



## CHILDREN'S ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & PROTECTION ADVISORY COUNCIL

October 7, 2020  
10:00am – 11:00am

### MEETING MINUTES

Members in attendance:

- Cliff Mitchell
- Eamon Flynn
- Dianna Abney (Governor's appointment pending)
- Camille Burke
- Jovonne Walker
- Kelly Love
- Kristen Rawlett
- Megan Latshaw
- Nse Witherspoon
- Devon Dodson
- Ruth Vriend
- Christina Drushel-Williams

Public:

- Veronika Carella (Legislative Director, MD Children's Environmental Health Coalition)
- Theodora Scarato (Executive Director, Environmental Health Trust)
- Cassie Shirk (MDA Director of Government Relations)

Meeting commenced at 10:01am

Introductions and Overview of CEHPAC

- Members introduced themselves, and members of the public identified themselves.
- Cliff briefly reviewed the history and purpose of the Council, including looking at the work of government, including reviewing regulations, legislation, and statute pertinent to children's environmental health; and providing a sounding board or to carry out projects to improve children's environmental health in the State. Cliff also reviewed statutory responsibilities and past activities and of CEHPAC, including the Maryland Children and the Environment 2008 report, use of green cleaning products, WiFi radiation in schools. Role is not to propose legislation, but can review and comment on impacts on children's environmental health, including regulations. Most regulations pertinent to children's environmental health are from MDE, using a self-identification of regulations as related to children's environmental health. Will continue to engage with other agencies about children's environmental health issues, but COVID-19 has presented a number of challenges to all agencies and organizations. How COVID affects children's environmental health would be a significant undertaking, which many members have already engaged in. Members are representing constituencies and the entire State - role is to bring knowledge, perspective,

experiences, but also to represent the entire constituency and variety of opinions and perspectives. Agenda is largely set by membership, and items to discuss should be brought up for inclusion. There are also several other councils and advisory groups that address children's health or environmental health - our role is to address children's environmental health, but if there are topics addressed by another council, we should respect their legislative overview.

#### Administration

- Minutes from July 2020 meeting were adopted (motioned by Camille, Devon), noting the need to correct Kristen Rawlett's name.

#### COVID-19 Updates

- Nse - Clear that early learning is also an important issue, not just schools. Transmission at younger ages appears to be less likely than older populations. Public health practices (including difference between cleaning and sanitizing) seem to be working but are still critical. Partnering with CDC and other state and national organizations is important.
- Cliff - Home visiting program for pediatric lead and asthma (funded under Children's Health Improvement Plan) - Have been checking in with families and looking at issues related to pediatric visits. Decline in pediatric visits and immunizations. Working with local health departments and home visiting program to look at how to resume home visits for lead and asthma programs.
  - Camille - Environmental staff have resumed working in courts to ensure landlords are held to environmental standards. Looking at how to resume home visits and conduct inspections, prioritizing kids with higher risk of asthma/lead issues. Have continued to serve children and families despite COVID-19 demands.
  - Dianna A. - Starting to do home visits for those who cannot pick up durable goods. Have sufficient PPE for home visits.
  - Devon - MDE was able to secure PPE for staff to conduct home inspections/visits/enforcement (75% have resumed).

#### Letter sent to health officers regarding discretionary use of pesticides

- Cliff reviewed the letter sent by CEHPAC to health officers in July 2020. No responses have been received from health officers to date. Discussed next steps.
- Cliff discusses issues related to COVID with health officers frequently - jurisdictions are still
- Role of CEHPAC is advisory in nature.
- Kelly (MDA) - The stay at home order is no longer in effect. Also the Secretary of Agriculture did not make the determination as to which industries were designated essential or non-essential. Veronika Carella disputed this point with facts.
- Cliff - The identification of critical industry sectors was made by a federal agency and did not distinguish between activities within a single industry sector. Local jurisdictions were not able to shut down critical sectors, just individual businesses deemed to be operating unsafely with respect to the spread of COVID-19. Health officers have had a challenging time dealing with COVID. If Council wants to continue to pursue this as a topic (impact of pesticides on children's health), then it is free to do so.

- Kelly - MDA has received no complaints related to children's exposure to pesticides.
- Cliff - MDH has also not received any complaints, but there are concerns of underreporting due to difficulty identifying cause. All non-COVID illnesses and injuries have been underreported in 2020 as a result of COVID-19.
- Nse - Childhood illness and injury - including childhood abuse - are not being identified by surveillance systems during this time.
- Megan - Letter sent November 19th to MDA - Still unanswered questions, and a meeting was requested with MDA, MDH.
- Devon suggests Cliff ask health officers for a response to the July 2020 letter (which would come through MACHO). Cliff and Dianna will discuss whether MACHO would like to provide a formal response.
- Kelly - MDA did respond to the November 2019 letter, and that was the final official response.

#### Regulations review

- Cliff suggests we extend an invitation to secretaries of other agencies to attend a CEHPAC meeting to discuss their agency's approach to children's environmental health and how CEHPAC can assist in reviewing regulations and other proposals.
- Devon and Cliff propose to send future regulations proposals to 2 or 3 CEHPAC members to summarize, assess for impact on children's environmental health, and report back to Council for consideration of a formal response.

#### Public Comments

- Veronika – Sent written comments for today.  
**REQUEST #1:** CEHPAC membership – the Legislative Branch of government is under-represented on the Council. Please take action fill all vacancies asap, especially the seat for a member of the House of Delegates.  
  
**REQUEST #2:** CEHPAC and CEJSC Letters re: essential and non-essential portions of business per MD GOV exec order of 4/5/2020. Please ensure that Health Officers are informed of the need and take prompt action to protect children and their environment from discretionary application of hazardous pesticides, especially those applied to residential, commercial and community property and while children's homes are also their schools.  
  
**REQUEST#3:** Please act to ensure that MDA takes action on the items brought to their attention via the CEHPAC HiAP MDA Letter of November 19, 2019. CEHPAC's Call to Action Letter to MDA Secretary Bartenfelder remains outstanding and not officially responded to. No signed and official response has been received by CEHPAC as required by statute, as Sec. Bartenfelder is also a CEHPAC Commissioner bound by the duties defined in statute. MDA's draft response dated December 4, 2019 (and declared "official" by Kelly Love at the July 21, 2020 CEHPAC meeting) does not take any action on the concerns brought to Sec. Bartenfelder's attention in the CEHPAC Letter and required by statute.  
  
**REQUEST#4:** Data Gaps – Requesting that CEHPAC take prompt action to ensure that Maryland residents are given "immediate" access to pesticide application records (per MDA Reg 15.05.01.12 Records) when pesticides hazardous to human health and the environment are applied for

discretionary or other purposes, especially during the COVID-19 public health crisis. CEHPAC's assistance in accessing vital public health information such as pesticide application records (including product label and SDS information) is requested and required to protect children and their environments (especially their groundwater).

- Theodora - Will be sending email with more information. Medical education conference in January 2021. Berkeley cell phone right to know act - requires notice that phones emit radiation - was struck down by court. Case against FCC about radiofrequency limit - FCC did not address issue raised about childhood exposures.

Meeting adjourned at 11:02 am.