

**Virginia Council on Women  
Subcommittee – Women’s Healthcare Initiative**

Draft Minutes  
September 23, 2014  
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

The September 23, 2014 meeting of the Women’s Healthcare Initiative Subcommittee took place in the Patrick Henry Building, 1111 E. Broad Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219, 4th floor conference room.

Members present:

Meredith Johnson Harbach, Chair  
Lashrescse Aird  
Meta Braymer  
Sally Mullikin  
Susan Rowland

Staff present:

Kelly Thomasson Mercer, Deputy Secretary of the Commonwealth  
Katherine Waddell, Special Advisor, Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth

\* \* \*

Before the meeting officially came to order, Secretary of the Commonwealth Levar Stoney welcomed subcommittee members and thanked them for their work.

Meredith Harbach called the meeting to order at 10:15 AM and welcomed all members and administration staff.

The purpose of this initial meeting was to begin formulating a response to Governor McAuliffe’s request (attached to these minutes), which states, in relevant part:

I would ask the Council on Women to form a “Women’s Healthcare Initiative” subcommittee to look at the issue of women’s healthcare in Virginia and develop recommendations on what our state government can do to improve access to quality healthcare. The Council can play an important role in examining policies that will best support women, and assessing the impacts of legislation on the health and well being of women. . . . It is critical that we ensure that all Virginia women have access to the healthcare resources they need. It’s not just a health issue – it’s an economic issue.

Meredith Harbach and Katherine Waddell opened discussion by asking members to share why they were interested in serving on the subcommittee, what issues the subcommittee might investigate, and what action(s) the subcommittee might ultimately take.

Following is a list of women's healthcare issues that members raised as worthy of the subcommittee's attention:

- Healthcare access/insurance for the poor and working poor
- Healthcare services for the poor and working poor in underrepresented areas of the Commonwealth, both urban and rural
- Implementation of the Affordable Care Act and assisting women and families in enrolling in Obamacare/health insurance
- Medicaid Expansion
- Health issues pertaining to older women, including aging, menopause, and elder care
- Access to reproductive healthcare and related services
- Existing and pending legislation affecting women's access to healthcare

Ideas for Subcommittee action/implementation included the following:

- A portable, model program taking a holistic approach to providing women with written information (English and Spanish) on how and where to access various healthcare services and health insurance in their communities
- A state-wide Women's Health Forum
- A wellness walk and wellness fair during National Women's Health Month/Week, potentially in partnership with Women's Health Virginia
- An Obamacare/health insurance information and sign-up day in Virginia
- Analysis and recommendations on existing and pending legislation affecting women's access to healthcare
- A report to the Council and Governor on the status of women's access to healthcare in the Commonwealth, with recommendations

The Subcommittee ultimately settled on the following next steps:

- To begin preliminary planning of a Women's Wellness Walk and Health/Wellness Fair at the Capitol to be offered during National Women's Health Month/Week in 2015, potentially partnering with Women's Health Virginia and seeking sponsors from Virginia healthcare providers, etc.
- To begin the process of collecting data to determine the current state and regulation of women's access to healthcare in Virginia, relating to the issues set out above
- Each member was tasked with investigating and gathering specific data and will plan to report back to the subcommittee at the next meeting

Members agreed to convene the next subcommittee meeting on Thursday, November 13, 2014 at 10:00 AM, location to be determined.

Meredith Harbach adjourned the meeting at approximately 12:00 PM.