



**Vermont Commission on Women
Health Equity Committee Meeting
Friday, December 7, 2023
3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. via teleconference
MEETING MINUTES**

Present: Nancy Kaplan, Sarah Mell, Hazel Brewster, Alex Hilliard

Absent: Karen Cygnarowicz

Recording: Sarah Mell

1. Presentation by Emma Anderson, Not a Luxury, Inc.

Mission: Eradicate period poverty in Vermont; over 23,000 menstrual products donated since 2020 with initial donation to Spectrum

First Fundraising Event: January 27, 2024 at St. Michael's College

What help might you want from us?

“Helping to spread the word; using our networks to uplift the work”

What data/information do you have about school districts not meeting the new requirement?

Reached out to superintendents in surrounding districts but didn't hear back or was told that it would be discussed at next meeting and they'd get back to her

Working with health resources offices in most buildings to break through that barrier (administration barriers); Head Nurses; CVSD (CVU and Williston) connections are strongest

Schools are liberally using the language of the bill in terms of location of where products are offered, which actually results in no products being available, particularly in bathrooms themselves

Using personal contacts to help get foot in the door (mom Head Nurse at CVU, stepdad administrator in Hinesburg)

Use of media/news collaborative from UVM to do some collaborative push and focus on this issue; reporter follow-ups on legislation 2-3 years on whether or not there's been follow-through

Nancy's job outside of VCW is community outreach and rural health around the state, which feels aligned with this kind of work; mentor to MPH students and Med Students doing their Public Health rotations and always looking for projects for students; this is a Public Health issue

Models available for projects through UVM LCOM - data analysis opportunities; poster session opportunities; all of those pieces can then be useful to Emma's work and the uplift

Richard Watts at UVM - Community News Projects - embed students in communities reporting on news, which could also be involved; Emma Anderson & Not a Luxury, Inc. could be an option for students to choose to do the journalistic work

This being a student-driven effort feels particularly good to Emma

Vermont Afterschool Association has a lot of power and a lot of legislative power that Emma could tap into, as well. Nancy is a contact for this.

How many other states have a bill like S.115 that includes period products in schools?

Emma will get us flyers and announcement materials for the fundraiser for us to share with our networks. Sarah will connect Emma with Karen/Nancy if need be.

Hazel updates - legislation that was passed, is this something we can ask Cary to help close the loophole in this bill?

2. Approved minutes and agendas.

3. Free-standing Birthing Centers:

We can bring to full Commission, we can choose not to, is this an issue that will absolutely be brought up this legislative session, do we ask them back to this space?

That last bit is great to ask Cary to check in on along with other partners

Curiosity about whether we can move this down the road a bit when we're sure legislation is up for consideration.

Need to run any ask through the ORE tool and unsure that it would meet our standards

The need to run this through Green Mountain Care Board

We only have one freestanding health center in the state

Next step: Check in with Cary about her thoughts on this legislation coming up

4. December meeting outreach: need to change the Forum time to 12pm; also concern about potential for harm online

5. Next Meeting: January 11, 2024 - 3pm-4pm