

Date: November 7, 2013

To: Washington State Board of Health

Re.: Agenda Item 13 Recommended Strategies to Improve the Oral Health of Washington Residents

Dear Board Members:

My name is Norma Wells, a registered dental hygienist with master degree in public health; And, educator with considerable experience in program development, administration, and evaluation of strategies aimed toward reducing health disparities, increasing health services options, and preventing chronic and acute diseases. Today, I am representing myself. These are my opinions, not those of my employer, organizations or agencies with which I am associated.

I am asking the Board to review the process upon which decisions for the proposed oral health plan was derived. In the Board of Health Logic Model beginning with inputs and proceeding to activities, etc., promoting partnerships, engaging the public, and developing rules are prioritized, among others.

Thus I ask, why was the existing Washington State Oral Health Coalition not advised of the process for bringing this new plan forward. And, why were existing Washington State Collaborative Oral Health Improvement Plan (2009-2014) issues not included?

While there are many very good ideas presented in the proposal it appears to be a hierarchal plan. However, to achieve the goals, much of the action needs to start within and with the existing and future workforce health providers at the community level. This means placing greater value on including those providers, agencies, and individuals already working toward the broader public health aims of reducing health disparities, increasing cultural competencies by understanding ethnic belief systems representative of our state's population. It's a huge undertaking. However, I believe the proposed plan needs to be re-worked. If the Board's mission "to provide statewide leadership in developing and promoting policies that protect and improves the public's health" is to be achieved.

Thank you for opportunity to express my opinion.

Sincerely,



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