

Massachusetts Special Legislative Commission on Postpartum Depression (PPD)
Wednesday, January 27th 2016, 5:30-7:30 PM
House Members' Lounge, State House, Boston

Minutes

Commissioners present: Representative Ellen Story (Chair); Senator Joan Lovely (Chair); Khadeejah Ahmed (on behalf of Rep. James O'Day); Kristen Alexander; Jamie Belsito; Dr. Lee Cohen; Jessie Colbert; Karin Downs; Gail DeRiggi (on behalf of Commissioner Thomas Weber); Elizabeth Fluet; Mary Elizabeth Gamache; Margaret Hannah; Dr. Gordon Harper; Dr. Julie Johnston; Dr. Tiffany Moore Simas; Dr. Lisa Price-Stevens; Dr. Michael Yogman.

Commissioners absent: Karen Crowley; Rep. Kimberly Ferguson; Sen. Jennifer Flanagan; Liz Friedman; Dr. Janice Goodman; Peggy Kaufman; Kerry LaBounty; Dr. Monica Le; Dr. Claire Levesque; Sen. Thomas McGee; Rep. Denise Provost; Sen. Richard Ross Rep. Tom Sannicandro; Dr. Alison Schonwald; Nancy Schwartz ; Dr. Jayne Singer; Dr. Joshua Sparrow; Eileen Terlaga; Lisa Waxman.

Commission staff present: Yaminette Diaz-Linhart, Aide to Rep. Story.

Special guests present: Congresswoman Katherine Clark and her Deputy Chief of Staff David Bond; Shennan Kavanagh, Deputy Division Chief of the Consumer Protection Division from the Attorney General's Office; Maria Mossaides, Child Advocate for the Commonwealth; and, Ariel Vega, Regional Director for Senator Elizabeth Warren.

Members of the public and other state employees were also present.

1. Welcome; approval of minutes

Rep. Ellen Story welcomed Commission members and guests. All of those in attendance introduced themselves. The Commission approved the minutes from the October 14th, 2015 meeting. Rep. Story also welcomed new Commission members. Ms. Jamie Belsito, Ms. Margaret Hanna and Ms. Jessie Colbert were appointed to the PPD Commission by the new co-chair appointments established in accordance with Chapter 119, section 22, of the Acts of 2015. Dr. Lisa Price-Stevens was appointed by Gov. Baker to fill a vacant commercial health insurance representative seat on the PPD Commission. Rep. Story also announced Ms. Lisa Waxman's resignation from the PPD Commission. Ms. Waxman served as the PPD survivor seat since the Commission's inception. Rep. Story thanked Ms. Waxman for her time and advocacy on the PPD Commission. Rep. Story and Sen. Lovely recommended to Gov. Baker that this vacant PPD survivor seat be filled by Ms. Divya Kumar.

2. Discussion on current events

Rep. Ellen Story led a discussion on the United States Preventive Task Force's (USTPF) Grade B recommendation for depression screening in adults, which made specific mention of screening women for depression in the postpartum period. Dr. Lee Cohen and Dr. Michael Yogman (PPD Commissioners) also spoke of the importance of the Grade B recommendation from the USPTF. Dr. Yogman commented on how a grade B recommendation will make it compulsory for insurers to reimburse for depression screening. Dr. Cohen discussed the media attention received, including a NY Times article feature.

3. Discussion on federal Bringing Postpartum Depression Out of the Shadows Act with Congresswoman Katherine Clark

Congresswoman Katherine Clark explained the history of this federal bill and detailed how the work done in Massachusetts has been integral to developing work on PPD at the federal level. Dr. Tiffany

Moore Simas will be a featured speaker about the federal bill alongside the co-sponsor of the bill, Congressman Ryan Costello, during the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology's Congressional Leadership Council in March of 2016.

4. Reports on subcommittees

All subcommittees held an initial meeting December 16th, 2015. Since then, subcommittees have been organizing their own meetings and will continue to do so until actionable next steps are achieved.

- Public awareness and stigma reduction: Mr. Michael Visocchi and Ms. Susan Petcher presented a draft plan to raise awareness and decrease stigma of PPD for the general population. The team asked for suggestions and questions in order to inform next steps in the process.
- Evaluating the impact of PPD initiatives in MA: Dr. Gordon Harper summarized the work of the subcommittee, which has included the development of a framework to determine what PPD initiatives require evaluation and fall within the scope of the Commission's work.
- Centralized PPD resources: Ms. Kumar discussed the idea of an online portal that holds all PPD-related resources for different stakeholders, families, mothers and providers.
- Outreach to special populations: Ms. Diaz-Linhart discussed several different populations that the subcommittee has been interested in expanding PPD-related work. The subcommittee is also looking to collaborate with other subcommittees to ensure all projects effectively reach special populations.

5. Reports and discussion of PPD initiatives

Department of Public Health (DPH) Annual Report: Ms. Karin Downs announced that DPH continues to collect PRAMS data, which will be important for the ongoing work of the PPD evaluation subcommittee. Ms. Beth Buxton announced that she is working with a student to empirically evaluate the PPD Pilot Programs.

State House screening of Dark Side of the Full Moon: Sen. Lovely and Ms. Anna Roy have organized a State House screening of a PPD documentary, Dark Side of the Full Moon on March 1st 2016 from 2-4pm in room 428. The film will be followed by a panel discussion to bring awareness to legislators on how to reduce barriers to access treatment for PPD.

2016 PPD Awareness Day at the State House: Sen. Lovely announced the tentative date for this year's PPD Awareness Day at the State House will be June 14th 2016. Ms. Roy has been working to organize the Awareness Day, which will be sponsored by multiple organizations that are currently doing PPD-related work.

National Coalition for Maternal Mental Health: Ms. Belsito, the Advocacy Chair for the National Coalition for Maternal Mental Health, announced an important initiative happening on Feb. 11th 2016 that encourages the use of advocacy through social media #loveanothermother. On April 15th of 2016, there will also be a lobbying day in DC for mothers to bring PPD into light.

Medicaid Screening Coverage Update: Dr. Yogman announced that the Edinburgh is now part of the SWYC child-screen and that as a result PPD screening should now be covered by MassHealth.

6. Other announcements

- Rep. Story announced that Gov. Baker’s budget for 2017 included a line item for the PPD Pilot Programs.
- Dr. Byatt announced the Care for Your Mind Blog Series, which will feature different topics of perinatal and postpartum mental health.
- Sen. Lovely announced that the State House is hosting a State House diaper drive from February 22-March 4. Donations of diapers and wipes will be accepted in Sen. Lovely’s State House office, room 413-A, and will go to Cradles to Crayons to be distributed throughout the Commonwealth.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.