

HRSA/MCHB 2007 FEDERAL/STATE PARTNERSHIP MEETING

Building Blocks for Promising Practice Models

October 14 - 17, 2007

AMCHP

MICHAEL FRAZER: Well, good morning. You all love the hangers on here, huh? I can't believe it's Wednesday morning already. It goes by so quickly. Thank you for getting up early to hear about what's going on at AMCHP. I grew up in Boston, so I never have the opportunity to learn about debutante balls, but I kind of feel like this meeting is a coming out party and just getting to meet you all. I don't have a nice new gown or anything like that, but it's been really fun to have the chance to network with you here at this conference. And many of you I have met in a prior life has mentioned that NACHO--somebody say NACHO, especially those in the southwest, you say NACHO. I was with NACHO or NACHO. So, I know how counties and cities work. And I know what the locals think about how the states work, so now I really have to find it out from you all about how the states work And I'm really, really excited to be here. My energy and enthusiasm come partly from inside me, but mostly from being with you all, and having the opportunity to work together. And it is a great partnership. Nan, thank you for the kind remarks. And Cassie, thank you for, uh, the introductions. It's really been fun to get to know you, and the bureau, and how things work.

So, in the next slide, this was kind of my first day on the job, and, um, deer in the

headlights. Because I thought I'd have all these instructions and I'm still kind of figuring out as it goes. But it's been wonderful to get your advice. I've been around the country visiting with folks when I'm at different conferences and meetings, and just listening and learning about what the issues have been and what the issues are, and beginning to predict the future. And it's been really interesting some of the commonalities that you all share in terms of where you want to see Title V go, where you want to see MCH go, and more specifically, where you want to see AMCHP go.

And so, those listening sessions in that learning has really been instructed to me. And I hope to continue to be able to do that because I am really still in my first trimester of the job. This is my second month. And it kind of feels like I'm on the elephant's gestational period, which is 22 months, I believe. I'm not sure what's going to happen after nine months or 22 months, but, um, something is going to happen, I'm sure, when we give birth to something new at AMCHP. And it's been kind of fun to think about it that way with your input.

But, really, when I got to AMCHP and was beginning to think about the work involved in the organization and the work that you all do, an image came to mind. And so, we captured that image on video. And I was hoping John in the back there could click on it for me.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: I like to climb mountains. I like to build planes in the air. I

grew up wanting to be on planes, wanting to be up this high.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Sometimes, the temperature or the altitude will reach 60 below. It's brisk. It's refreshing.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: You'll never know what you're going to come across up here, Canadian geese, mallards.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: These people back here, that's why I come to work with them. That's why I build airplanes in the sky.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: We're not just building planes here. We're building a dream.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: I love this job.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: (Inaudible) planes up here. When I look up there and I see that little kid, the look in his eyes, I saw the things I need.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: All right. So, it's not Digital Business and all that, but I stole that from a friend of mine but--to get the sense of kind of what we're doing here. We can't stop and say, "This is how we want AMCHP to be organized and this is how we want the bureau to be organized. And this is how we want the

agenda to be organized.” We’re building this plane as we fly. Anybody else feel that way in their jobs? Certainly.

So, there’s a lot of ways to think about that, but I thought that video was a good way of describing a little bit how I felt in the first couple of months. I’m not doing this alone. And all of us here today have a commitment to AMCHP and a commitment to MCH. We have a great board of directors. For those of you who had been involved in AMCHP in the past, thank you. And for those of you who are on the board now, I just wondered if you’d mind standing so folks see the leadership of AMCHP in the room. We got a few board members here. Thank you all.

It’s been wonderful to--I moonlighted while I was in NACHO. I went to the board meeting in June just to get a head start. And that was a great group of leaders in MCH to work with. So, it’s exciting to be a part of that. The other analogy that I used for AMCHP and, John, this is in--I don’t know if you want to advance it for me. This is kind of stuck on the video, I think. The other analogy that I’m using is a book I loved when I was a kid. And maybe this is really kind of my pulling this out of it. Great, yeah. Anybody read this book, “The Little Engine That Could”? It’s one of my favorites. I keep getting to my desk in the morning and say, “I think I can. I think I can.” It’s been a good motivational strategy for me, because I think we can. I know we can and I’m really looking forward to doing that together.

When I was out in states visiting over the past couple of months, the one--there's two things that people said. The first thing they said was, "Please, no more surveys." I don't know if I can do that and I'll tell you why in a minute. But the other thing they said is "We want to see AMCHP succeed to a T." There wasn't one person who didn't mention that in my time visiting with them, when I spoke with staff and when I met with folks at the bureau. Everybody wants to see AMCHP succeed and so I think we can.

But it's not going to be easy because we are in this sort of a teeter-totter or a seesaw relationship with ourselves and with MCH more generally. On one side of this teeter-totter, we really want to focus on the core of what we know best, which is Title V and the MCH programs. And on the other side of this teeter-totter is this bigger MCH agenda, this bigger enterprise in which we're all involved.

And so AMCHP seems to be swinging up and down on this seesaw and we've yet to find a good balance and I think that's part of what we need to do this year in particular as we set our agenda. Where are we going to balance that, between being the group of Title V directors and between being part of this bigger enterprise of MCH? And that's something that all of us need to figure out as we move AMCHP forward because there is a bigger national agenda for MCH and as Nan mentioned in our strategic planning, we want to move forward.

What does AMCHP's contribution to that agenda and how does that fit in with our

partners? So we're part of that, but we're not the group that's going to set the national agenda for MCH. We can't do that by ourselves. We can talk about what we know, and what we think, and how that fits in to a bigger picture.

We have a number of different programs in which we're engaged at AMCHP through support of the bureau, through CDC, several foundations and some of the work that you all are doing with us. One of the great things that we do is our new director mentor orientation program and I urge you to find out more about that. We had a class on Sunday morning at 9:00 with about 40 people in the room and when we tallied the years of MCH experience in that room, it was 368 years of MCH experience and that was new directors and what we like to call seasoned directors. There were folks in that room that have been in this area for a very long time looking to share what they know with folks who have just started out. 368 years of experience in one room. And if we did that here, it would be in the thousands of years I'm sure. So avail yourselves of our leadership programs, because I think those are great member services that we offer and great ways for you to learn more about AMCHP and the bigger MCH agenda.

I don't play golf. I got to admit. I don't play golf, but I--my dad does incessantly. And so I didn't realize why we need all these different golf clubs in our bag. I play mini golf, that's what I play. You get one club, right? And usually that's this teeny one. Why are there so many different clubs in a golf bag? Anybody know? I had to find this out. They're all different? The holes are all different? You need

different weights, you need different types? You actually need a caddie to help you figure that out, right? Well, in terms of our approach to problem solving, I think sometimes we're just using one golf club.

Well--but that one kind of worked last time. It got me pretty close to the hole or that one gave a hole once so I'm going to trust that one, that's my favorite club, right? But as we think about our work, as we think about promising practices, we got to reach in to that golf bag or whatever the analogy is for you, I'm not going to know all of where you're coming from, but for me, this kind of worked, because all of the problems that we faced are different. And yes, our states and our territories and our programs are different. And so, reaching out and reaching in to that kind of golf bag of ideas, these best practices that we're sharing here, is really going to move us forward. You've heard about some of the unique things that folks are doing. They're reaching into that bag and trying to get on par with different kinds of clubs. I like talking in analogy. Sometimes they don't work. But if you just have one club in your golf bag, you're not going to win this game. We got to reach in for different tools and part of what we want to do at AMCHP is give you some of those tools, share those tools and nationally, so that you can more easily find those. Think of us maybe as your caddie perhaps. I don't know if I want to say that, but think of us as being able to link you to the expertise in this room and across the country and with our partners at the bureau and with our partners in other places as you're looking to solve some of your problems.

Well, let me talk about our problems. I'm kind of glad to be out of the district even though it's not far. It's been a long time that I've felt really positive living in Washington for a lot of different reasons, but we can't lose enthusiasm for what we're doing. Even in a legislative environment, that's very difficult. And regardless of what you think about where we are currently, there are some stark realities about the policy for moms and kids in this country that I think AMCHP is well positioned to share.

And so one of the things that we're going to be doing more of with you and with a renewed emphasis on policy in our legislative agenda is beginning to tell you more about what's happening in Washington for a number of different reasons. One is because it's good to know we're all part of this nation, but secondly, there is action that you can take in your states and with us to help move our agenda forward, our policy issues forward even if it's uncomfortable or even if you're a little unaware of how the things work here in D.C., there's many opportunities for us to talk, to educate, to inform and yes, even advocate and lobby. But we want to do that right and we want to do that well and there's several folks back at the office who are thinking about this day in and day out. And they're going to be contacting you for your expertise and for your take on some of these important issues, through our legislative committee, through our healthcare financing committee and through one to one conversations about what's happening at the state level.

So look for our legislative agendas and look for some of the information that we're giving about policy that may not seem it's entirely relevant to you today, but the policies that we shape now are going to position us well for the future. What's going on with SCHP? What's going on with the Title V appropriation? We're tracking that vigorously. And there's many other issues to share with you that will be making sure we put out there.

I'd like to use this slide--everybody know who this is? The Keebler Elves. I used this for doing a talk in Iowa, so some of my friends at Iowa are--had a head start on this. I've been thinking a lot about how we tell our story. I've been thinking a lot about how we let people know what we do.

On Monday, Lee Grossman from the Autism Society of America gave a presentation and how did he start his presentation? Does anybody remember? With a picture, right? Remember the picture? Do you remember anything else about that talk? But you remember the picture, right? And what was the picture of? His son and a dolphin, right? And he started the presentation by saying, "This is my son. He's the one on the left," because there was a dolphin in the picture, too.

How are we starting to tell our story about what we do so that people remember that first slide and are hooked for the rest of what we're going to tell them about what we do? All of the presenters on that topic included a story in their talks and I

remembered those because it made it real.

I'm showing you this Keebler slide, because companies have something to sell and they need to make up the story. There's--elves don't make cookies, do they? I don't think they do, okay? But they have this whole mythology around elves making cookies. They're telling this story really well and we believe it when we see it. We go into the grocery store and say, "I want to buy those cookies. The little elves make those cookies." And they're just as good as the Safeway cookies or the Albertsons cookies or whatever, but you want those cookies because the elves made them and you remembered that.

We don't have to do that in MCH. We don't have to make up a story about elves making cookies. You have the real stories of the impact of your work in the communities in the states that you serve and part of what we want to begin to do at AMCHP is find out about those stories, tell them strategically, incorporate them into the work that we do so that people understand what it is that you do and they can't help but be part of what we're trying to do together, because it's a great story and it means something.

And what we're going to be doing in March here at this same hotel, at our annual conference, is talking about how we make a difference, how you make a difference in the states. And so one of our strategic objectives is to begin to infuse everything we do with the reality of your practice and incorporate that so

that as we are amplifying your work in the states nationally, the stories of the difference that you're making are infused throughout all of our work, in our policy, in our programs and with our people back at the office.

One of the things that's absolutely incredible for me is to reflect on how I got to where I am today. I got--I found out about this job at AMCHP from a friend and I met that friend at a conference, and I went to that conference as part of my work. It wasn't in the Washington Post. I didn't do the monster.com search and so when you're thinking about how you're going to spend your time, I like to use this quotation from Margaret Weadley that talks a lot about leadership. "Events like this, although they take us away from the office for a really long time, truly are lifesavers and truly do reinvigorate us." And so I invite you to come to--come back here in March, if we don't see you sooner, to see what happens--what's happened to AMCHIP and what's happened across the country with MCH as we move forward together and we begin to tell that story of how we are making a difference. I think I'll end it there, Cassie. I'll give it back to you, but thank you all for your support and for being part of AMCHP.