

**Integrated Population Health Data (iPHD) Project
Governing Board (GB) Meeting Minutes
December 8, 2023**

3:00 PM-4:30 PM EST

iPHD Governing Board meeting convened in compliance with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act and all participants attended the meeting virtually.

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), Francis Baker (Ex officio/Designee for the NJ Attorney General, Deputy Attorney General, NJ Office of the Attorney General), Greg Woods (Ex officio/Designee for the NJ Commissioner of Human Services, Chief Innovation Officer, Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services Department of Human Services), 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 (NJ Department of Human Services), Maria Baron (NJ Department of Health), Kara Unal (NJ Department of Health), Stella Tsai (NJ Department of Health), Jose Nova (Rutgers Center for State Health Policy), Kate Scott (Rutgers Center for State Health Policy), Jolene Chou (Rutgers Center for State Health Policy), Joshua Lue (Rutgers Center for State Health Policy), Oliver Lontok (Rutgers Center for State Health Policy), Joe Brecht (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 3:05 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 the meeting time and location in the Newark Star Ledger and three websites (NJ. Com, NJ Press Association, and the iPHD website). Instructions for registration and login information were posted in the publications and the websites.
- R. Hammond thanked the Board members for their commitment and participation in the iPHD Project.

General Updates/Actions

Meeting Minutes

- R. Hammond requested Board members to review the October 13, 2023 Governing Board meeting minutes (approved by the Minutes Subcommittee on November 21, 2023).
- J. Currie made a motion to approve the October meeting minutes. K. Noonan provided the second and, upon roll call, the minutes were approved unanimously.

Discussion

Cycle I Additional Data Request

- R. Hammond reminded the Board members that the Central Jersey Family Health Consortium (CJFHC) received pilot funding in Cycle I and this project was in memory of Colette Lamothe-Galette. CJFHC submitted a request for additional data years (memo shared with the Board members) with no other substantive changes in the study design. As discussed in the October Board meeting, any modification to approved projects should come back to the Board for review and approval. This modification is subject to IRB approval.
- R. Hammond asked the Board members to propose a motion approving the release of additional years of data to CJFHC. G. Woods asked if CSHP has any concerns with the approval of additional years. M. Koller responded that there are no concerns and CJFHC shared an updated data management plan. G. Woods made a motion to approve the request and K. Noonan offered a second and, upon roll call, the release of additional data years was approved.
- J. Cantor asked the Board members to consider whether CJFHC is responsible for the fee for the extra years (approximated at \$2,220) or to include these fees in the fee waiver from Cycle I. R. Hammond asked CSHP to discuss the implications for both options.
 - M. Koller responded that considering the estimated cost, it would be easier to roll this into the current award for administrative simplification. R. Hammond responded that it is a reasonable approach.

- J. Cantor said this decision should not be construed as precedent for additional data requests for future approved projects. J. Currie responded that a decision on each request should be made based on the merit and available resources. R. Hammond added that applicants need to submit a formal request for any modification to the approved projects for the Board's review and approval.
- R. Hammond requested the Board members propose a motion to extend the fee waiver for the CJFHC project. J. Currie made a motion to extend the fee waiver to include these fees for the additional data and G. Woods offered a second and, upon roll call, the motion carried.

Cycle II Proposals

- Establishing Funding Criteria
 - R. Hammond said that we first need to establish criteria for making a funding determination for consistency and fairness for the six projects approved for data release in the October 13th Board meeting.
 - R. Hammond requested that Board members with a conflict of interest recuse themselves from the discussion.
 - R. Hammond proposed considering (a) the diversity and geographic representation of the applicants; (b) whether the applicant received funding in the previous cycle; (c) the number of research priorities they've addressed; (d) if the principal investigator is affiliated with a New Jersey state agency; and (e) any significant shortcomings detected in the project. K. Noonan said that maybe (a) we rank proposals based on quality of research; (b) determine if they have other sources of funding available; (c) consider underrepresented researchers or organizations not historically involved in research.
 - J. Cantor mentioned that while all approved projects meet quality standards, not all may hold equal public health significance. He urged the Board to also consider (a) the proposals most crucial for the state, and (b) whether they originate from institutions underrepresented in this field of work. J. Currie asked for the number of pilots and fee waivers for Cycle II. R. Hammond responded that the funds are available to support up to two pilot (including fee waiver) and up to two fee waiver projects. J. Currie asked if one state agency can charge the other state agency. J. Cantor responded that if it is a priority for one state agency then it is a high priority for the state.
 - R. Hammond asked if it is appropriate to approve the application if the project is not approved for pilot funding or fee waiver and they didn't select the self-pay option. J. Cantor responded that if an application is approved without funding, it puts them in a stronger position to seek funding. J. Currie added that it is easier for reviewers to approve proposals based on the quality of research and consider funding later.

M. Koller said that the applicant's funding request was masked from the subcommittee so that the approval of data release was based on the quality of proposal.

- G. Woods said that the criteria looked reasonable, and it is important to consider the public health value to the state. R. Hammond agreed and added that this is a good starting point and criteria will be refined as we move through more cycles.
- R. Hammond requested the Board members to make a motion to approve adoption of criteria for funding decision. K. Noonan suggested adding language that this list will be refined as needed. K. Noonan made a motion to approve the criteria (listed below) for consideration of pilot awards and fee waivers for this period and these criteria will be revisited and refined (if needed) for the future cycles.
- R. Hammond restated the criteria based on the discussion:
 - Did the applicant receive previous funding?
 - Is the application addressing a public health priority area (including application from another NJ state agency)?
 - Weaknesses identified in the proposal;
 - Diversity of the applicant (underrepresented organization or geography);
 - Underrepresented research priorities or projects.
- F. Baker clarified if this motion is applicable to the current applications under review. R. Hammond responded that this is a generalized motion for establishing criteria for funding determination and will be revised if needed going forward. J. Currie offered a second and, upon roll call, the motion carried.

- Consideration of the Cycle II Funding

- R. Hammond requested the Board members with conflict of interest to recuse themselves from the funding discussion. J. Cantor (non-voting member) and E. Litten recused themselves from all proposals, and F. Baker recused himself from application #209 (Title: Impact of "Opt for Help and Hope" on drug overdose deaths among NJ criminal defendants, 2020-2025; PI: Kelly Levy, JD). She instructed them to stay in the virtual room, turn off their camera, and mute themselves for that portion of the meeting. She added that they will be called back into the virtual meeting for discussion of subsequent agenda items.
- R. Hammond suggested a roll call vote for deciding the pilot funding and the fee waivers. She reminded the Board members that the Yale

university application is not eligible for pilot funding or fee waiver as funding can only go to NJ based institutions.

- G. Woods requested the subcommittee to provide some guidance on which proposals are most appropriate for pilot funding or fee waiver. K. Noonan suggested grouping the five applications based on the funding request and reviewing the summary sheet for each group. R. Hammond agreed with the approach.
- J. Currie asked if there are any budget constraints for funding four applications. M. Koller responded that the money is allocated in the budget to fund two pilot projects \$30K each and two fee waivers.
- J. Currie said that three applicants are requesting pilot funding, and 2 applicants are requesting fee waivers. K. Noonan suggested reviewing the summaries for the three proposals requesting pilot funding and select two. M. Koller reminded that one of the three applicants received the pilot funding in the last cycle. R. Hammond said that two applications are from Rutgers and one from Montclair and suggested considering a non-Rutgers application for diversity. G. Woods and K. Noonan said that the non-Rutgers application is the weaker of the three but agreed with the approach. J. Currie said that one applicant received funding in the last cycle, so this approach seems reasonable.
- R. Hammond requested the Board members to make a motion to approve pilot funding to application #208 (Title: Linked administrative data as surveillance of overdose crisis and drug-related adverse health events in New Jersey; PI: Grant Victor, PhD) and #214 (Title: The impact of severe maternal morbidity (SMM) on mother and children's hospitalization/ ED use one year after birth; PI: Sze Yan Liu, PhD, MPH) and to not approve for pilot funding application #213 (Title: Integrating EMS data with hospital, mortality, and geographic data to identify opioid overdose patterns across settings in New Jersey communities; PI: Stephen Crystal, PhD). K. Noonan made a motion and G. Woods offered a second and, upon roll call, the motion carried unanimously.
- For decision regarding the two fee waivers, G. Woods suggested using the same logic as application #213 received pilot funding (including fee waiver) in the last cycle. R. Hammond requested the Board members to make a motion to approve a fee waiver to application #207 (Title: Opioid-related overdose and mortality among pregnant and postpartum individuals in New Jersey; PI: Elizabeth Suarez, PhD) and #209 (Title: Impact of "Opt for Help and Hope" on drug overdose deaths among NJ criminal defendants, 2020-2025; PI: Kelly Levy, JD) and to not approve for #213 (Title: Integrating EMS data with hospital, mortality, and geographic data to identify opioid overdose patterns across settings in New Jersey communities; PI: Stephen Crystal, PhD). F. Baker was recused from this motion. G. Woods made a motion and K. Noonan

offered a second and, upon roll call, the motion carried by unanimous vote.

- Timeline for Data Release
 - R. Hammond invited the recused members to participate in the discussion.
 - M. Koller provided an overview of the timeline of release of datasets. CSHP will execute data use agreements and subcontracts with the approved projects, and data transfer will occur by the end of the first quarter of 2024.
- 2024 Fee Schedule
 - J. Cantor said that the current fee schedule expires on December 31st. CSHP has to undergo a formal review process with the Rutgers Office of Cost Accounting to approve the fee schedule (with components similar to NIH standards).
 - J. Cantor said that fee schedule is restructured and simplified based on the lessons learned from Cycle I. Fee schedule is restructured based on the size of the dataset, complexity in creating them (i.e., where there are matching challenges) and the number of years requested. The intent for restructuring is to ensure that it reflects the amount of work required to create a linked dataset for individual projects and to decrease the fees. The administrative costs will be removed from the calculation and that will lead to substantial reduction. The draft of the new fee schedule will be shared in the January Board meeting for approval.
- 2024 Cycles Timeline and the Governing Board Meeting Schedule
 - M. Koller provided an overview of the three cycles planned for 2024, two cycles will offer fee waivers one cycle will be self-pay only. She mentioned that CSHP is implementing lessons learned from the last cycle to improve efficiency of the application process. She added that the timeline of the transfer of additional approved datasets (PRAMS, Cancer Registry, COVID Vaccine, and Medicaid) will be discussed in the next Board meeting. The first RFA will launch with the five existing datasets, and iPHD will add additional datasets to the RFA only after the data are transferred to the iPHD.
 - M. Koller said that O. Lontok sent the calendar invitations for 2024, with the meetings starting in January. The meetings are bimonthly and scheduled for the fourth Friday of the month from 1:00-2:30 pm. M. Koller requested the Board members to inform O. Lontok if they have any issues with the meeting schedule.

R. Hammond indicated that the executive session is not needed. 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 at 4:23 pm.

- G. Woods made a motion to adjourn the open session of the meeting.
- J. Currie offered a second.
- Unanimous vote to adjourn the meeting.