels have agreements with all departments. This is an impactful way to collaborate within the various DOH departments on the issues, and to integrate the Working Group's work into the larger issues of climate change and its impacts.

Nancy stated this working group has been a great opportunity for HPHA. It started with an APHA mini grant on climate change, and has grown to become a model for other states to potentially follow. HPHA has been happy to initiate and co-chair this initiative, and is interested in remaining involved in discussions going forward relating to climate change and health.

It was decided by DOH to inactivate the working group at this time, re-convening on an as-needed basis, and calling in new experts as needed, to get an even broader base.

George Luber, lead climate change & health scientist for the CDC, is coming to Hawaii as a plenary speaker for the 2016 Hawaii Public Health Conference. It was noted that the Hawaii Climate Change & Health Working Group could potentially reconvene to meet directly with Luber, if there is interest.

The Hawaii Climate Change & Health Working Group preliminary report was directly forwarded to chairs of the Health and Environment committees at the Legislature, and was forwarded as well in December to Senate and



House leadership by the Department of Health. A copy of the report and recommendations is located at the following site:

<http://www.hawaiipublichealth.org/resources/HCR108%20SLH2015%20Climate%20Change%20and%20Health%20Working%20Group%20122715.pdf>

Dr. Pressler noted that the report will serve as a useful resource set of findings and recommendations specific to climate change and Hawaii health impacts for the future. A copy of the report and recommendations will be sent directly to all state legislators as a resource as well. Dr. Pressler assured everyone that, even though there are no dedicated resources in DOH specifically addressing climate change, DOH will maintain a collaborative approach on climate change and health moving forward.

Suggestion to further the support and dialogue of above issues, to hold brown bag lunches on the issues and offer workforce training on the climate change & health issues and topics. It is important to keep in mind the health impacts of all the issues presented to keep DOH employees in the loop and look at their own department issues through this lens. Judy Kern volunteered to coordinate the brown bag lunch series.

With regard to the question of baseline data in Hawaii relating to climate change impacts on health, Dr. Pressler noted the following key contacts:

- A. Extreme heat/droughts – no lead
- B. Worsening air quality – Clean Air Branch
- C. Rising sea levels/flooding-DLNR
- D. Vector-borne diseases (Dengue, Zika, Chikungunya, other)-DOH Outbreak Investigation
- E. Rainfall pattern, water quality, water-related infections – DOH Clean Air and Water Branch
- F. Food security, food-related infections-DOH Environmental Health Division, Food Safety
- G. Mental health, displacement, impacts – DOH is working to integrate this into primary care

There is a lot going on to address all of the various issues separately. There is no one DOH person or other in charge of climate change and health coordination at this time. One new initiative relating to improving data quality is the Hawaii Health Data Warehouse is starting the “Office of Information” to collect data statewide.

Victoria Keener inquired how we can get Climate Change and Health on to the Hawaii Survey. Nancy said she would follow-up on the survey with DOH Statistician, Dr. Kay Baker. Maxine Burkett noted that Maine and Oregon have two good examples of possible questions for the survey. It was suggested that Hawaii’s survey include five questions to address specific issues related to Hawaii, health and heat. Perhaps look at the existing survey to see if questions are relevant to the current issues. Judy Kern offered to help with this.

The recent dengue outbreak has created a new model for disaster preparedness, which will be used to help develop statewide plans for mosquito borne illnesses unique to each county.

Wrap up and closure

Today’s meeting marks the official end of the Climate Change and Health Working Group’s work. Meetings will be convened only if the Department of Health decides to reconvene the group at some point. Dr. Pressler thanked all Working Group members for sharing their time and expertise over the past 10 months, and HPHA and Nancy for their work on this initiative.