

## Minutes

### Collaborate for Healthy Weight Meeting

Wednesday, April 11, 2012

4:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.

Attendees: Nazeera Dawood, Patricia Jackson, Deborah Cherry, Laje Reine, Sister Betty Ali, Patricia Smith, Dr. Don Rubin, Dr. Stephanie Walls, Dr. Tulasi Vanapalli, Jenny Pueston, Ken Lazarus, Sarah Samter

Via Telephone: Lee Lambert, Therese McGuire, Keith Mitchell, Roz Tucker, LaShawn Wright

The main model for improvement is the Act, Plan, Do, Study model outlined in the Collaborate for Healthy Weight (CHW) guide. We plan to create multi-sectoral teams, focus on variable target populations, work consistently with the end in mind, and with QI methodology. Other goals include strengthening multi-sector community based partnerships and planning and coordinating services.

There was discussion as to why there were no faith-based assessments readily available already. A large recognition about obesity in the United States was the dietary behaviors in Western culture as well as lack of knowledge about exercise and nutrition planning. Also, it is difficult to persuade people to change their health behaviors as pertaining to eating healthy and exercising. An issue is that weight-loss is commonly discussed as a route to health, but not healthy eating behaviors.

Cultural sensitivity came up as well, as the program needs to be marketed differently to appeal to different ethnic and religious groups. For instance, in the Hindu community, many members are underweight, but diabetes is rampant. The Muslim community has strict eating habits but has its own share of common health problems. A participant noted that education is a key component and that lack of education causes the problems to begin with. The agreed point of impact is: Promoting Healthy Behaviors through sustainable policy, systems and environmental changes.

At the conclusion, the group made it necessary to use faith-based messaging that is fun and interesting and to focus on health behaviors. Some ideas were:

- God-given food vs. Man-made food
- Faith and Wellness
- Using evangelism as a tool

Efforts in motion:

- Build partnerships to improve health and social well-being
- Be more specific in objectives
- Create new, sustainable language/verbiage within churches, mosques, temples, etc.
- Create unity amongst religions
- Form interfaith partnerships on health
- Empower health leaders

The proposed aim of this effort is: Faith Communities United for Health: Your Body is a Temple