

**Integrated Population Health Data (iPHD) Project  
Governing Board Meeting Minutes  
November 12, 2021**

**1:00 PM-2:30 PM EST**

*iPHD Governing Board meeting convened in compliance with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act. All participants attended the meeting virtually due to the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions.*

**Board Members Present:**

Rachel Hammond (Chair and Designee for the Commissioner of Health Data Privacy Officer, NJ Department of Health), Joel Cantor (Ex officio/ Non-voting, Director of Rutgers Center for State Health Policy), Rashmi Jain (Appointed- Big Data/Security Expert, Chair of Information Management and Business Analytics, Montclair State University), Michele Norin (Ex officio, Chief Information Officer- Rutgers University), Elizabeth Litten (Appointed- Legal & Privacy Expert, Partner and Chief Privacy & HIPAA Compliance Officer, Fox Rothschild LLP), Kathleen Noonan (Appointed- Chief Executive Officer, Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers) and Janet Currie (Appointed- Human Subjects Research Expert, Professor of Economics and Policy Affairs, Princeton University)

**Attendees:**

Margaret Koller (Rutgers Center for State Health Policy), Mark McNally (NJ Office of the Attorney General), Suzanne Borys (Division of Mental Health & Addiction Services), Barbara Bolden (NJ Department of Health), Jody Ruiu (NJ Department of Health), Brandie Wooding (NJ Department of Health), Bretta Jacquemin (NJ Department of Health), Maria Baron (NJ Department of Health), Bhavani Sathya (NJ Department of Health), Abiola Amutah (NJ Department of Health), Renee Kraus (NJ Department of Health), Mildred Mendez (NJ Department of Health), Jose Nova (Rutgers Center for State Health Policy), Jolene Chou (Rutgers Center for State Health Policy), Kate Scotto (Rutgers Center for State Health Policy), Ed Liu (Rutgers Center for State Health Policy), and Manisha Agrawal (Rutgers Center for State Health Policy)

## **Call to Order/Opening Remarks**

- R. Hammond called the meeting to order at 1:06 pm with a quorum present.
- R. Hammond acknowledged that the meeting was being held in compliance with the 1975 NJ Open Public Meetings Act and that there was a publication of meeting time and location in two NJ print publications (Newark Star Ledger and The Times of Trenton), and on the iPHD website. Information regarding transition from an in-person to virtual meeting due to the COVID-19 pandemic was posted in the publications and on the iPHD website.

## **General Updates/Actions Updates**

### *from the Chair*

- R. Hammond thanked Board members for their support and participation this year.
- R. Hammond said the DUA was approved by the AG's office and Rutgers, and is with DOH for final execution. R. Hammond said that she is expecting the DUA to be signed in the next couple of weeks.
- M. Koller provided an update on the status of the DUA between RU and researchers. She mentioned that the DUA was modeled after the DUA with DOH and it will be completed prior to when the iPHD starts accepting application. She added that the draft will be shared for feedback but it does not require Board approval.

### *Meeting Minutes*

- R. Hammond requested board members to review the October 8, 2021 Governing Board meeting minutes (approved by Minutes Subcommittee on November 3, 2021).
- J. Currie made a motion to approve the October meeting minutes. R. Jain provided the second and, upon roll call, the minutes were approved unanimously.

## **Discussion**

### *Ethics Training Requirement*

- J. Ruiu provided an overview of ethics training requirements for the Board members:

- Ethics requirement for “Special State Officers” is applicable for the Board members.
- The Board members are required to complete the ethics training annually and share documentation of their completing the training with J. Ruiu and the iPHD staff.
- The Board members are also required to complete the Outside Employment Questionnaire every three years or when there is a change in circumstances.
- J. Cantor asked for clarification of “outside employment.” J. Ruiu responded that it is outside of the Board and all other voluntary activities.
- J. Currie said that she completed multiple training and forms for different organizations. She asked if there is checklist to see what is completed and what is outstanding for the Board members.
- R. Hammond responded that O. Lontok is tracking compliance requirements for the Board members and he will coordinate with the members after the meeting.
- J. Ruiu discussed the potential circumstances for recusal, criteria for attending events sponsored by a non-state government entity, and accepting gifts as a Board member.
  - Events: Board members acting in their capacity as an iPHD Board member, have to obtain permission if they attend an event sponsored by a non-state government entity.
  - Gifts: there is “zero” tolerance for accepting any gifts as an iPHD Board member.
  - Recusal: if needed, Board members should complete the recusal form prior to the meeting. If a Board member realize the need for recusal during the meeting, immediately notify and make sure it is included in the meeting minutes. If the meeting is in a public session, the recused member can sit and observe. If it is a closed session, recused member is required to leave the room.
- O. Lontok will share J. Ruiu’s presentation slides with the Board members.

*Research Advisory Committee (RAC) Orientation Sessions*

- M. Koller said that the two orientation sessions are scheduled for January 13<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. One session will be recorded and the recording will be shared with those who couldn’t attend either session. Sessions will focus on application process, review requirements and work flow.
- M. Koller said that the RAC members completed a short survey on the areas of methodological expertise, preferences for reviewing applications within the four

iPHD research priorities, and the expertise working with any of the initial five iPHD datasets.

- M. Koller shared the survey findings and said that highest preference was for reviewing COVID research applications. Key findings included:
  - Low preference for opioid research was a surprise. R. Jain said that opioid research is very politically driven.
  - EMS dataset is complex and most RAC members don't have experience using the EMS data.
  - Most members characterized themselves as a research generalist.
- J. Cantor said it is a good representation of skills and expertise. If needed, RAC will be expanded to be able to efficiently review the COVID related applications.
- M. Koller said that CSHP will develop the training modules before the holidays.
- R. Jain said this is a lot of good information about RAC members from a short survey.

### *Fee Schedule*

- J. Cantor provided an overview of the draft iPHD Fee Schedule. He said that the fees is derived using methods consistent with NIH "Core Facilities" guidance and is based on a series of assumptions. Key highlights of the proposed Fee Schedule included:
  - Fee schedule developed based on the number and types of approved projects - number of RU projects, number of NJ institution and non-NJ institution projects
  - Fee will vary by dataset complexity, number of datasets linked, and number of years of data
  - Non-NJ researchers will pay 37.2% indirect cost which is Rutgers federal approved "other sponsored activities" rate. There will be reduction for NJ institutions. Planning to apply subsidies to reduce cost
- R. Hammond asked about 37.2% indirect cost for state agencies. J. Cantor said that plan is to use NJDOH funds to subsidize indirect costs. He added that the published rates will be kept simple.
- M. Koller said that we are trying to keep the fee affordable and the proposed Fee Schedule has to be approved by RU Cost Accounting before it can be implemented.
- E. Litten asked for clarification on technical assistance fees (beyond base). J. Cantor responded that the fee will cover cost if people have special requests or need additional assistance after data transfer.

- J. Cantor said that CSHP is working on a detailed memo so that cost estimates are transparent. The memo will be shared with the Board members.
- S. Borys asked for the cost estimate if a researcher requests additional year of data linked after paying for initial dataset.
- J. Cantor responded that there will be incremental charges. iPHD will not charge again for data already transferred to the researchers. If data is re-used for a different project, there will be a set-up charge.
- E. Litten said that the initial pricing for different activities seems reasonable.
- K. Noonan said that pricing seems reasonable for academic institutions. Non-profits may not apply. R. Jain agreed and said that this is something we need to think about.
- J. Cantor said that the formal vote on the Fee Schedule will be in January. However, we need to informally agree to submit the Fee Schedule to RU Cost Accounting for review.
- R. Hammond said that we could proceed and requested to share the Fee Schedule in advance to allow enough time for Board members to review before the January meeting.
- E. Litten asked if the cost will be covered in case there is a special data request from a researcher who received pilot funding. J. Cantor responded that for the pilot projects all data costs are covered.

**R. Hammond asked if anyone would like to make a public comment. There were no comments and the open session of the Governing Board meeting was adjourned to executive session at 2:25 pm.**

- E. Litten made a motion to adjourn.
- R. Jain offered a second.
- Unanimous vote to adjourn the open session.

Executive session was concluded at 2:41 pm with an immediate vote taken to adjourn the meeting.

- E. Litten made a motion to adjourn.
- J. Currie offered a second.
- Unanimous vote to adjourn the meeting.