

# ALASKA NATIVE TRIBAL HEALTH CONSORTIUM

## Alaska Native Elder Health Advisory Committee



### MEETING SUMMARY

**MEETING DATE:** October 14, 2009  
Alaska Native Elder Health Advisory  
Committee

**LOCATION:** Anchorage

**STAFF:** Kay Branch

**RECORDER:** Michelle Gonzalez

**MEMBERS:**    *Present = P*    *Absent = A*    *Excused = E*

Andrew Jimmie, ANTHC	P	<b>Staff:</b>		Barbara Franks, ANTHC	P
Iver Malutin, KANA	P	Kay Branch, ANTHC	P	Kyla Hagan, ANTHC	P
Ethel Lund, SEARHC	A	Cheryl Easley, UAA	P		
Mary Schaeffer, Maniilaq	P	George Charles, UAA NRC	P	<b>Guests:</b>	
Rose Ambrose, TCC	P	Jim LaBelle, UAA NRC	P	Leland Barger, Maniilaq	P
Berda Willson, NSHC	P	Rita Blumenstein, ANTHC	P	Carl Hild, APU	P
Lotha Wolf, MSTC	E	Gary Ferguson, ANTHC	P	Nancy Furlough, UAA, Alaska Native Oratory Society	P
Allan Upicksoun, ASNA	P	Sharon Susook, ANTHC	P		
James Sipary, YKHC	P	Jennifer Johnson, ANTHC	P		
Rose Heyano, BBAHC	P	Greg Nothstine, ANTHC	P		
Mike Zacharof, APIA	P	Nicole Taniguchi, ANTHC	P		
Janet Guthrie, Metlakatla	P	Hilary Strayer, ANTHC	P		

TIME	AGENDA ITEM (PRESENTER):
9:10 a.m.	<p>Call to Order by Chair Andrew Jimmie.</p> <p><b><u>Koyukon Athabascan funeral traditions – Sharon Susook</u></b></p> <p>Sharon Susook, a student at APU discussed what she is doing for her project—looking at the funeral traditions of the Koyukon Athabascan people from her community of Kaltag. Sharon also has ties to Point Lay through her husband. The study came about from personal experience two years ago, when a loved one passed away in Anchorage and she was attempting to get them back to Kaltag. There was difficulty understanding state, hospital and funeral home procedures and regulations. All that she ended up doing seemed against the traditions of her people. She will be researching the laws and procedures around death and the traditional practices in the hopes of making the transition back to the community easier for families in the future. Will be presenting the conclusion to APU in May 2010.</p> <p>Iver Malutin, KANA - want to applaud you for what you're doing. As advisors of the consortium do you need us to relay a message for you?</p> <p>Mike Zacharof, APIA – you'll send a good message, it affects all of us one way or another. Anytime we hear that new houses are going to be built we get</p>

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	<p>involved with the housing authority, we want to make sure the design will allow for our own funeral practices. Is there any way we can help? We are glad to support you.</p> <p>Rose Heyano, BBAHC – Mother died 10 years ago; it was costly to transport her mother back to Dillingham.</p> <p>Mary Schaeffer, Manillaq– Even in our part of the country we go through the very same thing.</p> <p>Allen Upicksoun, ASNA – we are really proud of Sharon and her pursuits.</p>
	<p><b><u>ANTHC FDPIR Program – Gregory Nothstine</u></b>  Greg gave an overview of the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations; this is a federal program providing commodity foods. ANTHC is currently working with programs in Alaska and getting food out to people in twelve villages in Alaska. They will be looking for additional villages in the future.</p> <p><b><u>ANTHC Obesity study - Jennifer Johnson</u></b>  Jennifer is a nutritionist and is doing an evaluation of the FDPIR program. Her group is traveling to the villages that are receiving food through FDPIR and surveying the people enrolled in the program. Questions they ask cover traditional foods, food security, and store bought foods, such as fruits and vegetables. Found that about 20 % of calories were coming from traditional foods; there is an interest in how these traditional foods will be affected by the FDPIR program. They will go out again in a year. Right now they are also doing education about the FDPIR foods--would be helpful to make them tastier? what would people like better? They have hired people out in the villages to do the education.</p> <p>Rose Heyano, BBAHC – Can we get a copy of your research down the line? Yes</p> <p>Iver Malutin, KANA– meals on wheels in the villages. There is very little fish. Dr. Weston – renowned dentist. Seal meat is the only meat that has vitamin C. 1 cup of berries gives your body the full amount of vitamin D for a day. 3 oz of seal meat gives your body the full amount of vitamin C a day.</p> <p>Mary Schaeffer, Manillaq – would be interested in those getting food from the food banks – interesting to see balance of traditional foods with the canned foods.</p> <p>Jennifer Johnson, ANTHC – also look at what is available in the stores in each community--goes to store to research foods and prices</p> <p>Dr. Rita Blumenstein, ANTHC – do you study anything about the seal oil and what it does.</p> <p>Jennifer Johnson, ANTHC – don't study what seal oil does but does study seal oil and how much people are eating every day.</p> <p>Berda Willson, NSHC – When you did your research you said you did interviews. Did you interview children?</p> <p>Jennifer Johnson, ANTHC – we don't have permission to interview anyone under 18.</p> <p>Berda Willson, NSHC – would be good to ask mothers and ask if whole family eats items that are sent</p>
	<p><b><u>Traditional Healing</u></b>  <b><u>Della Keats video – Dr. Carl Hild, APU</u></b>  <b><u>Dr. Rita Blumenstein – discussion</u></b></p> <p>Introduction of Leland Barger and Dr. Carl Hild. Watched the 30-minute DVD of Della Keats.  Leland Barger is Della Keats grandson. He is currently working with Mary Schaeffer – chairman of the Yupik Language Commission  At age 9 Leland contracted a disease, he was the 4<sup>th</sup> person in the world to get it. He spent 2-3 weeks in a coma. His grandmother Della Keats worked on him. When he he woke up she said “how would you like to be a tribal doctor?”</p>

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	<p>Leland learned much of his spiritual life from Della Keats. It is the Inupiaq values to care for each other. Our health is a priority.</p> <p>Leland Barger – There is a tribal training facility in Kotzebue. Phone calls are coming from around the state. People are wanting to become tribal doctors. It would be a good idea to have a training facility with other people. We are working towards that reality and are training other people to become tribal doctors.</p> <p>Mary Schaeffer, Manilaq – There have been people from the Nome and Barrow area who have trained at the Tribal Doctor Program. Tribal doctor services are limited since there are so few of them.</p> <p>Dr. Carl Hild, APU – Tribal doctors are asking for additional academic recognition. This gives additional credibility in both worlds. Della Keats read physiology books and used other avenues about learning about the human body.</p> <p>Iver Malutin, KANA – We should advise the board and let them know that we definitely want to go ahead with this.</p> <p>Dr. Rita Blumenstein – My husband helped bring out my gift of healing. I come from 9 generations of healers. Rita shared more about her work and it's spiritual base.</p> <p>Mary Schaeffer, Manilaq – I applaud the work of everyone. I would like to see the 3 hour video on Traditional Healing / Della Keats video.</p> <p>Janet Guthrie, Metlakatla – This has been the best session for me.</p> <p>Berda Wilson, NSHC – I would like to see more on traditional healing in the future. This will be a topic of future agendas.</p>
	<p><b><u>Elder Fall prevention - Nicole Taniguchi, Hillary Strayer</u></b>  Hillary provided statistics and other information regarding falls in the elderly in Alaska.</p> <p>Nicole Taniguchi, physical therapist at ANMC discussed how studies show that lower leg strength activities help to prevent falls. She demonstrated some of the exercises and the committee participated.</p> <p>They would be interested in incorporating some Native dancing into exercises for leg strength building that might be more interesting to patients. They would look for dances from different regions.</p>
	<p><b><u>Alaska Native Oratory Society – Nancy Furlough, Barbara Franks</u></b></p> <p>Nancy Furlough - Alaska Native Oratory Society. Have various topics, story telling, rap, poetry, speech. Last year we had our largest number of speeches, all together there were 104 speeches that day. Students identified with Alaska Native groups. Would like more elders to mentor next year. Would like the young people to learn the style of their region. Learn the stories and languages from their own area. Please let them know if you know other elders who would like to work with them. The Oratory Society has focused on Native issues the past 2 years. This year were dealing with sustainability and climate change. We want our college students mentoring our high school students. This past year Isalgik had 2 middle school students enter the competition. These 2 young people brought so much joy to the competition. They had important stories to share. They were not eligible for cash prizes due to age / grade level. It's more than just a speech competition. It instills pride in them.</p> <p>Barbara Jean Franks, ANTHC - At the age of 52, came up to Anchorage and enrolled at UAA. will be traveling to high schools to teach. At Elders and youth conference to speak for a ½ hour on Suicide Prevention.</p> <p>Iver Malutin, KANA – went to Nancy's oratory society contest at UAA, we need to encourage this in every region in Alaska. Larry Merculief is trying to work with her on getting our youth trained to be future leaders.</p>

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	Berda Willson, NSHC – Published stories from regions – want to commend you on the story telling process.
	<p><b><u>Suicide Prevention – Barbara Franks, Kyla Hagan</u></b>            Kyla presented statistical information about suicide and discussed the Injury Prevention group’s approach to training community members. Suicide is the 4<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death among youth</p> <p>Janet Guthrie, Metlakatla – how do we compare to natives from other states?</p> <p>Kyla Hagan, ANTHC – it varies widely by reservation or tribe. Alaska has the highest suicide rate of any IHS service area.</p> <p>Mike Zacharof, APIA – it is true what Iver has said about suicide. Raised with natural death vs. suicide concept.</p> <p>Presented the new Suicide Prevention flyer and would like to get feedback on the activities under Prevention, Intervention and Postvention.</p> <p>A new initiative is the “Message of Hope” media campaign – targeted towards youth. They are looking for messages from elders about the importance of each individual.</p> <p>Injury Prevention is also focusing on Prevention point # 5 – reducing the danger of lethal means by installing gun lockers and locking medicine cabinets.</p> <p>Mary Schaeffer, Manilaq – what are your plans for # 5 – what is needed? Additional funding            Mary Schaeffer, Manilaq – The highest rate of suicide is in the Nome area.</p> <p>James Sipary, YKHC – ask our regions “what do we want to do”. We have technical assistance ready to go out and help.</p> <p>Janet Guthrie, Metlakatla – We have educate our people. We have to work harder to help our people.</p> <p>Iver Malutin, KANA – we have to talk to everyone about this. Meet with legislature, department of health social services (Bill Hogan) – with collaboration we can get there.</p> <p>Mike Zacharof, APIA – Communication – sharing, taking care of each other</p> <p>Iver Malutin, KANA – were an advisory board, we need to start advising the board. We have to let them know how important this is to us.</p> <p>Berda Wilson, NSHC – point of intoxication and suicide - working on the amount of alcohol and drugs that go into our villages</p> <p>Kyla Hagan, ANTHC – there are statistics. About half the people who attempt suicide, there is an alcohol involvement.</p> <p>Andrew Jimmie, ANTHC – we do have a drug and alcohol treatment in our region. There are about 4 dry villages around my community. Good point of each region going through a drug and alcohol treatment.</p> <p>Barbara Jean Franks, ANTHC – we have the tools to train in the communities. You need to have your own people to know how to be trained. This is through the ASIST training.</p> <p>UAA has taken a big step, Native student services have always been there but we need to encourage students to use these services more. Right now there is a population shift from people moving from the village to the city. Bullying is a big thing in the high schools right now.</p> <p>Mike Zacharof, APIA – Mention of all tribal leaders attending meeting,            Would like to suggest that Kyla and Barbara contact Angel Dotomain to ask for money for trainings</p>

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	<p>Kyla Hagan, ANTHC – distributed classes we have been teaching with ASIST; the training sessions are 2 full days  Barbara Jean Franks, ANTHC – in order for anyone from ANTHC to come into a community to help, we need to be invited in.</p> <p>Rose Heyano, BBAHC – Important to train as many leaders as possible</p> <p>Mary Schaeffer, Manilaq– want to commend you guys for doing the training – my daughter got the training and is already training some of the health aides already</p> <p>Continue having this on the agenda for ANEHAC Meetings.</p> <p>George Charles, UAA – stopped by at National congress of American Indians meeting. mentioned that there’s a senate bill that will be funded to help work on suicide prevention. Clayton Small developed 2 DVD’s, breaking the code of silence. Trying to get permission to place on website. A lot of veterans are committing suicide. With the help of human services we are developing a veteran center (in the works). Talked to Barbara Franks to work on senate bill.</p> <p>Dr. Rita Blumenstein, ANTHC – I work with lots of Iraq veterans – my grandkids are over there too and I worry about them. Sometimes people ask me to do the ceremonies. Our people use to talk about how to eliminate bad spirits, “smudging”. Teach your young people to learn about ceremonies. Go to your elders in the villages and collect the stories. Concentrate on the troubled kids. Concentrate on the distant kids. Grandparents are the anchors.</p> <p><b><u>Action Items</u></b></p> <p>Andrew Jimmie, ANTHC – do we have any action items going foreword to the board?</p> <p>Mary Schaeffer, Manilaq – would it be ok to send a recommendation to the board to make prevention a higher priority (all the issues that we talked about).  Mary, Iver</p> <p>Rose Heyano, BBAHC – Really liked the presentation on traditional healing – would be great if ANTHC would take on a project to identify traditional plans, etc. This would be a good extension.</p> <p>James Sipary, YKHC – Injury Prevention and Suicide Prevention – advise Mr. Petram and Bradley and ask our hospital directors to see if they can come up with their own sub-regional conferences on suicide prevention. We must work to do away with this heartbreaking problem.</p> <p>Mike Zacharof, APIA – would like to thank committee members, everyone time I come here I learn new things. The younger generation is being trained to take over these issues.</p> <p>Andrew Jimmie, ANTHC – Young leaders are willing to take over but they are willing to learn more. Group of 5 young gentlemen that are working with the younger people on suicide prevention.</p> <p>Mike Zacharof, APIA – Would like to adopt the 1<sup>st</sup> Alaskans institute paper, brought by B. Franks to support their efforts with suicide prevention awareness. Seconded by Mary Schaeffer.</p>
	<p><b>Next meeting date – proposed April 22 – 23, 2010</b></p> <p>Mike Zacharof, APIA – complements for the chair on doing a good job</p> <p>Motion to adjourn, Mary Schaeffer</p> <p>Meeting adjourned at 3:48 p.m.</p>