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## HEALTH POLICY COUNCIL CALL MINUTES

Date Wednesday, April 8, 2020  
Time 12 p.m. CT

MEMBERS	
Joanna Buscemi, PhD (Chair)	Marian Fitzgibbon, PhD
Pamela Behrman, PhD	Amy Janke, PhD (SPLC Chair)
Akilah Dulin, PhD (Health Policy Committee Chair)	

  

REGRETS	
Brian Gonzalez, PhD	Judy Ockene, PhD, MEd, MA
Carly Goldstein, PhD (CPEC Chair)	Monica Wang, ScD, MS (CPEC Chair)
Sara Knight, PhD	

### Approve minutes from the January, February, and March call

Approval of January, February, and March minutes tabled due to lack of quorum. Ms. Borzon noted that Dr. Bean's appointment to the council was currently under review by the Executive Committee.

### Update on rural health policy ambassadors list

Dr. Buscemi thanked Dr. Dulin for her efforts on culling the list of potential rural health ambassadors. Dr. Dulin noted that she had help from a student to review the list of ambassadors, and that said student would be willing to help cull the list further. Ms. Borzon also mentioned that she would be able to help determine suitable candidates for the rural health ambassadors.

### Health Policy Council Response to COVID-19

Dr. Buscemi then updated the council on the virtual Board Call. She stated that there is currently a delicate balance with the ambassadors program, as the program should not lose traction, but Congress members have higher priorities in light of the current pandemic. However, the council is still able to proceed with getting a commitment from ambassadors to join the program. She noted that the Board recommend that the ambassadors reconvene with their typical duties in May, and begin relationship building in June. The council agreed with this timeline, as it is a difficult time for Congress to be receptive to other messages. It was determined that the best course of action would be to invite rural health ambassadors to participate in the program. Additionally, the opioid



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pain management ambassadors were to be informed that their efforts should be temporarily halted given the current climate, and reconvened when the pandemic stabilizes.

The council was also informed that SBM had signed on to co-endorse a statement from the Physicians' for Human Rights that stated that physicians should be better protected from the pandemic and have greater access to PPE. Dr. Buscemi stated that it would be beneficial for the Health Policy Council to issue a joint statement with the Health Policy Committee, Health Equity SIG, and CPEC on how the pandemic disproportionately affects disparity groups. It was determined that the statement would be on why people of color are more susceptible to COVID-19 due to environmental and systemic issues. Dr. Wang's op-ed on systemic issues could be an excellent jumping off point. Dr. Buscemi, Dr. Wang, Dr. Fitzgibbon, Dr. Goldstein, Dr. Dulin, and Dr. Carson would work together to release this statement.

#### **Adjourn**

The call adjourned at 12:30 p.m. CT.

*Minutes submitted by R. Borzon on April 14, 2020.*