

# AMERICAN SAMOA

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## HEALTH PLANNING NEWS

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### ASHPDA'S REVIEW & COMMENTS ON 1982 DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH BUDGET

The ASHPDA recently completed its review & comments of the 1982 Department of Health budget. A full report of this review is provided since there is considerable interest among members of the Council.

Under the Code of American Samoa the ASHPDA has responsibility to review and comment annually on the five-year strategy plan and budget of the Department of Health. The Agency makes its findings and comments as to the consistency of the DOH plan and budget with the Territorial Health Plan. Such findings and comments must be submitted to the Office of Planning & Budget, Office of Development Planning, The Governor, The Fono, and the Director of Health prior to legislative review of such plan and budget.

In its review of the DOH budget for 1982, the ASHPDA considered not only what was included in the budget, but also, what was absent or deleted, in relation to Territorial health needs.

Regarding Public Health Services (314(d) grant programs, the DOH projects a budget of \$193,700 for the total 314 (d) programs. The ASHPDA feels that this is unrealistic. Funds for this program were cut in FY 1979 to \$166,000, and are very likely, to be reduced again under President Carter's cutbacks.

The PHS 314(d) programs are important as a means of providing services not otherwise available to our people. The ASHPDA has repeatedly urged the Department to shift certain vital 314(d) programs (Health education and Health statistics) to the ASG budget to assure their continuation in the event of further reductions in federal funds. This has not been done and the Health Education program is now a program in name only.

There is no way that the Department of Health will be able to achieve its stated long-term goal to "elevate the knowledge and understanding of the general public on health care matters and the individuals role and responsibility in preventing illness and maintaining health," under the existing or proposed health education budget.

The ASHPDA and ASHCC have repeatedly pointed out the urgent need for a federal health programs coordinator to plan, monitor, coordinate, and evaluate the Public Health grant programs. The Department has experienced continual problems with these programs, primarily because of the absence of a person trained in the development and operation of these kinds of programs. The FY 1982 budget shows no indication that the DOH intends to fund such a position.

Funds budgeted for off-island care have reached 13% of the total Territorial funds for all medical care. The growing demand for off-island care has still not been adequately addressed. Pumping more money into care has still not been adequately addressed. Pumping more money into the account without adequate controls only increases the problem.

The very obvious deficiency in the FY 1982 budget is in the area of on-going education for permanent medical and nursing staff. With travel funds of only \$19,000 for medical staff and only \$3,000 for nursing staff it is virtually impossible to assure the continued quality of services in the Territory. The rapidity with which new medical knowledge and practices are being discovered has moved continuous medical education and training to one of the highest priorities in any quality assurance program. This is especially true because of Samoa's isolation from the general medical community and access to new knowledge. However, in the absence of any continuing education plan or program, it is too much to expect the Fono to believe that travel funds will be utilized primarily for necessary on-going education rather than for other non-essential purposes.

All hospitals which expect to receive reimbursement for medicare will have to comply with the federal health care Financing Administration uniform financial reporting requirements by July 1981. This means the LBJ Tropical Medical Center must employ at least three new clerical personnel in FY 1982 to compile the necessary information for the computer. The DOH Budget does not reflect this requirement.

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HEALTH MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT  
CONFERENCE



In an attempt to meet the needs of the Territory for development of health professionals, the ASHPDA with the assistance of Dr. Robert Mytinger of Honolulu Mytinger Associates, sponsored a two-day conference in San Francisco on May 14-15, 1980.

Among those present were representatives of the

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The ASHPDA feels it is not appropriate to arbitrarily place a ceiling on the annual allowable budget increase for health services. The cost of health services, especially medical services are rising at a rate above the average increases in the consumer price index. These services directly affect the health and welfare of the Territorial population and should be evaluated by their potential contribution to health improvement. The territorial health system is now at the point where continued budgetary restrictions can be expected to result in lower quality services and the inability to mount health programs with significant health improvement potential.

There is considerable evidence indicating that the Territory is probably underspending for health care. The FY 1979 per capital expenditure for all health and medical services was \$187. In the same year the U.S. per capital expenditure were \$850. Thus, by any standard, and despite what might appear to be alarmingly high increases in health budget requests for American Samoa, relatively little, in comparison with the U.S. is allocated for such centrally important services as health care.

major Pacific and West Coast Schools of the health professions including UC-Berkeley, UC Los Angeles, UC-San Francisco Medical Schools, Stanford University, and University of Hawaii. Also present were officials from Region IX of the Federal Government. Representing the American Samoa Government were Manpower Resources Director Edna Taufa'asau, ASCC President Sa'e'u Scanlan, Acting Health Director Paul Turner and the ASHPDA Director Charles McCuddin.

The primary purpose of the conference was to explore future possibilities for cooperative agreements between the health professional schools and the American Samoa Government for the training of Samoan health professionals. The conference also discussed other problem areas of vital concern such as preparation of students to be able to handle the academic aspects of health professions schools, improvement of pre-professional and professional education on-island, and recruitment and retention problems for all classes of medical professionals.

The recommendations and conclusions of the conference are presented in a written report by Dr. Robert Mytinger, which is available at the ASHPDA's office.

In his report of the conference to the ASHCC meeting, ASHPDA Director McCuddin stated that he was quite satisfied with the conference. He felt that the framework had been laid for the development of a very workable system which could show definite benefits over the next ten years, but success depends on some one agency in the Territory acting as a catalyst to keep everything moving. McCuddin also said that the health manpower development arrangements envisaged by the conference will, of course, take a substantial amount of money, not only from the Federal grant sources, but also from American Samoa itself.

GRANT APPLICATION FOR FUNDING OF  
MANU'A DISPENSARY PROJECT  
RESUBMITTED



With the approval of the ASHPDA and support of the ASHCC, The Department of Health has resubmitted its application for a \$63,000 grant to extend and renovate the Ta'u Dispensary.

This project is long overdue. The funds were approved seven years ago, but the project has still remained unexecuted. Consequently the cost of construction has increased during the extended period of time, which makes the approved funds now insufficient to complete the whole project. The resubmitted application asks for a reduction in project scope to include only the Ta'u portion of the project.

For this portion of the project, the DOH will need an additional \$20,000 from the local government. While the request for this money was not approved this year, the Governor's office has assured the federal government of its support and the availability of the additional funds for the project when it starts.

The federal government presently advises the DOH to hurry up and start utilizing the monies by this July before they will be lost through deobligation.

Once the final approval is granted, the Public Works Department will start the project with the ASHPDA responsible for monitoring and reporting for the project as required.

GRANT APPLICATIONS AND PROGRAM PLANS  
REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY ASHCC

The ASHCC reviewed and approved the following grant applications and plans submitted by the Department of Health and the ASHPDA for the 1981 Fiscal year.

- \* Family Planning Grant application submitted by the Family Planning Program. A program plan (state plan) is a basic requirement for continuation of grant award to this program.



- \* V.D. grant application submitted by Dr. Tofiga Liaiga, Acting Public Health Director
- \* Immunization grant application submitted by the Acting Public Health Officer Dr. Tofiga Liaiga, also the program director.
- \* Hypertension supplemental grant application submitted by Dr. Faiaoga Tosi and Sarona Ma'ae of the Public Health's Hypertension control program
- \* MCH & CC grant application and state plan submitted by Dr. Julia Grach, MCH & CC program Director.
- \* Health Planning & Development grant renewal application submitted by Charles McCuddin, ASHPDA Director.

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### OFF-ISLAND TRAINING & MEETINGS

The following training and meetings held off-island were attended by members of the ASHCC and staff during the last three months of the 1979 fiscal year. These training sessions were attended as part of continuing education of the council members and staff:

- \* April 12-19 - Proposed Uses of Federal Funds

Mrs. Repeka Howland and HC Tuiteleleapaga, both members of the Project Review Committee, attended this training which was held in Seattle for three days.

- \* May 5 - Health Planning & Policy Analysis

Mr. Anetere'a Puletasi, Assistant Director of ASHPDA, attended the two-week seminar in health planning & policy analysis at the George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

- \* May 11 - Health Manpower Development

Dr. Sa'eu Scanlan of ASCC, Mrs. Edna Taufa'asau of the Department of Manpower Resources, Dr. Paul Turner of the Health Department and Mr. Charles R. McCuddin of the ASHPDA attended the three day conference on health manpower development in San Francisco.

- \* June 1 - Annual Meeting, American Health Planning Association

Dr. Edgar Reid & Mrs. Fa'au'uga Achica of the ASHCC and Mr. Charles McCuddin of the ASHPDA attended the annual meeting of the American Health Planning Association.

### HEALTH LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

The following health-related legislation was initiated with the assistance and support of the ASHPDA and ASHCC:

- \* **Fluoridation bill:** Governor Coleman signed this bill into law which allows the Government water supply system, including the elementary schools water supplies to be fluoridated.
- \* **Certificate-of-Need Amendments:** The Governor also signed this bill into law order for the Territory to meet the federal requirement for continued funding of the National Health Planning & Development Program in the Territory.
- \* **Board of Health Bill:** Was introduced in the Fono to create a policy making board for the effective and efficient administration and management of the Department of Health. The bill was passed by the Senate, and subsequently tabled by the House.
- \* **DOH Reorganization bill:** Was introduced simultaneously with the Board of Health Bill, and was based on the recommendations of the Mytinger Associates study report recently completed of the Territorial health care system. The bill was also tabled.

## ASHCC ANNUAL MEETING

The fourth annual meeting of the ASHCC was held on June 20, 1980 at Soli's Restaurant.

More than thirty members and their guests were present. The purpose of the meeting was to report on the past year's accomplishments, and to hear concerns of health care issues from the officers and the Governor. The meeting was also for the acknowledgement of the good job of the out-going officers as well as recognition of the new officers.

Re-elected as chairperson for this year was Fa'au'uga Achica, and Paul Stevenson was elected Vice-Chairperson replacing Dr. Tiamu Lopa.

Chairperson Achica opened the meeting with her personal remarks on the vital health concerns of the ASHCC and ASHPDA. Achica stressed the need for better coordination and cooperation between the ASHCC/ASHPDA, Department of Health, and Governor's office in decision-making on formulating of health policies.

Following her remarks, the Chairperson introduced Mr. Lyle Richmond representing the Governor as guest speaker. Mr. Richmond spoke about the urgent need for improvement of the Territory's health care system, and the importance of the role of ASHCC and ASHPDA in assisting to bring about such improvement.

The chairperson expressed her good feelings and praised ASHPDA Director McCuddin and his staff for outstanding performance of their duties and functions during the last year. The chairperson also expressed appreciation to the outgoing vice-chairperson Dr. Tiamu Lopa and all members of the ASHCC for involvement in the past year's activities. Achica also expressed warm welcome to the new vice-chairperson Paul Stevenson.

Director McCuddin expressed his heart-felt appreciation to all members of the ASHCC for their dedication and participation in the last year's activities. He also expressed good feelings about his staff for their outstanding performance and continuing support of the program's activities during the past year.

The meeting concluded with a delectable dinner and the lovely, amusing polynesian floor show. It was a very enjoyable event for those who made it to the meeting.

## PUBLIC INFORMATION & HEALTH EDUCATION

More information has been found which proves that smoking is hazardous to health. Two recent studies add to the evidence that there is something experienced by many non-smokers in the presence of cigarette smoke.

According to one study published in the American Journal of Epidemiology, the evidence shows that children living in households where one or both parents smoked tobacco had lower mid-expiratory flow rates (a measure of potentially reversible small airway disease) than children who lived in households where no one smoked.

A similar study published in the New England Journal of Medicine shows that non-smokers who work in places where smoking is permitted also have small airway disease. Their scores on tests designed to measure this were similar to those of long-term smokers who do not inhale and to those of long light smokers (10 cigarettes per day for more than 20 years).

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HEALTH PLANNING DICTIONARY:

Some of the ASHCC members are familiar with the acronyms and abbreviated terms commonly used by health planners. Some are not, and have asked to make a list of these terms. Here are some common abbreviated terms used:

- \*P.L. 93-641 National Health Planning and Resources Development Act of 1974
- P.L. 96-79 Health Planning and Resources Development Amendments
- \*P.L. 16-26 American Samoa Act of 1979 Creating Territorial Health Planning and Development Program
- \* PHS Act Public Health Service Act
- \* ASHPDA American Samoa Health Planning & Development Agency
- \*ASHCC American Samoa Health Coordinating Council

- \*CON Certificate of Need
- \*MCH & CC Maternal and Child Health & Crippled Children
- \*THP Territorial Health Plan
- \*AIP Annual Implementation Plan
- \*PRC Project Review Committee of the ASHCC
- \*PDC Plan Development Committee of ASHCC
- \*314(d) Health programs created under U.S. Public Health Service Act, including health education, health statistics, Mosquito \* Filariasis control, Public health laboratory, and mental health.

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