

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE KANSAS FUTURES COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Carlos Mayans at 1:30 p.m. on March 6, 2001 in Room 526-S of the State Capitol.

All members were present except: Representative Bob Bethell - excused
 Representative Mike O'Neal - excused

Committee staff present: April Holman, Legislative Research Department
 Lynne Holt, Legislative Research Department
 Amy Kramer, Legislative Research Department
 Lois Hedrick, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:
 Dr. Robert St. Peter, President and Director, Kansas Health Institute, Topeka

Others attending: See attached list

The Mission of the Kansas Health Institute

Dr. St. Peter described Kansas Health Institute's (KHI) organization as an independent, non-profit health policy and research organization, established in 1995 by a multi-year grant from the Kansas Health Foundation to identify issues that affect the health of Kansans and communicate information so informed decisions can be made which optimize our health.

He stated KHI's annual operating budget is \$2.7 million. It has had over \$3.5 million in grants awarded to it since 1999; half of which flows through other research partners. Dr. Peters listed some of their activities:

- Policy Analysis through Health Policy Forums - Ad hoc groups convening on health issues such as use of Medicaid/CHIP funds for expanding coverage; Medicaid capitation rates in Kansas; analysis of alternatives to standard community water fluoridation in Wichita/Sedgwick County; and analysis of a reorganization of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE).
- Evaluation and Monitoring - Such as the \$1.4 million evaluation of the children's HealthWave program; technical assistance on Children's Cabinet evaluation strategies; and assessment of local health departments' abilities to meet minimum standards.
- Data Development and Analysis - (1) Such as that of the Kansas Integrated Public Health Information System (KIPHS). Three years ago only three counties ran an interactive information system; now there are 45. KDHE assigned a full time Fellow to the project to assist in developing the state-of-the-art information system. He encouraged committee members to determine if their county is using the new system, and noted, too, their work on a bio-terrorism grant to be linked to the system. (2) A Minority Health Disparities Project. Dr. St. Peter stated the disparities among racial/ethnic groups are dramatic and to date there is no real understanding for them. Life expectancy numbers are available, but underlying risk factors have not yet been determined. The project will determine the root causes.
- Governing Board for HealthCare data.
- Predicting primary care providers' capacity in Kansas.
- The Face of Hunger in Kansas. Dr. St. Peter indicated there was not a significant difference in the amount of hunger between elders and non-elders; but the marked increase was found in single parent households (urban and rural) where it was much higher than the national average.
- Production of the 2001 Health SourceBook for Legislators, which is planned to be updated every two years.

Other activities include Kansas Health Researcher Group Meetings, technical assistance workshops for evaluators; and a paid internship program.

Dr. St. Peter listed funding sources as private foundations and federal, state and local governmental agencies. The factors that determine KHI's agenda include (1) relevance of the project to the state and its citizens; (2)

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inclusion of population-based approached and a broad definition of health; (3) the potential for collaboration with other research partners in the state; and (4) generation of non-partisan, high quality timely information.

Foremost among the state's challenges, Dr. Peters listed:

- The aging of its population.
- Continued urbanization.
- Increasing racial and ethnic diversity.
- Impending environment issues, such as the depletion of the aquifer and agricultural and industrial pollutants.
- Stability and integration of communities.

He noted, too, the opportunities:

- Insuring the people of Kansas.
- Contain costs of health care.
- Ensure availability of providers.
- Change paradigm from one of "disease" to one of "health".

Dr. St. Peter stated information about the Institute is available on its computer web site: <http://www.hki.org>

The next meeting is scheduled for March 8, 2001.