

State of Connecticut
GENERAL ASSEMBLY



PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING HARTFORD,
CT 06106-1591

Task Force to Study Methods to Address the Shortage of Radiologic Technologists,
Nuclear Medicine Technologists and Respiratory Care Practitioners in the State

Meeting Summary

Friday, December 20, 2024

9:30 AM on Zoom and YouTube Live

I. Convene Meeting and Review of the Charge

- Bernadette Mele convened the meeting at 9:30 AM.
- Attendance: Bernadette Mele, Matthew Green, Rep. Cristin McCarthy-Vahey, Sajjad Raza, Adam Kaye, and Karen Griffiths
- Guests: Kat Hall

II. Reports and Discussion

- Bernadette Mele announced to the group that there were edits to the draft report after it was sent out. She asked Adam Kaye if he would like his report added as an appendix.
- Adam Kaye doesn't believe it should be included as the data is reflected in what they did, and the report emphasized anonymity so he would like for his report to stay as a summary.
- Bernadette Mele moved onto summarizing the draft report. She announced that the subgroup met and that they have made additional changes to the

draft report. She stated that she added more information to the background for their professions. She shared that Karen Griffiths and Sajjad Raza assisted in the wording of the report. She commented that they have moved overarching principles and report contents further up the report as they made the report flow better. She mentioned that for the section titled Background Information, Including Current Status and Profession Specific Staffing Challenges the data from CHA is in there and asked Matthew Green if he has additional data for nuclear medicine technologists' programs.

- Matthew Green responded that there is one program in Connecticut, and he unfortunately couldn't connect with them so they will have to go with their current data.
- Bernadette Mele stated that they moved the CHA data from the respiratory care practitioner section further up. She commented that for the section titled Scope of Problem, Sajjad Raza suggested starting the section with the mentioning of the COVID-19 pandemic and asked members for their thoughts. She believes that with or without the pandemic the shortage would still be experienced however the pandemic accelerated the process.
- Adam Kaye agrees that COVID-19 directly affects respiratory therapists and indirectly affects the other two professions and suggested broadening the language to include unforeseen events.
- Kat Hall agrees with that framing and likes the broadened language.
- Adam Kaye suggested a sentence change where the language is broader to include events including the COVID-19 pandemic and other unforeseen events.
- Sajjad Raza suggested that they can remove the COVID-19 sentence and include another revision he suggested that gets to the core of their discussion.
- Rep. Cristin McCarthy-Vahey stated that when they talk about children's mental health, they mention the COVID-19 pandemic constantly and she doesn't believe there is anything wrong with referencing COVID but does like the broader language. She believes that the report has gotten the point across that there is a preparedness issue and that they are not prepared currently, or for the future.
- Bernadette Mele believes that the suggested changes by Sajjad Raza are good and asked members for their thoughts.
- Adam Kaye likes the change and suggested that they can reference COVID-19 as that would encompass the conversation in a concise way.

- Bernadette Mele asked if they would like the mentioning of COVID-19 to be removed in the first paragraph and included later in this section.
- Matthew Green has an issue of starting the section titled Scope of Problem with COVID-19 as the pandemic highlighted the shortage but, with or without another unforeseen event, the shortage is still happening.
- Adam Kaye likes moving the COVID-19 reference further down the section.
- Bernadette Mele asked the Task Force about moving the COVID-19 reference further down the section.
- Karen Griffiths asked for clarification that they would be removing this reference in the first line which poses significant risks.
- Bernadette Mele responded affirmatively as it is mentioned below in the section so it would be redundant.
- Sajjad Raza stated that he removed that first line because it was already mentioned but believes that they can keep the line as it provides the main theme of the initial sentence.
- Karen Griffiths agrees with Sajjad Raza.
- Bernadette Mele moved onto the section titled Connecticut's Current System and shared that they moved up Shared Continuing Problems and Issues and Inequalities in Access. She added additional information to the section regarding nuclear medicine technologists. She moved onto the section titled Recommendations and shared minor spelling changes.
- Karen Griffiths stated that they did minor spelling changes in Recommendation four and suggested removing the word partnership to avoid repetition.
- Bernadette Mele agreed with the change and moved onto the section titled Conclusion and mentioned that they included an additional paragraph regarding respiratory therapists and COVID-19.
- Sajjad Raza suggested a format change of moving the additional paragraph up as he wouldn't like it to be the final paragraph of the report.
- Bernadette Mele commented that they included additional information about the three professions in the section titled Conclusion.
- Adam Kaye would like to include something about safeguarding access to care and suggested a revision to the final paragraph.

- Bernadette Mele asked the Task Force for their thoughts about the report.
- Karen Griffiths suggested formatting changes to the section titled Overarching Principles as well as removing the summary for the section titled Report Contents.
- Bernadette Mele asked the Task Force for their thoughts about the changes.
- Kat Hall agrees with the changes.
- Bernadette Mele stated that she will make the changes and reformat the report. She asked the Task Force if they have any additional changes.
- Sajjad Raza suggested a change to the tables regarding programs and their capacities as he included a percentage sign to the capacity row.
- Bernadette Mele responded that the capacity rows are absolute numbers and not percentages.
- Sajjad Raza thanked Bernadette Mele for the clarification.
- Karen Griffiths stated that the report said that the University of Hartford is a bachelor's program and Quinnipiac isn't, but she knows that Quinnipiac is an entry level bachelor.
- Bernadette Mele answered that she wrote it that way because the University of Hartford has a Bachelor of Science and a Certificate, and she breaks it down in the report. She shared with the Task Force the changes she will make to the report. She asked for a motion to vote on the report with the revisions.
- Karen Griffiths motioned to vote on the report with the revisions and Sajjad Raza seconded.
- The Task Force voted unanimously to finalize the report with the revisions and to send it to the Connecticut General Assembly Public Health Committee.
- Bernadette Mele noted that Paul Kidwell is in support of the finalized report.
- Bernadette Mele stated that she will make the changes and send it to members. She asked members to continue advocating and thanked members for being part of the Task Force.

III. Adjournment

- Bernadette Mele asked for a motion to adjourn. Karen Griffiths motioned to adjourn, and it is seconded by Bernadette Mele.
- The meeting adjourned at 10:05 AM.