

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF
AGENCY 1

February 4, 1977
8:00 A.M.
Room 225
State Capitol Bldg.

HEALTH SERVICES

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Bradley. Roll was taken - Members present were Representative Bradley, Representative Marks, Senator Roberts, Senator Stephens and Senator Thomas.

Dr. Knight opened the meeting with an apology for the large delegation of yesterday.

Chairman Bradley referred the group to Page 566 in the executive budget. She explained with the added \$30,000, number 6 would be B level instead of A level.

The Fiscal Analyst then explained some of the differences. He said the programs are on the B level, or current level, in the LFA recommendation.

The meeting was then open to questions -

Senator Stephens asked Mr. Blewett why they need Management and Nurse Consultants.

Mr. Blewett explained a management consultant is associated with purchase of services from professional firms. They give us independent advice. We want to meet health needs. If we have to cut back, we would rather do it in administration.

On the nurse consultants, the Nurse Bureau employes state nurses to travel throughout the state. They provide advise and consultation to community health departments. There are over 250 health nurses throughout the state.

Senator Roberts asked if the state wide 208 Water Quality program is the one in Kalispell?

Mr. James said no, the one in Kalispell is area wide 208 program. The state wide does not include Kalispell at the present time but hopefully will later, when the area wide program is terminated in a year or two.

Senator Stephens asked someone to explain the WIC program, who gets it, how they qualify, etc.

Mr. Blewett said funds for WIC are 100% federal funds. No match is needed.

Mary Feuersinger talked about WIC. She said WIC is statewide now - 100% federal funds. 80% of funds available must be spent on supplemental food. The rest goes to program administration. In order to qualify the person has to be a high nutrition risk, must be low income. She said eligibility standards must be maintained. They receive a draft each month, no cash. They

can only purchase specific foods, the drafts can not be spent on just anything they want to purchase.

Senator Stephens asked how do you know they purchase the proper food?

Mary Feuersinger said they have contracts with certain stores and they monitor very close. She said their object was to help those in need, not to make them dependent upon the program.

Senator Stephens asked if doctors make referrals. Mary Feuersinger said yes, also public health nurses, public health nutritionists or anyone else could refer. He then asked her what determines when they get off the program. She said they are checked every 6 months.

Senator Stephens then asked what percentage of clients are on Indian Reservations; which she answered 40%.

Representative Bradley asked what kind of effect have you had. Mary felt they are doing a lot.

Representative Marks asked if they deal with just pregnant women? Ms. Feuersinger said they also deal with infants and children up to 5 years of age. He then asked how they get off this program. She said their eligibility is assessed every 6 months. We have standards to go by and we do on-going counseling.

Representative Marks asked if counseling continues after the finances are discontinued. Ms. Feuersinger said they go together, however standards change from city to city. Representative Marks then asked what constituted low income. She said a family of 5 and makes less than \$11,000.

Mr. Blewett then went over the chart to show who would qualify for what assistance, depending on their income. He referred to Attachment D and explained who could qualify for what help, such as medicaid, etc.

He also said they encourage the use of low cost foods which does not contribute to inflation. This is done through a devise of formulas. He felt it was easy to manage and administer.

Representative Marks asked how many women and children do you have on the program?

Ms. Feuersinger said almost 9,000. 25% are women, 25% below the age of 1 year and 50% children.

Senator Stephens said I am still a little concerned about whether the right food gets to the right people. How do you know the youngster is actually getting the food? Have you considered any kind of program to be conducted through the schools?

Mary Feuersinger said they couldn't go through the schools because 5 is the maximum age. With the food package there is about \$25.00 in food a month. The people interested in fraud would not bother with that amount.

Senator Stephens asked if they get food stamps. She said not all of them do. He then said that \$25.00 worth of food did not seem like much aid. Is this how you treat anemia?

Dr. VanDrunen said it is treated by food high in iron, such as beans, cheese, etc. When treated with medicine, the problem is back as soon as treatment is stopped. With good nutritious food, the anemia is conquered.

Mrs. Feuersinger said high iron content food they recommend is iron fortified such as formula, cereal, eggs, milk, cheese, fruit juice (not steak because of the price).

Mr. James mentioned the proper foods are listed on the back of the checks.

Mr. Blewett talked some more about Family Planning. He said funds come from 3 sources - Medicaid, Title 10 and Title 20. He said they also get some aid from SRS.

Ms Nybo said there are 10,500 women who could be receiving help from Medicaid but only 336 women have actually used the program. One reason for this is that women who are eligible have a choice between a family planning clinic or their private physician.

Representative Marks asked which ever place women go for family planning, the family physician or the clinic, does the money come from the same place? Mr. Blewett said when a women comes in and is eligible, we bill medicaid for services rendered. It is billed through the medicaid program.

Representative Marks asked how many women do you have in the group above 10,000?

Mr. Blewett said 2,416 women that pay their own fees.

Representative Marks asked if they take care of about half of the 31,000 women in the middle group. Does that mean the other half don't want the service?

Mr. Blewett said we feel about 6,000 would come. There are 42,000 from 15 through 45 who would be eligible for family planning service. These are women who did want the service.

Ms Feuersinger said there were 15 family planning centers in the state. There is a physician connected with each center. We have nurses, social workers, health educators, physicians, nutritionists, etc. in each clinic. This is a preventive health care center.

Dr. Knight talked about the good things being done with preventive health care, pap tests, cancer checks, problems of all kinds.

Senator Thomas asked if they supplied the birth control materials.

Ms Nybo said they were given information, a pharmacist does the supplying. If they are below the \$5,000 income, the materials are free, over that it is based on the ability to pay.

Representative Marks said in looking at your program, it looks like there are things that are not family planning; only 3 are connected to family planning. How much of your total budget is going into family planning and how much is going to health?

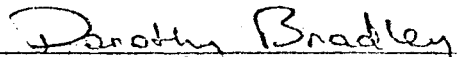
Ms Nybo said family planning and health are a package, they go together.

Mr. Blewett said in terms of overall objectives of the program, the object is to increase the ratio of well babies when born. To achieve that we have to start with the mother long before the birth of the baby. We must have healthy women to have healthy babies.

Senator Roberts asked if they contract any of this service.

Mr. Blewett said we are phasing out state employees. We are trying to go more to local operators instead of state operators.

After a little more discussion, two of the committee members had to leave, so the hearing was concluded.



Representative Bradley, Chairman

Nina Kosmas, Sec.