

AMCHP 2007 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

March 3rd to 7th, 2007

Medical Home: The Bridge Across the Quality Chasm

PETER VAN DYCK: Well, welcome. It's really great to be here and see a lot of friends. I stop saying old friends, just good friends, and I think we should pass a moment. Jeff, those were wonderful comments, and I have worked with Jeff for many years, but particularly closely over the last two years. And I have to say he deserves a great deal of credit. He's done a wonderful job as president of AMCHP, and I think we deserve to give him ovation.

My time is limited so I wasn't going to tell any story, but Jeff showing his kids— Jeff showing his—this is literally true. Jeff showing his kids made me think about something my kids had just sent me this last week. I mean this is really—this is true. I'm not just saying it's true, all right? They sent me a page of old folk jokes. I have no idea why but one of them was, "Gee, Dad, won't it be nice that this year you can now hide your own Easter eggs and then hunt for them the next day?" So that's what I get from my kids, and Jeff gets all this loving smiles and all the (inaudible).

Well, I want to thank the people in the bureau that are here this afternoon, and thank the people in the bureau generally what a wonderful group it is to work

with, that I have the privilege to work with. And I'm going just to give a couple of comments about healthy communities, the theme of the meeting, and talk about just very briefly the MCH bureau's vision of community, the departments vision of community, the IOM's vision of community, and then a few quotes on community, and I'll this, well, within the time limit.

So our vision for the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, we believe in a future America in which the right to grow to one's full potential is universally assured through attention to the comprehensive physical, psychological and social needs to the Maternal and Child Health population. The MCH Bureau strives for a society where children are wanted and born with optimal health, perceive quality care, and are nurtured lovingly and sensitively as they mature into healthy productive adults. The bureau seeks a nation where there is equal access for all to quality health care and a supportive, culturally competent family and community setting. And this was written in 1999 in our very first strategic plan, and we began emphasizing community back in their—in the '90s. And in October 2001, we had one of our first partnership meetings, and the theme of that meeting was strengthening community partnerships. And we've given many grants for community partnerships over the years, and I'll talk in a minute about another community effort that we've undertaken.

The department in Healthy People 2010 also feels communities are important. And in a Health People 2010 documents, it says individual health is closely linked

to community health. The health of the community in which people live, work and play, likewise community health is profoundly affected by the collective beliefs, attitudes and behaviors of everyone who lives in the community.

What is a healthy community? A healthy community is one that embraces the belief that health is more than merely an absence of disease. A healthy community includes those elements that enable people to maintain a high quality of life and productivity. For example, one, a healthy community offers access to health care services that focus on both treatment and prevention for all members of a community. Two, a healthy community is safe. Three, a healthy community has road, schools, playgrounds, and other services to meet the needs of the people in that community. These items are referred to as infrastructure. I didn't realize that was in the Healthy People 2000 goals, but it is. They must have stolen that from us. And four, a healthy community has a health and safe environment. That was written in the early 2000s in the Healthy 2010 document. And in 1997, the IOM issued a report, "Improved Health in the Community. And these are still available. That was written in 1997. And for both individuals and populations at states, health depends not only on health care but also on other factors including individual behavior, genetic make-up, exposure to health threats, and social and economic conditions. Health in the community can be seen as the product of these changing mixes and interactions of factors over time. The multi-dimensional perspective reinforces the value of public health's traditional emphasis on a population-based approach to community health

issues. It also provides a basis for looking to many segments of the community to address factors affecting many health and well-being making it appropriate to bring a wide array of parties to the table as interested stakeholders and accountable partners. A committee adopted as a starting point or the committee adopted as a starting point for it's discussions of community the following definition: individuals with shared affinity, perhaps a shared geography, who organize around an issue with collective discussion, decision-making and action. MCHB, the Department in Healthy People 2010 and IOM, now to a different description of community from Black Elk. Black Elk was the famous Holy Man of the Sioux Nation and lived from 1863 to 1950, whose life is chronicled most famously in the little book Black Elk Speaks, which is a wonderful little book about a holy man. He says, "You have noticed that everything an Indian does is in a circle, and that is because the power the world always works in circles, and everything tries to be round. The sky is round. I've heard that the earth is round like a ball, and so are the stars. The wind and its greatest power whirls, birds make their nests in circles for theirs is the same religion as ours. Even the seasons form a great circle, and they're changing, and always come back again to where they were. The life of man is a circle from childhood to childhood, and so it is in everything where power moves." A little different description of community. In the Reader's Digest, I think in the description, there is the young Scotsman who moved to New York, left home, left his parents, and moved in to his own flat in New York. After a few weeks, his parents phoned him to find out how he was. "What are you neighbors like," his mother asked. "They're a bit

strange actually,” he told his mom. On one side, there’s a man who keeps banging his head against the wall, and on the other side, there’s a woman who just cries and moans.” His mother said, advised him, “I’d keep to myself if I were you.” “Oh, I do,” the son replied. “I just stay in my room all day and play me bagpipes.” Now, there was a man in a few neighbors who desperately need community. And famously, Lyndon Johnson, “The American city should be a collection of communities where every member has a right to belong. It should be a place where every man feels safe on his streets and in the house of his friends. It should be a place where every individual’s dignity and self-respect is strengthened by the respect and affection of his neighbors. It should be a place where each of us can find the satisfaction and warmth which comes from being a member of the community of men. This is what men sought at the dawn of civilization. It is what we seek today.”

Finally, as our society moves into the next millennium, carrying some of the resolved problems of its Maternal and Child Health population, our Maternal and Child Health population and our providers will face new challenges. The Maternal and Child Health Title V program and it’s many partners need to review the past history and approaches, modify these approaches for the new era, reaffirm their purpose, and provide the leadership required because as we look to the future America that we are striving to become, it’s instructive and inspiring to look back, to reflect on, and to learn from our past in Maternal and Child Health. The Maternal and Child Health program has evolved to serve the health of all

mothers and children, pregnant infants--pregnant women, infants, children, adolescents and their families, including women of reproductive age, fathers, and children with special health care needs. We face the future with a science base that advances daily, a clear set of goals, and the strong sense of mission to achieve these goals. Our past is prologue to the America we envision. Thanks very much for letting me say a few words, and have a great meeting.