

Skokie Board of Health
December 11th, 2014

Present

Dr. Drachler
Ms. Jones Thorne
Ms. Langguth
Dr. Luka
Ms. Nikitsch Dugan
Mr. Pandya

Dr. Prince
Dr. Sood
Dr. Topouzian
Ms. Urbanus
Ms. Varma
Dr. Williams

Excused

Dr. Gaynes
Mr. Nidetz
Dr. Usman

Absent

Mr. Abbasi
Dr. Polin

Guest

Swapna Dave, Research Project Manager, Northwestern University Medicine

Dr. Counard, Director of Health
David Clough, Staff

Call to Order - The meeting was called to order at 7:32 p.m. by Dr. Drachler, Chairman.

A moment of silence was held for Dr. William Plotkin, a long standing Board of Health Member who recently passed away.

Approval of Minutes –The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

Swapna Dave, Research Project Manager, Northwestern University Medicine (presentation attached)

Dr. Dave has lived in Skokie for the past 12 years since her arrival in the U.S. She was a physician in India and pursued a Master's in Public Health at UIC after coming to America. Public Health, education, and disease prevention are her passions. She now works at Northwestern University Medicine doing research on community health interventions to improve the health of the South Asian Community.

South Asians are defined as people from India, Pakistan, Bhutan, Nepal, Bangladesh or Sri Lanka. There are 3.4 million South Asians in the U.S. and they are the second fastest growing ethnic minority. South Asians are at high risk for diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Mediators of Atherosclerosis in South Asians living in America (MASALA) Study

This study is the first longitudinal cohort study for South Asians and was conducted in collaboration between Northwestern University and University of California at San Francisco. It is an NIH funded study and new funds have been received to research the social networks of the study participants. The purpose of the study is to understand the risk factors that lead to South Asians suffering from high rates of heart disease.

Between October 2010 and March 2013 a total of 906 healthy South Asian men and women were recruited to receive a battery of medical tests to assess risk factors. The risk factors for heart disease in South Asians include abnormal cholesterol, diabetes, physical inactivity, poor diet, and stress. For South Asians, the Body Mass Index cut off for obesity is 23 as opposed to 25 for the rest of the U.S. population. This is due to their increased concentration of abdominal fat at lower body weights. The MASALA study

found 75% of participants to be obese and 50% of men to have multiple cardiovascular risk factors. Compared to other racial/ethnic groups South Asians had the highest prevalence of diabetes and second highest prevalence of high blood pressure.

The MASALA study is currently in the phone and electronic follow up phase with follow up clinical visits planned for 2015. The participants from this study will be eligible to participate in a second study to understand Social Networks of South Asians.

South Asian Heart Lifestyle Intervention (SAHELI) Study

The SAHELI study was done in collaboration with the Metropolitan Asian Family Services community center on Devon Avenue. The majority of residents and business owners on Devon Avenue are recent immigrants from India and Pakistan. This was a randomized control trial where half of the participants received classes on diet, exercise, and healthy lifestyle. Educational activities included teaching them about whole grains and how to read nutrition labels. Hands on activities such as making healthy plates with food models and a healthy salad competition were utilized. The intervention group lost a significant amount of weight and their hemoglobin A1C levels also went down. The participants greatly enjoyed the intervention and found the activities helpful in developing and maintaining healthier habits. Follow up funding from NIH has been received for another intervention study for South Asian women and their children.

Town Hall in Skokie

The Northwestern University Medicine research team on South Asian Health and the Skokie Health Department will be conducting a Town Hall Meeting at the Skokie Public Library on January 24th, 2015 from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM. The intent of the meeting is to gather information about health concerns in the community through a facilitated discussion, rather than provide education or materials. Ms. Dave distributed draft fliers and the proposed questions for the facilitated discussion, requesting feedback from the Board of Health.

Dr. Williams commented that the flier seemed more focused on the medical side and less on lifestyle interventions. He proposed making the flier more positive and fun to attract participants by focusing on the improvement of their lives instead of the higher risks they face.

Dr. Drachler asked if bad eating habits originated in the South Asian countries of origin or in the U.S. Dr. Dave reported that the foods were basically the same, meaning often not healthy, but people tended to be more active in their countries of origin. She also reported that some recent immigrants eat more of their traditional foods after coming to the U.S. because it is a reminder of home.

Dr. Topouzian pointed out that many of the South Asian foods look incredibly healthy due to the high vegetable content and moderate use of meat. Dr. Dave pointed out that there are many vegetables but very few raw vegetables and a lot of fried items.

Ms. Jones Thorne pointed out that many of the questions seemed to steer towards medical interventions that would be provided to them instead of lifestyle interventions they could enact themselves. She recommended some of the questions be reworded to focus on lifestyle interventions.

Dr. Counard suggested that we train the facilitators to focus on these types of interventions during the discussion.

Dr. Sood suggested advertising at the high schools to get youth involved. It was mentioned that including minors in the meeting would be problematic as parental consent would be needed.

Dr. Dave asked about other potential places to display fliers. Pharmacies and grocery stores that sell South Asian foods were suggested.

Mr. Pandya suggested that sedentary activities are the primary lifestyle issue that increases risk of heart disease. Ms. Dave agreed that there is a lack of awareness that exercise is preventative.

Ms. Jones Thorne suggested distributing the fliers online via private Facebook groups or other online communities. This would be an especially effective way to reach youth.

Dr. Drachler thanked Ms. Dave for her presentation and invited her to stay for the remainder of the meeting.

Chair's Report

Dr. Drachler reported on the Village of Skokie Community Forum he attended on November 2nd. The forum was designed to obtain input from residents and other interested parties for programs, services and priorities to help guide development of a five year plan for the Village. More than 100 people participated. The forum was a positive experience and reaffirmed that Board of Health priorities align closely with the priorities of the community, especially in the area of creating a healthy environment. He also mentioned that a focus on mental health was suggested and studies of South Asian mental health might be beneficial to Dr. Dave's future research.

Personal Statements

No new personal statements.

Director's Monthly Report highlights – a copy is attached

- Preparations for South Asian Town Hall Meeting
Physicians from the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, in collaboration with the Skokie Board of Health and Health Department, are sponsoring a town hall meeting focused on health issues unique to the South Asian community. The meeting will be 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Saturday, January 24 at the Skokie Public Library. A suggestion for the 2017 Community Health Plan is to focus more on health disparities, and we are beginning that process!
- Community Health Plan presentation at Evanston Public Library
Dr. Counard joined a panel discussion held at the Evanston Public Library, which focused on the collaboration between Evanston, Skokie and Erie Family Health Center to bring healthcare resources to people in our area.
- Working to draft a comprehensive environmental plan for the Village
The Skokie Health Department is the only health department in northern Illinois that included "a healthy environment" as a community health plan priority. As a result, the environmental faculty and students at the UIC School of Public Health invited Dr. Counard to speak about the plan. At the conclusion of the presentation, she was very pleased that the faculty offered to assist with drafting an environmental health plan for the Village, which is a major goal of the *Skokie Community 2012 Health Plan*. More to come on this important initiative!

Community Health Plan

- Access to Healthcare
Dr. Counard reported that Asian Human Services would be speaking at the Board of Health Meeting in January. Dr. Drachler mentioned that he is seeing patients from Erie Family Health Center for labor and delivery on a regular basis. Dr. Counard announced that as of fall 2015 both high schools are expected to have school based health centers staffed by healthcare providers from Heartland Alliance.
- Obesity Prevention
Dr. Drachler distributed articles on obesity and false marketing of sugary drinks to youth. Dr. Counard reported that Dr. Leslie Cordes, a pediatrician from Lurie Children's Hospital who is getting a Master of Public Health, will be joining the Department as an Epidemiology intern in January, and will assist with developing a comprehensive plan to address childhood obesity in Skokie youth.
- Tobacco Use Prevention
Dr. Counard reported that we would meet with Corporation Counsel Mr. Michael Lorge on Monday (December 15) to discuss language for proposed legislation to regulate indoor use of electronic cigarettes and to raise the age to sell, purchase or possess tobacco products to 21 years of age.
- Healthy Environment
Dr. Williams reported on the One Health Initiative and how integral environmental health is. The initiative focuses on multiple disciplines including human, animal and environmental health.

Old Business

Dr. Drachler mentioned that in the Community Forum someone brought up the issue of raising backyard chickens. Dr. Counard stated that she and Mr. Bruce Jones, Environmental Health Supervisor, are working on a memo regarding the problems with keeping chickens in an urban environment.

New Business

No new business.

Adjournment The meeting adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

**REMINDER: THE JANUARY 8TH MEETING WILL BE HELD
AT THE LIBRARY!!!**
