



# **A Report on the Health Initiatives of State Women's Commissions and Councils**

**National Women's Law Center  
2008**

## *Introduction*

The National Women's Law Center's 2007 *Making the Grade on Women's Health: A National and State-by-State Report Card* found that the nation as a whole and most states are falling behind in their quest to meet national goals for women's health. Indeed, one in four women in the United States have limited or no health insurance.<sup>i</sup> Twenty-four percent of American women are obese,<sup>ii</sup> and the number of women diagnosed with diabetes increased in 43 states during the past three years.<sup>iii</sup> Nearly 18 percent of women suffer from osteoporosis.<sup>iv</sup> Maternal mortality has soared to a rate of 13.1 per 100,000 women,<sup>v</sup> and the national coronary heart disease death rate remains troublingly high—141.9 per 100,000 women, and 190.2 per 100,000 Black women.<sup>vi</sup>

Women are more likely than men to need and use health care, but also face more problems in obtaining and affording care. They are also more likely to be poor and to encounter cost barriers to full coverage.<sup>vii</sup> Moreover, all too often, women face barriers to obtaining important health services, such as reproductive health care. Women across the country also face harmful disparities in health care based on their race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and other factors. In particular, many low-income women and women of color confront systemic barriers to securing even the most basic levels of care.<sup>viii</sup>

The fight for progressive health care reform is currently at crossroads of major consequence at both the state and national levels, and addressing the barriers to women's health care access is more important than ever before. The National Women's Law Center (NWLC) has launched **Reform Matters: Making Real Progress for Women and Health Care** to encourage women's advocates to be active and vocal participants in this fight and to provide them with the tools to do so.

Women's commissions, women's health councils and offices of women's health have long been working to improve the health of the women in their states through research and analysis, public education campaigns, and in some cases, legislative advocacy. As states grapple with the idea and execution of health care reform, women's commissions and councils are in a privileged position to inform both local leaders and their constituents about the importance of health care reform for women and ensure that reform proposals appropriately address women's unique health needs.

## *Writing the Report*

At this pivotal moment in the health reform debate, it is crucial that women's advocates across the country are connected and united in their efforts to improve the quality of women's health in the U.S. NWLC developed *Reform Matters: A Report on the Health Initiatives of State Women's Commissions and Councils* as part of the Center's efforts to convene a national community of women's health advocates; to give state commissions—particularly newly-established commissions—an opportunity to learn from, and collaborate with, their counterparts in other states; and to identify ways in which the Center can provide technical assistance to local advocates as health care reform takes the stage in their communities. The idea for this report came in December 2007, when NWLC received a request from members of a newly-formed women's health council for information on the health-related work of their counterparts across the country.

The report focuses on the work of state women's commissions and women's health councils that were established by statute or by executive order; and NWLC has included basic information (as available) on when and how these commissions or councils were established. For links to the legislation authorizing the creation of certain women's commissions, taskforces on women's health and offices of women's health, see the National Conference of State Legislatures' "State Laws and Women's Health Initiatives," available at: <http://www.ncsl.org/programs/health/whofcomm.htm>.

The information included in the report was primarily gathered through conversations with the individual listed as the state contact, all of which took place between January and June of 2008. For state commissions that could not be reached, as much information as possible was gathered from their websites and included here. Efforts were also made to ensure that every individual and entity represented in the report had an opportunity to review the summary before final publication.

For states without a statewide women's commission or council, NWLC has included contact information and a brief outline of the work of the state's Office of Women's Health, when appropriate, or a comparable women's health unit or coordinator at the state's health agency. Contact information for state women's health coordinators was taken from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service's Office on Women's Health's "State Women's Health Coordinators," available at: <http://www.womenshealth.gov/owh/about/swhc.cfm>. Detailed information on the coordinator's work was gathered from conversations with the state contact, all of which took place between January and June of 2008. For information on the women's health initiatives of state health agencies, including Offices of Women's Health, that are *not* included in this report, see the Office on Women's Health's "Regional Offices and Programs," available at: <http://www.womenshealth.gov/owh/reg/>.

Though NWLC has chosen to feature the work of state women's commissions and councils, we also commend the commitment and accomplishments of city, county and university women's commissions. On pages 36-8, we have included examples of the health initiatives of two city women's commissions and one county women's commission. For more information on local women's commissions, see the National Association of Commissions for Women's (NACW) member list, available at: <http://www.nacw.org/regions/index.php?page=main>.

NWLC would also like to extend thanks to NACW for supporting this report, for its leadership on osteoporosis education and awareness, and for its longtime commitment to advocacy for equity and justice for women.

### ***Findings***

The report finds that women's commissions and councils are addressing a broad and diverse cross-section of the health issues affecting women and girls; and their specific areas of focus generally reflect the health experiences of, and trends among, the women in their communities. Nevertheless, certain topics are fairly ubiquitous. Eight or more commissions have engaged in specific advocacy or public education around breast cancer, cervical cancer and the HPV vaccine, health care reform and efforts to expand health coverage, osteoporosis, coronary heart disease, or sexual assault and domestic violence. Other topics commonly addressed include: diabetes, substance abuse or mental

illness, teen pregnancy, nutrition or eating disorders, HIV/AIDS, health care access for women with disabilities, access to emergency contraception, smoking, elderly care and health disparities among women.

In many states, the women's commission or council's primary assignment is to evaluate the status of women in the state, including their health status, and make policy recommendations to the Administration. Several commissions, such as the Florida Commission on the Status of Women and the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women, accomplish this task by producing annual reports on the status of women in the state that include information on women's health.

A number of commissions and councils keep track of state legislation relating to women's health (among other areas of focus) and advocate accordingly. The California Commission on the Status of Women, for example, maintains a daily-updated, public database of all legislation in the state relating to women and girls, with specific sections on Health, Long Term Care and Aging, and Reproductive Health; the database also lists the Commission's position on each of the pending bills.

Developing an annual policy agenda is a critical priority for a number of commissions and councils, such as the Connecticut Women's Health Campaign (a project of the state's Permanent Commission on the Status of Women), the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women, New Mexico's Governor's Women's Health Advisory Council and the Vermont Commission for Women. Their advocacy has produced notable results, including the successful passage of legislation that mandates insurance coverage of at least 48-hour hospital stays for childbirth and certain breast cancer surgeries (Connecticut), legislation that increases funding for the Department of Public Health to provide contraceptive services for women with incomes below 250 percent of poverty (Iowa), and recently, a bill that sets a \$25 co-pay limit for women seeking mammograms (Vermont).

Furthermore, as increasing numbers of states delve into health care reform, local women's commissions and councils are rising to meet the challenge. The California Women's Health Council, the New Hampshire Commission on the Status of Women, the Pennsylvania Commission for Women and the Vermont Commission on Women are four examples of commissions and councils that have been active and influential participants in the health care reform debates taking place in their states, fighting to ensure that all reform proposals meet women's health needs.

In addition to producing publications and advocating for or against legislation, commissions and councils have undertaken diverse strategies to "get the word out" about women's health. Several state commissions, such as those in Louisiana, Pennsylvania and Texas, have hosted or helped plan statewide conferences on the status of women and included presentations and workshops relating to women's health. Another example is the New Jersey Advisory Commission on the Status of Women, which helps organize and host an annual conference on women. Their March 2008 conference, which had 1500 women in attendance, featured sessions on cancer, genetics and age-related conditions, and a "health fair" where providers performed screenings and gave information on conditions including sickle cell disease, heart disease and osteoporosis. A number of state commissions, including the Hawaii Commission on the Status of Women and Texas' Governor's Commission for Women, coordinate outreach events during "Awareness" months like National Women's Health Month, Minority Health Month,

Breast Cancer Awareness Month and Domestic Violence Awareness Month, using these opportunities to increase education and awareness around women's health issues.

Some of the strategies employed by commissions and councils are highly creative. The West Virginia Commission for Women has established a "Speaker's Bureau" that provides contact information for women's health experts available to give presentations and workshops on issues such as osteoporosis and breast cancer; the District of Columbia's Commission for Women distributed "Breast Care Diaries" to city residents; the New Mexico Commission on the Status of Women developed and disseminated a statewide survey for girls ages 15-18, which found that health issues—including depression, body issues and domestic violence—rank high on girls' lists of problem areas that they would like the Commission to address; meanwhile, the Governor's Women's Health Advisory Council in New Mexico helped create the first-ever women's health policy class at the University of New Mexico. Notably, the Pennsylvania Commission for Women has helped implement touch-activated, bilingual *Women's Wellness Guide* healthcare kiosks, with the tagline, "Take hold of your health," in public health facilities, supermarkets and correctional facilities across the state. The kiosks target underserved women without internet access who might not have the time or opportunity to go for wellness checks and health seminars, and provide healthcare definitions, preventative measures and questions for the users to ask their healthcare providers.

Perhaps most impressive, however, is the manner in which women's commissions and councils across the country—in many cases struggling to maintain their high level of work within diminishing budgets—have managed to stretch their resources and expand their influence by partnering with other organizations and campaigns. The DC Commission for Women partnered with the District's Department of Health, the Women's Collective and BET's Rap-It-Up campaign to increase HIV/AIDS awareness among District residents; the Texas Commission for Women joined with the Austin Commission for Women to host a seminar on osteoporosis in May 2008; and the North Carolina Council for Women and Domestic Violence Commission is currently working with the Coalition Against Domestic Violence in North Carolina and the North Carolina Coalition Against Sexual Assault to create a state-wide database on domestic violence shelters and the clients they serve. Many state commissions and councils, including the Delaware Commission for Women, the Louisiana Women's Policy and Research Commission and the Wisconsin Women's Council, partner with the American Heart Association's "Go Red for Women's Heart Health" campaign. An excellent example of institutional partnership is occurring in New Mexico. The New Mexico Commission on the Status of Women helped the governor put together an Executive Order establishing the Governor's Women's Health Advisory Council, which—though a separate entity with separate funding—is currently located in the Commission's office, thus facilitating collaboration and partnership between the two entities. The Executive Director of the Commission also serves on the Health Advisory Council.

New Mexico is not alone, however, in institutionalizing collaboration between independent, state-sponsored entities. The Executive Director of the Michigan Women's Commission also serves on the Family Planning Advisory Commission through the Department of Community Health; the Executive Director of the Indiana Commission for Women sits on the Advisory Board for the Office on Women's Health; and the Executive Director of the Kentucky Commission for Women serves on the Breast Cancer Advisory

Board and the Domestic Violence Advisory Board for the Kentucky Department of Health, thus fostering communication and partnership between the Commission and the two Boards. Similar interagency collaborations are occurring across the country.

### *Conclusion*

Despite challenging budget shortfalls, state women's commissions and councils have developed creative, effective and, in many cases, *replicable* methods to address the diverse health issues confronting women in their states. As health care reform becomes an increasingly "hot topic" in the U.S., we encourage commissions and councils to connect with other women's health advocates across the country (and within their states!) to form a united—and powerful—advocacy force. By working together and learning from the experiences of advocates in states further along in the health reform process, women's advocates will be better equipped to enter forthcoming health reform discussions with the knowledge, passion and confidence necessary to ensure that all health reform proposals address women's pressing health care needs.

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<sup>i</sup> Elizabeth Patchias and Judy Waxman, "Women and Health Coverage: The Affordability Gap." The Commonwealth Fund, Pub. 1020, Volume 25, April 2007, *available at*:

<http://www.nwlc.org/pdf/NWLCCommonwealthHealthInsuranceIssueBrief2007.pdf>

<sup>ii</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey Data* (BRFSS), 2005, *available at*: <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/brfss/index.asp>. The National Women's Law Center, *Making the Grade on Women's Health: A National and State-by-State Report Card*, 2007, *available at*: <http://hrc.nwlc.org>

<sup>iii</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey Data* (BRFSS), 2005, *available at* <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/brfss/index.asp>. The National Women's Law Center, *Making the Grade on Women's Health: A National and State-by-State Report Card*, 2007, *available at*: <http://hrc.nwlc.org>.

<sup>iv</sup> National Osteoporosis Foundation, *America's Bone Health: The State of Osteoporosis and Low Bone Mass in Our Nation* (Washington: National Osteoporosis Foundation, 2002). The National Women's Law Center, *Making the Grade on Women's Health: A National and State-by-State Report Card*, 2007, *available at*: <http://hrc.nwlc.org>.

<sup>v</sup> National Center for Health Statistics, "Compressed Mortality File 1999-2004," CDC WONDER On-line Database, compiled from Compressed Mortality File 1999-2004 Series 20 No. 2J, 2007, *available at* <http://wonder.cdc.gov/cmfi-icd10.html>, analyzed by Quality Resource Systems, Inc. Data for live births from 1999 through 2002 also come from the CDC Wonder on-line site. National Center for Health Statistics, Division of Vital Statistics, "Natality public-use data 1995-2002," on CDC WONDER On-line Database, November 2005, *available at*: <http://wonder.cdc.gov/natality.html>, analyzed by Quality Resource Systems, Inc. The 2003 live birth data come from Joyce A. Martin and others., "Births: Final data for 2003," *National Vital Statistics Reports 54* (2005). The 2004 live birth data come from Joyce A. Martin and others, "Births: Final data for 2004," *National Vital Statistics Reports 55* (2006). The National Women's Law Center, *Making the Grade on Women's Health: A National and State-by-State Report Card*, 2007, *available at*: <http://hrc.nwlc.org>.

<sup>vi</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, The Office on Women's Health Quick Health Data Online, *available at* <http://www.womenshealth.gov/quickhealthdata>. The National Women's Law Center, *Making the Grade on Women's Health: A National and State-by-State Report Card*, 2007, *available at*: <http://hrc.nwlc.org>.

<sup>vii</sup> Patchias and Waxman, 2007.

<sup>viii</sup> Brian D. Smedley, Adrienne Y. Stith, and Alan R. Nelson, Eds., *Unequal Treatment: Confronting Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health Care*, Institute of Medicine: Washington D.C., 2003.

## **State Women's Commissions, Councils and Women's Health Coordinators**

### **State = ALABAMA**

Commission/Council = Alabama Women's Commission

Contact = Sarah Skipper, Executive Director

Contact Information = [sarah.skipper@servealabama.gov](mailto:sarah.skipper@servealabama.gov); (334)202-6553

Website = <http://www.alabamawomenscommission.com/>

Established = 1971, by statute

Women's Health Work =

- Awarded 2007-2008 research grant to Dr. Carole Zugazaga, Auburn University to identify and analyze issues and policies affecting mothers and infants (birth-age one) in Alabama. The Commission will share the results of this study and make any appropriate recommendations to the Governor and Legislature upon the study's conclusion in September 2008. Study results will be available on the Women's Commission's website.

### **State = ALASKA**

Commission/Council = N/A

Other = State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health, Section of Women's, Children's and Family Health

Contact =

- Stephanie Birch, RNC, BSN, MPH, Section Chief, Women's Children's and Family Health, MCH Title V and CSHCN Director
- Kelly Keeter, Family Planning Program Manager

Contact Info = [stephanie.wrightsmann-birch@alaska.gov](mailto:stephanie.wrightsmann-birch@alaska.gov); (907) 269-3400

Website = <http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/wcfh/>

Established = N/A

Women's Health Work =

- Received three-year Women's Comprehensive Care Grant in July, 2001 through the United States Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau (US HRSA/MCHB); used a quality-improvement methodology to create more effective ways to coordinate and deliver women's care at a community health center in Anchorage. Objective was to create a client-centered, risk-based, coordinated, comprehensive service system that supports women in their efforts to seek and/or maintain health and well being, and to then replicate this model at community health centers across Alaska.
- Created a state-wide Alaska Women's Health Partnership (AWHP), which served as an Advisory Board for the work performed at the Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center between 2001 and 2004 and continues to work together on an informal basis to improve women's health in Alaska.
- Developed AWHP workgroups on Preventive Health Services, Unintended Pregnancy Prevention, Women's Advocacy, Mental/Behavioral Health, and National Women's Health Week Planning Committee. The workgroups carried out well-defined, time-limited, project-oriented work, such as:

- The Preventive Health Services workgroup created the “Alaska Women’s Guide to Good Health” daybook, which included Alaska women’s health statistics, resources and referral information to educate women about the need for routine screenings and behavioral health recommendations (e.g., nutrition, exercise). Members secured financial support from a variety of state programs and private organizations to print 8,500 full-color copies and utilized the AWHP general membership to distribute the booklets statewide.
- The Unintended Pregnancy Prevention workgroup developed a statewide campaign, entitled “BC Now!” (i.e., birth control now), aimed at increasing provider knowledge and acceptance of the evidence-based clinical practice guideline for initiating hormonal contraception in low-risk women; this practice guideline encourages the provision of hormonal contraception without first requiring a comprehensive physical (including pelvic) exam.

## **State = ARIZONA**

Commission/Council = Governor’s Commission on Women’s and Children’s Health

Contact = Gina Flores, Director of Family and Community Health

Contact Info = [gflores@az.gov](mailto:gflores@az.gov); (602) 542-2391

Website = [http://gocyf.az.gov/FCH/BRD\\_GCWCH.asp](http://gocyf.az.gov/FCH/BRD_GCWCH.asp)

Established = Originally established in 2000; reestablished in 2008

Women’s Health Work =

- The Commission is focused on improving the health of women and children through collaboration and innovation, while also reducing health care costs and maximizing existing resources.
- The Commission will identify priorities and advise the Governor on the most effective policy direction and methods to improve the health and wellness of Arizona women and children.
- The Commission’s areas of concentration will include:
  - Access to health care and reducing the number of uninsured women and children
  - General health concerns affecting women, including chronic disease prevention and behavioral health
  - Reproductive health, family planning, teen and unplanned pregnancy prevention
  - Increased community education and outreach for existing health programs

## **State = ARKANSAS**

Commission/Council = N/A

Other = Women’s Health Work Unit, Arkansas Department of Health and Human Services

Contact = No response

Contact Info = [dianne.campbell@arkansas.gov](mailto:dianne.campbell@arkansas.gov); (501) 280-4523

Website = <http://www.state.ar.us/dhs/dco/> (Arkansas Department of Health & Human Services)

Established = N/A

Women’s Health Work = Unclear



## **State = CALIFORNIA, 1**

Commission/Council = California Women's Health Council (WHC)

Contact = Marj Plumb, Dr.PH, Vice-Chair

Contact Info = [marjplumb@aol.com](mailto:marjplumb@aol.com); (916) 440-7626

Website = <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/services/boards/whc/Pages/default.aspx>

Established = 1995

Women's Health Work =

- Composed of a body of experts and community representatives that provide policy recommendations to both the California Department of Public Health and the Department of Health Care Services, through the Office of Women's Health.
- Offers policy recommendations directly to the Directors of both the California Department of Public Health and the California Department of Health Care Services.
- Offers analysis of emerging issues, such as health care reform, and contributes to the planning, projects and products of the Office of Women's Health.
- Creates opportunities for public-private partnerships and linkages to improve the health status of women and girls in California.
- Focuses work on health access, health disparities and data/research.
- WHC members form ad hoc working groups to address time-sensitive and specific topics, such as: access to health care, the impact of immigrant reform, gynecologic cancers, drug and alcohol abuse and mental health.

## **State = CALIFORNIA, 2**

Commission/Council = California Commission on the Status of Women

Contact = Mary Wiberg, Executive Director

Contact Info = [mwiberg@women.ca.gov](mailto:mwiberg@women.ca.gov); (916) 445-3173

Website = <http://women.ca.gov/>

Established = 1965, by executive order

Women's Health Work =

- The Commission's Executive Director also serves on the California Women's Health Council.
- In 2003, co-sponsored a Legislative Briefing on Women's Health in partnership with the California Women's Health Partnership, a regional coalition of community leaders, social service organizations, community-based organizations, health care professionals, and individuals who work together to decrease breast and cervical cancer mortality rates through outreach, education and early detection strategies.
- Sponsored a briefing in 2007 on Von Willebrand's Disease, a blood disorder that is frequently misdiagnosed in women.
- Participates, monitors, and appoints members to the State Advisory Committee on Sexual Assault Victim Services and Prevention Programs in conjunction with the Office of Emergency Services.
- Is a member of the California State Domestic Violence Interagency Collaborative; participated in the development of the 2007 Domestic Violence Awareness Month Toolkit, a resource that included fact sheets, talking points, local and legislative strategies.

- In 2006, convened an Advisory Committee on anti-reproductive rights crimes; released a report on the implementation of California's anti-reproductive rights crime legislation with a set of recommendations. Currently supporting legislation SB1770, which would extend the current law by at least five years.
- Monitors and takes positions on legislation relating to health and reproductive rights, among other areas of focus. Two examples of current legislation supported by the Commission are SB 840, the California Universal Healthcare Act, and SB 1147, which would ensure minors do not lose Medi-Cal (Medicaid) eligibility if they are incarcerated.

Links =

- 2008 Legislative priorities (See sections on "Health," "Long-Term Care and Aging" and "Reproductive Health"): <http://ct2k2.capitoltrack.com/report.asp?rptid=U23146>
- The Implementation of California Laws on Anti-Reproductive Rights Crimes: <http://www.women.ca.gov/UserFiles/1009.TheImplementationofCALawsonARRCs.pdf>
- Domestic Violence Awareness Month Toolkit – 2007: <http://www.women.ca.gov/doc.asp?id=924>

**State = COLORADO**

Commission/Council = N/A

Other = Women's Health Unit, Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment

Contact = Candace Grosz, LCSW, Director

Contact Info = [Candace.grosz@state.co.us](mailto:Candace.grosz@state.co.us); (303) 692-2482

Website = <http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/pp/womens/index.html>

Established = N/A

Women's Health Work =

- Administers four programs:
  - Family planning – provides family planning services in 57 sites throughout Colorado, serving over 50,000 women and men annually
  - Nurse Home Visitor Program (NHVP)— provides grants to public or private organizations in Colorado to provide health education and counseling services by specially trained nurse home visitors to first-time, low-income women beginning in pregnancy and up to the child's second birthday
  - Prenatal Program – A program intended to improve the reproductive health status of pregnant women by promoting healthy behavior and risk reduction during pregnancy
  - Prenatal Plus – A program intended to improve birth outcomes by reducing the prevalence of low birth weight infants among Medicaid-eligible women in Colorado

**State = CONNECTICUT**

Commission/Council = Connecticut Women's Health Campaign, Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW)

Contact = Lisa P. Sementilli, Research and Public Policy Director for PCSW and the Co-Chair of the Connecticut Women's Health Campaign

Contact Info = [lisa.sementilli@cga.ct.gov](mailto:lisa.sementilli@cga.ct.gov); (860) 240-8447

Website =

- Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW):  
[http://www.cga.ct.gov/pcsw/Commission%20Action/commission\\_action.asp](http://www.cga.ct.gov/pcsw/Commission%20Action/commission_action.asp)
- Connecticut Women's Health Campaign, a project of PCSW:  
[http://www.cga.ct.gov/pcsw/cwhc/pages/cwhc\\_main.asp](http://www.cga.ct.gov/pcsw/cwhc/pages/cwhc_main.asp)

Established = 1973, by statute

Women's Health Work =

- Hold periodic networking meetings on women's health, including most recent event in April 2008 on "Unnatural Causes: In Sickness and in Wealth." A community conversation was held on gender, racial, ethnic and income disparities and health.
- Release electronic newsletters with the latest policy developments, resources and events on women's health in Connecticut.
- Released reports on issues including: "Universal Health Care: What it Means for Women" and "The Real Cost of Living and Getting Health Care in Connecticut: the Health Economic Efficiency Standard (HESS)."
- 2008 Priority Areas:
  - *Legislative:*
    - Instituting a statewide system of Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners
    - Promoting comprehensive sexuality education through incentive grants
    - Implementing the Connecticut Home Care Program for the Disabled
  - *Administrative:*
    - Implementing the Medicaid 1115 Family Planning Waiver
    - Expanding Medicaid coverage of smoking cessation treatment
  - *Watch List:*
    - Universal health care reform efforts, including:
      - Charter Oak Health Plan, a state reform product that would offer some coverage for uninsured adults
      - HealthFirst Authority (asked to be an ex-officio member), which evaluates alternatives for expanding health coverage and recommends ways to lower health care costs, improve health care quality, and finance quality, affordable health coverage
      - Primary Care Authority (asked to be an ex-officio member), which determines what constitutes primary care services, inventories the state's existing primary care infrastructure, and is charged with developing a universal primary care system for state residents and a plan for its implementation
      - Ensuring the inclusion of gender-appropriate, trauma informed care to address the whole of women's health and wellness, including inpatient and outpatient behavioral health services, in all health care reform proposals
- Accomplishments:
  - Secured state funding for breast and cervical cancer screening for low-income uninsured or under-insured women.
  - Expanded access to gynecological services for women with disabilities.

- Expanded family planning services to low-income women through a Medicaid waiver (though legislated, the waiver has not been implemented).
- Helped pass legislation mandating insurance coverage of hospital stays for childbirth (at least 48-hours) and certain breast cancer surgeries.
- Helped pass legislation mandating pharmacies to fill prescriptions for contraceptives.

Links =

- Universal Health Care: What it Means for Women:  
[http://www.cga.ct.gov/pcsw/cwhc/pages/cwhc\\_publications.asp](http://www.cga.ct.gov/pcsw/cwhc/pages/cwhc_publications.asp)
- Guide to Women's Health Rights in Connecticut:  
[http://www.cga.ct.gov/pcsw/Written%20Materials/Pages/pcsw\\_publications.asp#](http://www.cga.ct.gov/pcsw/Written%20Materials/Pages/pcsw_publications.asp#)
- The Real Cost of Living and Getting Health Care in Connecticut: the Health Economic Efficiency Standard (HESS) Full Report:  
[http://www.cga.ct.gov/pcsw/Written%20Materials/Pages/pcsw\\_publications.asp#](http://www.cga.ct.gov/pcsw/Written%20Materials/Pages/pcsw_publications.asp#)

**State = DELAWARE**

Commission/Council = Women's Health Committee, Delaware Commission for Women (DCW)

Contact = Romona Fullman, Executive Director; Theresa DelTufo, Chair, Women's Health Committee

Contact Info = [romona.fullman@state.de.us](mailto:romona.fullman@state.de.us); [Theresa.deltufo@state.de.us](mailto:Theresa.deltufo@state.de.us); (302) 761-8005

Website =

- DCW: <http://commissionforwomen.delaware.gov/default.shtml>
- Women's Health Committee, DCW:  
<http://commissionforwomen.delaware.gov/information/womenshealth.shtml>

Established = Unclear

Women's Health Work =

- Responsible for advising the Governor and the General Assembly on women's issues, including health.
- Works closely with the Office of Women's Health.
- Works with the American Heart Association to support and promote "Go Red for Women's Heart Health" Day.
- Works closely with the Office of Minority Health to target and eliminate race- and gender-based health disparities.
- Has engaged in education and awareness work around HIV/AIDS for several years; plans to cosponsor the local celebration of the second national Women and AIDS Awareness Day.

**State = DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Commission/Council = District of Columbia Commission for Women

Contact = Niambi Jarvis, JD, Director, Office on Women's Policy and Initiatives, Executive Office of the Mayor

Contact Info = [women@dc.gov](mailto:women@dc.gov); (202) 724-1516

Website = <http://owpi.dc.gov/owpi/cwp/view,a,3,q,573079,owpiNav,%7C33266%7C.asp>

Established = 1967, by statute; adopted by the City Council in 1978

Women's Health Work =

- Partners closely with community-based organizations throughout Washington, D.C.; is involved in numerous collaborative efforts, including:
  - Distributed Breast Care Diaries last year to city residents, supported the Capital Breast Care Center Break, and partnered with the Avon Foundation to support the 2008 Breast Cancer Walk in DC.
  - Co-sponsored an HPV Vaccine Forum and disseminated fact sheets on the vaccine and cervical cancer with the Washington Area Women's Foundation and the DC Women's Agenda.
- Works with DC's Office of Women's Policy Initiatives to keep the District of Columbia government informed on current women's health issues affecting city residents.
- Organizes a "Love my Body" program, through which the commission performs education and awareness about eating disorders among minority communities.
- Partners with the Department of Health and local advocacy groups to increase HIV/AIDS awareness amongst District residents. Strategic partners include the Women's Collective and BET's Rap-it-Up campaign. Outreach includes co-sponsoring forums and distribution of literature.
- Sponsored two domestic violence forums in 2007.

## **State = FLORIDA**

Commission/Council = Florida's Commission on the Status of Women (FCSW)

Contact =

- Kelly Sciba, Executive Director (FCSW)
- Corine Mealing, M.P.H., M.Ed, Women's Health Coordinator (Interagency Committee on Women's Health)

Contact Info =

- [Kelly.Sciba@myfloridalegal.com](mailto:Kelly.Sciba@myfloridalegal.com); (850) 414-3531
- [Corine.Mealing@doh.state.fl.us](mailto:Corine.Mealing@doh.state.fl.us); (850) 245-4444 ext 2305

Website = <http://www.fcsw.net/>

Established = 1991, by statute

Women's Health Work =

- The Commission's mandate is to study and make recommendations to the Governor, Cabinet and Legislature on issues affecting women, including health issues. These recommendations are presented in the form of an annual report that is distributed in the first quarter of each year.
- Produce reports on a variety of topics, including women's health issues:
  - 2006 Annual Report - *Life Issues of Florida Women: Mid-Life and Beyond*; addresses issues of osteoporosis, mental health, and HIV/AIDS.
  - 2002 Report - *A Passion...To Play! 30 Years of Women's Athletics in Florida*; addresses issues of health, exercise and obesity.
  - 2001 Annual Report – *Prevention by Intervention: Girls in Florida's Juvenile Justice System*; addresses abuse and teen pregnancy.
  - 1996 Report – *Women and Health: A Status Report*.

- At the close of every legislative session, produce *The Summary of Florida Laws Affecting Women and Families*, which includes sections on "Health and Safety" and "Criminal Justice" (containing laws relating to domestic battery and sexual offenses).
- Active member of the Interagency Committee on Women's Health, a section of the Florida Department of Health created by the Florida Legislature in 2004. The Interagency Committee aims to integrate women's health programs into current operating and service delivery structures, and to set priorities for women's health. (For more information, see: <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/family/wh/committee.html>).

Links = The aforementioned publications are available at: [www.fcsw.net/publications.htm](http://www.fcsw.net/publications.htm)

## **State = GEORGIA**

Commission/Council = Georgia Commission on Women (GCW)

Contact = No Response

Contact Info = (404) 657-9260

Website = <http://www.gacommissiononwomen.org/>

Established = 1992, by statute

Women's Health Work =

*As per website...*

- The Commission has six main areas of focus, one of which is Women's Health. The Committee on Health primarily works to expand access to health services.
- The Committee on Violence works on issues relating to domestic violence and sexual assault.
- Currently advocating for the legislative passage of the Student Health and Fitness Act.

## **State = HAWAII**

Commission/Council = Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women (HSCSW)

Contact = Sharon Ferguson-Quick, Executive Director

Contact Info = [sharon.y.ferguson-quick@hawaii.gov](mailto:sharon.y.ferguson-quick@hawaii.gov); (808) 586-5757

Website = <http://hawaii.gov/hscsw/index.html>

Established = by statute

Women's Health Work =

- For 14 years, the Commission has organized events around Women's Health Month in September to encourage organizations that specifically focus on women's health to increase their education and awareness campaigns.
- Supports the Women's Health division of the Hawaii Department of Health in their initiatives, such as the National Women's Check-Up Week in May, working together to educate the community about important testing
- Utilizes and advertises reports issued by the Women's Health division of the DOH.

## **State = IDAHO**

Commission/Council = Idaho Women's Commission (IWC)

Contact = Kitty Kunz, Director

Contact Info = [kitty.kunz@women.idaho.gov](mailto:kitty.kunz@women.idaho.gov); (208) 562-0619

Website = <http://www.women.idaho.gov/index.html>

Established = 1965; part of the Office of the Governor

Women's Health Work =

- Due to limited resources, the Commission is unable to perform independent research on women's health. It relies instead on the publications produced by the Gender Studies Program at Boise State University, which is currently working on a report on violence against women with disabilities in Idaho.

Links =

Gender Studies Program, Boise State University: <http://genderstudies.boisestate.edu/>

## **State = ILLINOIS**

Commission/Council = N/A

Other = Governor's Office of Women's Affairs

Contact = Sheryl Redman, Director

Contact Info = [Sheryl.redman@illinois.gov](mailto:Sheryl.redman@illinois.gov); (312) 814-2121

Website = <http://health.illinois.gov/woman.html>

Established = March 2004, by executive order

Women's Health Work =

- Promotes education and awareness around breast and cervical cancer screenings.
- Promotes access to screenings and treatment for breast and cervical cancer.
- Launched Pink Potluck events in an effort to spread the word about the importance of breast and cervical cancer screenings.
- Created Breast and Cervical Cancer Work Group with a coalition of over 30 community organizations to increase screenings.
- Pursuing legislation to ensure affordable access to comprehensive healthcare for all women.
- Works with community leaders to inform them of two programs administered by the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services: Illinois Healthy Women (IHW) program, which helps low-income women access family planning (birth control) and related reproductive healthcare services, and FamilyCare, which offers healthcare coverage to parents living with their children 18 years old or younger.
- Created the Domestic Violence Help Line in October 2007 to link victims to domestic violence services.
- Participate in the Closing the Gap Initiative, a partnership between state agencies and community lead agencies to reduce racial maternal and child health disparities.

Links =

- Illinois Breast and Cervical Cancer Program:  
<http://www.cancerscreening.illinois.gov/aboutibccp.cfm>
- Illinois Healthy Women:  
<http://www.illinoishealthywomen.com/>
- Family Care:  
<http://www.familycareillinois.com/>



## **State = INDIANA**

Commission/Council = Indiana Commission for Women (ICW)

Contact = Chelsea Stauch, Project Coordinator

Contact Info = [icw@dwd.in.gov](mailto:icw@dwd.in.gov); 317-233-6303

Website = <http://www.in.gov/icw/>

Established = 1992, by executive order; 1996, by statute

Women's Health Work =

- Advocated for legislation creating a permanent Office of Women's Health (OWH) in the Indiana Department of Health. The Executive Director of the Indiana Commission for Women sits on the Advisory Board for that Office.
- The Commission supports, but does not duplicate, the work of the OWH. The OWH is involved in the following initiatives:
  - Working closely with First Lady Cheri Daniels to promote her women's heart health campaign.
  - Promoting Dr. Judy Monroe's INFLuence (Indiana Female Leaders Unite) initiative, a program which encourages women of power and influence to carry critical women's health messages far and wide, and make these issues relevant and visible at work, at school, at home, in policy, in the media, in faith communities, and among health care professionals.
  - Managing a pilot patient navigation project for underserved females with diabetes in three different counties.
  - Managing a Rape Prevention and Education grant from the Center for Disease Prevention and Control.

Links =

- Office of Women's Health 2006-2007 Annual Report:  
[http://www.state.in.us/isdh/programs/owh/pdfs/2006-2007OWH\\_AnnualReport.pdf](http://www.state.in.us/isdh/programs/owh/pdfs/2006-2007OWH_AnnualReport.pdf)
- Indiana Female Leaders Unite (INFLuence) Initiative:  
<http://www.in.gov/isdh/programs/owh/INFLuence.htm>
- Heart Health Campaign:  
[www.hearttoheart.in.gov](http://www.hearttoheart.in.gov)

## **State = IOWA**

Commission/Council = Iowa Commission on the Status of Women (ICSW)

Contact = Rachel Scott, Division Administrator

Contact Info = [rachel.scott@iowa.gov](mailto:rachel.scott@iowa.gov); (515) 281-4461

Website = <http://www.state.ia.us/dhr/sw/>

Established = 1972, by statute

Women's Health Work =

- Published 2006 Report on the Status of Iowa Women: Women and Health.
- Member of FutureNet, Iowa's statewide network of individuals and organizations collaborating on issues relating to adolescent pregnancy prevention, parenting, and sexual



health, which recently convinced Iowa governor Chet Culver to reject federal funding for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs.

- In 2008, successfully advocated for legislation to increase funding for women's health issues, including:
  - HF2145, which requires insurers to cover HPV vaccinations
  - SF 2177, which provides for health-related activities and regulation by the Department of Public Health, including treatment and prevention of STDs available to minors
  - SF2400, which provides increased funding to the Commission for work on issues relating to violence against women
  - Increased funding for the Department of Public Health to provide contraceptive services for women below 250 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL)

Links =

- 2006 Report on the Status of Iowa Women - Women and Health:  
[http://www.state.ia.us/government/dhr/sw/publications/files/2006\\_SR\\_4.pdf](http://www.state.ia.us/government/dhr/sw/publications/files/2006_SR_4.pdf)

## **State = KANSAS**

Commission/Council = N/A

Other = Women's Health Coordinator

Contact = Marti Macchi, M.Ed., Director of Special Studies and Women's Health Coordinator

Contact Info = [mmacchi@kdhe.state.ks.us](mailto:mmacchi@kdhe.state.ks.us); 785-291-3743

Website = <http://www.kdheks.gov/>

Established = N/A

Women's Health Work =

- The State sponsors the Early Detection Works program, a Breast and Cervical Cancer early detection screening program that emphasizes the importance of breast self exams, mammograms and clinical breast exams.
- There is a special focus on women within the Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program; the program works with communities every year to organize events and presentations for the "Go Red for Women's Heart Health" campaign.
- Released 2006 legislative issue brief to educate policy-makers about Kansan women's relationships with a range of diseases and conditions, including diabetes, arthritis, HIV/AIDS, and cardiovascular disease.
- Coordinates the Chronic Disease Self Management Program; a six-week course for individuals with chronic diseases and/or their relatives to develop the skills integral to managing a chronic disease within one's day-to-day life.
- Coordinates monthly technical assistance conference call with grantees in the Chronic Disease Risk Reduction Grantees Program, focusing each month on the risk factors and needs of a specific population; calls have focused on women's issues on numerous occasions.

## **State = KENTUCKY**

Commission/Council = Kentucky Commission on Women (KCW)

Contact = Crystal Martzall, Project Manager

Contact Info = kcw@ky.gov; (502) 564-2611

Website = <http://www.women.ky.gov>

Established = 1964, by executive order; 1970, by statute

Women's Health Work =

- Cosponsoring a Cervical Cancer Awareness Week with the Lt. Governor.
- The Executive Director serves on the Breast Cancer Advisory Board and the Domestic Violence Advisory Board for the Kentucky Department of Health.
- The Project Manager serves on the Osteoporosis Advisory Council for the Kentucky Department of Health.
- Health and well-being will remain the #1 focus of the Commission during the tenure of the current Executive Director.

## **State = LOUISIANA**

Commission/Council = Louisiana Women's Policy and Research Commission (LWPRC)

Contact = Shanta Harrison Proctor, Ph.D., Secretary for the Louisiana Women's Policy and Research Commission; Executive Director, Governor's Office on Women's Policy

Contact Info = [Shanta.proctor@la.gov](mailto:Shanta.proctor@la.gov); (225) 219-9720

Website = [www.la-womenspolicy.com](http://www.la-womenspolicy.com)

Established = 2003, by statute

Women's Health Work =

- One Commission member is appointed by the State Department of Health and Hospitals to advise the Commission on issues pertaining to health and safety for women; the Commission, in turn, advises the governor.
- Recently held state-wide conference of which women's health was one area of focus. Conference developed work product outlining areas of research and further development, and advocating for the allocation of state funds to areas pertaining to women's health policy and research.
- The Commission utilizes an electronic mailing distribution for which women's health material has been and can be distributed to constituents statewide.
- Through the Louisiana Legislative Women's Caucus, partnership with the "Go Red for Women's Heart Health" campaign.
- Ongoing research and development of Louisiana Women's Health Initiative.
- The Governor's Office on Women's Policy (OWP), which houses the LA Women's Policy and Research Commission, is legislatively mandated to: "collect facts and statistics and make special studies of conditions" pertaining to the health and safety of women, and which otherwise affect the welfare of women. OWP is strategically engaged in the collection of this data and keeping abreast of the latest developments concerning women in Louisiana—including their health concerns, needs and hardships—and throughout the nation for public information and to advise state agencies.
- OWP, through contract, provides a toll free, 24-hour telephone hotline that directs women to family violence programs near their location anywhere in Louisiana; OWP also spearheaded a quality assurance process for monitoring domestic violence programs.
- Recent legislative accomplishments include successfully advocating for an Act, passed in the 2007 Regular session of the Louisiana Legislature, which provides unemployment

compensation for survivors of domestic violence unable to continue employment as a result of abuse.

## **State = MAINE**

Commission/Council = N/A

Other = Women's Health Coordinator, Department of Health and Human Services

Contact = Valerie Richer, Director of Family Health Division, Interim Women's Health Coordinator

Contact Info = [Valerie.J.Ricker@maine.gov](mailto:Valerie.J.Ricker@maine.gov); (207) 287-5396

Women's Health Work =

- To protect against the marginalization or under-funding of women's health issues, chose to have a women's health coordinator who helps facilitate the integration of women's health issues into a multitude of public health programs in lieu of a women's health commission.
- Received three-year Women's Comprehensive Care Grant in July, 2001 through the United States Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau (US HRSA/MCHB) for the development of an integrated, comprehensive model of women's health care in the state. Through this grant, hired the first dedicated women's health coordinator.
- Work with programs such as cardiovascular health and physical nutrition health to help them examine data by gender and suggesting gender-based interventions.
- Through the cardiovascular health program, participate in the "Go Red for Women's Heart Health" campaign.
- Work with the Chronic Disease Director to integrate women's health throughout the division.
- Received additional funding in 2004 from the United States Maternal and Child Health Bureau for work on depression and substance abuse among women of reproductive age. Focused on developing demonstration sites in four federally-qualified health centers, in which depression and substance abuse assessments were integrated into primary care.
- Collaborate with the breast and cervical cancer coalition to perform outreach relating to breast and cervical cancer screening programs.

## **State = MARYLAND**

Commission/Council = Maryland Commission for Women (MCW)

Contact = Dory Stacks, Executive Director

Contact Info = [dstacks@dhr.state.md.us](mailto:dstacks@dhr.state.md.us); (410) 260-6047

Website = [www.marylandwomen.org](http://www.marylandwomen.org)

Established = 1971, by statute

Women's Health Work =

- Perform education and awareness around osteoporosis;
- Promote legislative agenda aimed at:
  - Increasing funding for osteoporosis outreach, screenings and research;
  - Increasing funding for research around post-partum depression.

Links = The Human and Economic Costs of Osteoporosis in Maryland:  
<http://www.marylandwomen.org/pdf/osteofact.pdf>

## **State = MASSACHUSETTS**

Commission/Council = Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women (MCSW)

Contact = Linda Brantley, Executive Director

Contact Info = [linda.brantley@state.ma.us](mailto:linda.brantley@state.ma.us); (617) 626-6520

Website = <http://www.mass.gov/women/>

Established = 1988, by statute

Women's Health Work =

- Released two reports that include information on the health of women and girls: "Real Cuts, Real People, Real Pain: The Effects of the Fiscal Crisis on Women & Girls in Massachusetts" and "State of Women: A County by County Report on Women & Girls in Massachusetts."

Links =

- Real Cuts, Real People, Real Pain: The Effects of the Fiscal Crisis on Women & Girls in Massachusetts: <http://www.mass.gov/women/pubs/FinalBudgetReport.pdf>
- State of Women: A County-by-County Report on Women & Girls in Massachusetts: <http://www.mass.gov/women/pubs/StateofWomenFinalReport.pdf>

## **State = MICHIGAN**

Commission/Council = Michigan Women's Commission (MWC)

Contact = Judy Karandjeff, Executive Director

Contact Info = [Mdcr-womenscomm@michigan.com](mailto:Mdcr-womenscomm@michigan.com); (517) 241-2396

Website = <http://michigan.gov/mdcr/0,1607,7-138-4957---,00.html>

Established = 1968, by statute

Women's Health Work =

- Perform education and awareness around osteoporosis, including newsletter articles and lectures by Commission members.
- Perform education and awareness around unintended pregnancies and infant mortality.
- Takes positions on relevant legislation.
- Executive Director also serves on the Family Planning Advisory Commission through the Department of Community Health, thus fostering communication and collaboration between the two commissions.

## **State = MINNESOTA**

Commission/Council = Office on the Economic Status of Women (OESW)

Contact = Amy Brenengen, Director

Contact Info = [amy.brenengen@oesw.leg.mn](mailto:amy.brenengen@oesw.leg.mn); (651) 296-0711

Website = <http://www.oesw.leg.mn/>

Established = 1976, by statute; subsequently renamed.

Women's Health Work =

- Released fact sheet on Women and Health Insurance in 2007.

- Currently tracking legislation relating to Health Care and Long Term Care.
- Have provided information on the HPV vaccine and cervical cancer to interested legislators.

Links = Fact sheet on Women and Health Insurance:

[http://www.commissions.leg.state.mn.us/oesw/fs/Health\\_Insur.pdf](http://www.commissions.leg.state.mn.us/oesw/fs/Health_Insur.pdf)

## **State = MISSISSIPPI**

Commission/Council = Mississippi Commission on the Status of Women (MCSW)

Contact = No Response

Contact Info = 601-829-3864

Website = <http://www.geocities.com/mississippiwomen2002/>, (last updated June 2002)

Established = 2001, by statute

Women's Health Work = Unclear

## **State = MISSOURI**

Commission/Council = Missouri Women's Council (MWC)

Contact = Mary Cottom, Executive Director

Contact Info = [mary.cottom@ded.mo.gov](mailto:mary.cottom@ded.mo.gov); (573) 751-0810

Website = <http://www.womenscouncil.org/>

Established = 1985, by statute; subsequently renamed

Women's Health Work =

- Supports the efforts of First Lady Melanie Blunt to promote breast cancer awareness, including the Missouri Breast Cancer Awareness license plate.
- Helps pay for mammograms and breast cancer services for women ages 40-49.
- Drafted legislation for an income tax "check-off" for people to donate to breast cancer awareness, which will go into effect in August 2008.
- Endorses a rape victim support program developed by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services called "Step Forward Take A Stand Against Rape 'Denim Day.'"
- Organized State Health Fairs in 2005 and 2006, with up to 2,500 people in attendance.
- Executive Director also serves on the Women's Health Board and the Breast Cancer Program Advisory Board of the Missouri Department of Health.

Links = DHSS' "Denim Day": <http://www.dhss.mo.gov/WomensHealth/DenimDay/>

## **State = MONTANA**

Commission/Council = N/A

Other = Women's and Men's Health Section, Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services

Contact = Colleen Lindsay, Supervisor, Women's and Men's Health Section

Contact Info = [clindsay@mt.gov](mailto:clindsay@mt.gov); (406) 444-3775

Website = <http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/PHSD/Women-Health/famplan-staff.shtml>

Established = N/A

Women's Health Work =

- Administers the Title X Family Planning Program.
- Participates in periodic conference calls with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Region VIII Office on Women's Health in Denver, Colorado.

## **State = NEBRASKA**

Commission/Council = Nebraska Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW)

Contact = No Response

Contact Info = (402) 326-2449

Website = <http://www.women.ne.gov>

Established = 1964, by executive order; 1971, by statute

Women's Health Work = Unclear

## **State = NEVADA**

Commission/Council = N/A

Other = Women's Health Coordinator, Bureau of Family Health Services, Nevada State Health Division

Contact = Joanne Malay, R.N., B.S., M.P.H

Contact Info = [jmalay@health.nv.gov](mailto:jmalay@health.nv.gov); (775) 684-4250

Women's Health Work =

- Women's Health Coordinator facilitates the Nevada Women's Health Collaborative, a diverse group of women's advocates representing local and community governments, non-profits such as the American Lung Association and the American Heart Association, and community advocates. Current initiatives include:
  - Working to expand access to prenatal care, especially in Southern Nevada
  - Performing outreach and education around health insurance eligibility and applications
  - Organizing nurses to travel to communities to provide screenings and immunizations
- Partners with the Bureau of Community Health's Women's Health Connection project to provide breast and cervical screenings to underserved women ages 40-60 and to increase access to health care among this demographic through education and outreach.

## **State = NEW HAMPSHIRE**

Commission/Council = New Hampshire Commission on the Status of Women (NHCSW)

Contact = Sylvia Gale, Executive Director

Contact Info = [Sylvia.e.gale@nh.gov](mailto:Sylvia.e.gale@nh.gov); (603) 271-2660

Website = <http://www.nh.gov/csw/>

Established = 1969, by statute

Women's Health Work =

- Developing a Legislative Agenda that will include efforts to ensure access to comprehensive health services for women, including reproductive health services.
- Engaged in dialogue about how to become involved in reproductive justice issues pending in the Legislature.

- Participates in numerous statewide task forces and Legislative study committees, including: NH CARES, a network of human services advocates who "watchdog" the state budget in terms of its adequacy to meet the essential needs of low-income citizens; the Legislative Task Force on Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF); the Governor's Commission on Domestic and Sexual Violence and Stalking; and the NH Task Force on Women and Recovery.
- Very involved with initiatives to improve and expand services and conditions for women in the New Hampshire Criminal Justice system, with some focus on substance abuse and clinical mental health services; recently joined a newly-created task force to address the increasing numbers of individuals with mental illnesses who become incarcerated or otherwise involved in the Criminal Justice system, but who may be more appropriately diverted into treatment.
- Revising Legal Handbook for Women in New Hampshire (4<sup>th</sup> Edition), which provides information on state and federal laws relating to, among other issues, domestic violence and sexual assault.
- Released two fact sheets on the Family and Medical Leave Act in New Hampshire.

Links =

"New Hampshire and the FMLA" Fact Sheet:

[http://www.nh.gov/csw/resources/publications/fact\\_nh.html](http://www.nh.gov/csw/resources/publications/fact_nh.html)

## **State = NEW JERSEY**

Commission/Council = New Jersey Advisory Commission on the Status of Women, State of New Jersey Division on Women

Contact = Janice Kovach, Director

Contact Info = [Janice.kovach@dca.state.nj.us](mailto:Janice.kovach@dca.state.nj.us); 609-292-8840

Website = <http://nj.gov/dca/dow/commissions.shtml>

Established = 1974, by statute

Women's Health Work =

- The New Jersey Advisory Commission on the Status of Women is a part of the State of New Jersey's Division on Women.
- Responds to public inquiries about women's issues, including health, and refer to local organizations across the state.
- Hosts annual conference on women with sessions on women's health issues. There were 1500 women in attendance at the March 2008 conference, which featured sessions on cancer, genetics and age-related conditions, and a "health fair" where providers performed screenings and gave information on conditions including sickle cell disease, heart disease, and osteoporosis.
- Tracks all legislation relating to women, including women's health issues, and testify before or submit comments to the governor, legislators and relevant legislative committees. Have previously responded to legislation on the prevention of violence against women, the HPV vaccine, and HIV testing of pregnant women.
- Has recently provided reports and testimony to influence legislation on mental health parity, women and substance abuse, and paid family and medical leave.
- Commission members are composed of women's advocates from across the state, which carry the work of the Division of Women back with them to their local commissions and organizations.



- Has written reports on issues including domestic violence and substance abuse and its effect on women; also published a resource guide with information on a wide range of services for women.
- The Division on Women has seats on the following: Advisory Council on Adolescent Pregnancy, Child Care Advisory Council, Domestic Violence Fatality and Near Fatality Review Board, Gender Parity in Labor & Education, Governor's Advisory Council Against Sexual Violence, Interagency Council on Osteoporosis, New Jersey Advisory Council on Domestic Violence, New Jersey Cancer Education & Early Detection Program, New Jersey Cancer Education & Early Detection Program, New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect, Attorney General's Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner, Coordination Council, Violence Against Women (VAWA) Advisory Board.

Links =

- NJ Women Count - Substance Abuse and its Effects on Women:  
<http://www.nj.gov/dca/dow/docs/njwsubstanceabusefinal.pdf>
- Responding to the Victims: The NJ Domestic Violence Fatality and Near Fatality Review Recommendations Report:  
<http://www.nj.gov/dca/dow/publications/finaldvfrb3rdrecommendationsreport.pdf>
- New Jersey Resource Guide for Women:  
<http://www.nj.gov/dca/dow/publications/njresguidewomen.pdf>

**State = NEW MEXICO, 1**

Commission/Council = Governor's Women's Health Advisory Council

Contact = Giovanna Rossi, MSc, Executive Director

Contact Info = [Giovanna.Rossi@state.nm.us](mailto:Giovanna.Rossi@state.nm.us); (505) 222-6608

Website = <http://www.womenscommission.state.nm.us/womenshealth.htm>;  
<http://www.health.state.nm.us/OPMH/OPMHW.htm>

Established = 2006, by executive order

Women's Health Work =

- Currently updating New Mexico's Women's Health Profile and The Data Book on Women's Health Indicators in New Mexico (including status indicators of women's health in New Mexico, policy recommendations, and recommendations for improved data collection).
- Hosted Second Annual Policy Forum on Women's Health; 200 participants included Lieutenant Governor Diane Denish and First Lady Barbara Richardson.
- Has produced fact sheets on health coverage through a woman's lens, and have been lobbying for bills that would expand health coverage in New Mexico.
- Produced a position paper opposing a bill that would have mandated the HPV vaccine for certain populations.
- Created the first-ever women's health policy class at the University of New Mexico.
- Executive Director is the New Mexico State Liaison to the Office of Women's Health, DHHS; member of the National Women's Health Leadership Network at the Center for American Progress; member of the National Women's Health Agenda Taskforce; and Adjunct Faculty Member at the University of New Mexico.

Links =

- Governor's Women's Health Advisory Report, December 2006:  
<http://www.health.state.nm.us/OPMH/WHACReport.pdf>



- First Annual Policy Forum on Women's Health Report:  
<http://www.health.state.nm.us/OPMH/PolicyForum.pdf>
- Position Paper on the HPV Vaccine:  
<http://www.womenscommission.state.nm.us/Publications/HPV%20Statement%20Paper.GWHAC.pdf>

## **State = NEW MEXICO, 2**

Commission/Council = New Mexico Commission on the Status of Women (NMCSW)

Contact = Mary Molina Mescall, Executive Director

Contact Info = [mary.mescall@state.nm.us](mailto:mary.mescall@state.nm.us); (505) 222-6600

Website = <http://www.womenscommission.state.nm.us/>

Established = 1974, by statute

Women's Health Work =

- In 2005, the Commission was tasked by the State Legislature to study the need for an Office on Women's Health (OWH). The Commission planned a Women's Health Forum with over 200 attendees, including professors of medicine and community advocates from across the state. Based on the Forum's consensus, the Commission developed a report for the legislature on the need for an OWH and ultimately helped the governor put together an Executive Order establishing the Governor's Women's Health Advisory Council.
- The Governor's Women's Health Advisory Council, though a separate entity with separate funding (established by executive order and funded by the New Mexico legislature), is currently located in the Commission's office, thus facilitating collaboration and partnership between the two. The Executive Director of the Commission also serves on the Governor's Women's Health Advisory Council.
- Worked with the Advisory Council to host the Second Annual Women's Health Policy Forum.
- Established a "Girls Institute" at the Commission and developed and disseminated a statewide survey for girls ages 15-18 ("Dreams and Sorrows: Young Women in New Mexico." The survey demonstrated that health issues—including depression, body issues and domestic violence—rank high on girls' lists of problem areas on which they would like the Commission to focus.
- Currently publishing a Girls' Health Awareness Calendar and planning a Girls' Health Conference with support from the Advisory Council, using community health clinics across the state as a base for outreach.
- Wrote the first annual Report on the Status of Women in New Mexico, including information on the health status of women in NM.
- Supports the work of the YWCA, women's shelters, rape crisis centers and a variety of other advocacy and service-providing organizations relating to women's health.

Links =

- Dreams and Sorrows: Young Women in New Mexico:  
<http://www.womenscommission.state.nm.us/Publications/Dreams%20and%20Sorrows.Young%20Women%20in%20NM.pdf>
- Report on the Status of Women in New Mexico:  
<http://www.womenscommission.state.nm.us/publications.htm>

## **State = NEW YORK**

Commission/Council = N/A

Other = Bureau of Women's Health, New York State Department of Health

Contact = Margaret Mollnow, Women's Health Coordinator

Contact Info = [mas19@health.state.ny.us](mailto:mas19@health.state.ny.us); (518) 474-3368

Website = <http://www.health.state.ny.us>

Established = N/A

Women's Health Work =

- Organized a Women's Health Exposition in celebration of Women's Health Week
- Publishes and distributes osteoporosis-awareness brochures called "Strong Bones for Life," using a grant from the New York State Osteoporosis Prevention Education Program (NYSOPEP); hung up an Osteoporosis Quilt in the Concourse.
- Other women's health initiatives include: the New York State Infertility Demonstration program, Family Planning program, Prenatal Care program and Rape Crisis program.

Links =

- Women's Health Programs in New York State (2004):  
[http://www.health.state.ny.us/community/adults/women/womens\\_health\\_directory/docs/womens\\_health\\_directory.pdf](http://www.health.state.ny.us/community/adults/women/womens_health_directory/docs/womens_health_directory.pdf)
- NYSDOH Osteoporosis program:  
<http://www.health.state.ny.us/diseases/conditions/osteoporosis/>

## **State = NORTH CAROLINA**

Commission/Council = North Carolina Council for Women and Domestic Violence Commission

Contact = Tara Minter, Research Assistant

Contact Info = [tara.minter@ncmail.net](mailto:tara.minter@ncmail.net); (919) 733-6594

Website = <http://www.doa.state.nc.us/cfw/cfw.htm>

Established = The North Carolina Council for Women was established in 1963, by executive order. The Domestic Violence Commission was created and funded in 1999 by executive order. The agencies consolidated in 2001.

Women's Health Work =

- Organizes regional directors throughout state who provide technical assistance to domestic violence shelters.
- Partners with the Coalition Against Domestic Violence in North Carolina and the North Carolina Coalition Against Sexual Assault to create a state-wide database on domestic violence shelters and the clients they serve.

## **State = NORTH DAKOTA**

Commission/Council = N/A

Other = Women's Health Coordinator, North Dakota Department of Health

Contact = Charlene Rohrich-Reiswig, BSN, Women's Health Coordinator and Nurse Consultant, Family Planning Program, North Dakota Department of Health

Contact Info = [creiswig@nd.gov](mailto:creiswig@nd.gov); (701) 328-4535

Women's Health Work =

- Participating in the planning of a Women's Health Summit in Bismarck.
- The women's health coordinator attends many of the women's health-related events in the state, such as the most recent "Go Red for Women's Heart Health" event and Women's Health Summit.
- During National Women's Health Week, facilitates and collaborates on press releases and proclamations on issues of women's health.
- Works closely with the state's breast and cervical cancer program (Women's Way) and the STD and HIV programs. During the 2007 legislative session, \$50,000 was appropriated to develop a North Dakota brochure on HPV. These programs worked together to purchase two brochures: "Help Prevent Cervical Cancer - HPV vaccination for your daughter" and "Your Cervical Cancer Defense - The HPV Vaccine." These brochures were purchased through the Channing Bete Company, but were customized with information from the ND Department of Health.
- Collaborates with the ND Women's Health CORE, the National Center of Excellence in Women's Health Region VIII Demonstration Project. The Demonstration Project will focus on the needs of women of all ages, with particular emphasis toward women in rural areas as well as the needs of diverse populations, especially Native American women.
- Participates in the Women's Health Connection annual conference planning committee. This year's conference theme is "Nourish your body and soul."
- Participates on ND Partnership for Tobacco Prevention and Cessation for Women of Reproductive Age committee.
- Collaborate with the North Dakota March of Dimes.
- Participate on the Regional Office of Women's Health monthly conference calls.

Links =

- 2008 Women's Health Week news release and proclamation:  
<http://womenshealth.gov/whw/events/findprocStateDetail.cfm?postalCode=ND&state=North%20Dakota>
- ND Women's Health Services web site: <http://www.ndhealth.gov/womens-health/>

**State = OHIO**

Commission/Council = N/A

Other = Governor's Office for Women's Initiatives and Outreach (GOWIO); Ohio Interagency Council on Women and Girls

Contact = Hollie Hinton, GOWIO Director

Contact Info = [Hollie.hinton@odh.ohio.gov](mailto:Hollie.hinton@odh.ohio.gov); (614) 728-6716

Website = <http://www.governor.ohio.gov/women>

Established = 2007, as a part of Governor Ted Strickland's new administration.

Women's Health Work =

- Facilitated collaboration between a number of state agencies, including the Ohio Departments of Health, Administrative Services and Public Safety and the Employee Assistance Program, to advocate for a policy and training for roughly 60,000 state employees of Cabinet agencies, boards and commissions on workplace domestic violence. Governor Ted Strickland established the policy and training by Executive Order in April 2008.

- GOWIO promotes public policy that advances the status of Ohio's women and girls in the areas of health, economic development, education, and personal safety, and to establish a public dialogue to assess their needs. Works with non-governmental entities and across state agencies via the Ohio Interagency Council on Women and Girls in its efforts to achieve those goals.

Links =

- For more information about women's health work at the Ohio Department of Health, please read the Winter 2007 newsletter "Women's Health Update," Winter 2008: <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/ASSETS/9F072E01A3394B278E3E39AC3706EFFF/whuwin08.pdf>
- Barbara Warner Workplace Domestic Violence Policy: <http://www.governor.ohio.gov/Default.aspx?tabid=928>

## **State = OKLAHOMA**

Commission/Council = Oklahoma Commission on the Status of Women (OKSW)

Contact = No response.

Contact Info = [ocsw@opm.state.ok.gov](mailto:ocsw@opm.state.ok.gov); (405) 522-6897

Website = [http://www.ok.gov/opm/Status\\_of\\_Women/Local%20Publish/](http://www.ok.gov/opm/Status_of_Women/Local%20Publish/)

Established = 1994, by statute

Women's Health Work =

*As per website...*

- Committee on Women's Physical and Mental Health/Eldercare

## **State = OREGON**

Commission/Council = Oregon Commission for Women (OCW)

Contact = Regan Gray, Commission Chair

Contact Info = [OACO.mail@das.state.or.us](mailto:OACO.mail@das.state.or.us); (503) 378-2139

Website = <http://www.oregon.gov/Women/index.shtml>

Established = 1964, by executive order; 1983, by statute

Women's Health Work =

- Has emerged from a budget crisis with secure financial basis. Currently in the process of rebuilding the Commission with an emphasis on issues pertaining to women's health.
- Will be holding a statewide women's conference in 2008 to reach out to the Oregon women's community and determine their needs and priorities, and will then reach out to the legislature.
- Will be updating an Oregon Women and the Law Manual, which has historically included information on laws relating to health and health care.
- Commission Chair also serves in the Oregon Women's Health and Wellness Alliance, which has lobbied around domestic violence prevention and care and for improved access to emergency contraception in the ER for victims of sexual assault, and helped pass the Access to Birth Control Act in 2007.
- Other commission members have been active in advocating for key health policies for women, including mandates that private insurance companies must cover mammograms and pap smears for women above a certain age.

## **State = PENNSYLVANIA**

Commission/Council = Pennsylvania Commission for Women (PCW)

Contact = Leslie Stiles, Executive Director

Contact Info = [lstiles@state.pa.us](mailto:lstiles@state.pa.us); (717) 787-8128

Website = [www.pcw.state.pa.us](http://www.pcw.state.pa.us)

Established = 1974, by executive order

Women's Health Work =

- Supports the Governor's Office of Healthcare Reform with regard to its comprehensive health care reform plan, Prescription for Pennsylvania, including advocating for Senate Bill 1137, which provides affordable health insurance for uninsured Pennsylvanians (details can be found on the GOHR website). PCW is currently helping to educate the women across the State as to its wide and sweeping benefits.
- Implements a cross-state, multi-media marketing campaign to raise the profile of critical women's issues including breast cancer, heart disease, osteoporosis, domestic violence and rape. The tagline for this campaign is "Change it," to inspire women across the state to know that they can be forces of change. *Example: "Every 1 hour and 21 minutes a Pennsylvania woman will die of heart disease. Change it."* Similar marketing campaigns have been initiated to educate women as to the importance of voting.
- Co-hosts the Pennsylvania Governor's Conference for Women with Governor Edward G. Rendell, an annual one-day conference of over 5,000 women. Past breakout session topics included breast cancer, heart disease, cervical cancer, stress management and research advances. Each session is generally attended by up to 400 women.
- Implemented touch-activated, bilingual *Women's Wellness Guide* healthcare kiosks, with the tagline, "Take hold of your health." The kiosks target underserved women without internet access who might not have the time or opportunity to go for wellness checks and health seminars. Kiosks provide healthcare definitions, preventative measures and questions to ask their healthcare providers in an easy-to-understand format, featuring racially diverse voices and graphics. Illnesses/diseases include: heart disease, breast, cervical, ovarian, colon, lung and skin cancer, diabetes, depression, obesity, nutrition/exercise, osteoporosis, asthma, domestic violence, STDs and HIV/AIDS and insurance information. PCW works to place these kiosks across the state in public health facilities, supermarkets, correctional facilities, etc.
- Advocated for the Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Screening Act, the Breast and Cervical Cancer Tax Write-Off, the Breast Feeding Act and many other healthcare-related pieces of legislation. Sizable data base allows PCW to reach a large population of Pennsylvania women to participate in grassroots advocacy.
- Implements trade show exhibits, most specifically at the Pennsylvania Farm Show, where the Commission disseminates educational material on women's health. This year's focus was on osteoporosis and cervical cancer.
- Initiated a multi-media campaign to educate rural women about domestic violence and osteoporosis and possible avenues of assistance.
- Circulates a hard-copy newsletter to upwards of 9,000 women across the state; almost every newsletter contains an educational piece on women's health.
- Operates a hotline and website addressing, among other issues, healthcare concerns. PCW does not offer answers to healthcare questions but serves as a referral service.

- PCW Executive Director served as an honorary chair of the American Heart Association's "Go Red for Women" Luncheon and is an Executive Committee Member in Philadelphia; holds a position on the Cervical Cancer Task Force and helped formulate a report to the Pennsylvania legislature; serves as the Honorary Chair of the Pennsylvania Breast Cancer Coalition; an honorary committee member of the PA Leadership Summit on Depression During and After Pregnancy; and on the Board of the Susan G. Komen for the Cure- Philadelphia Affiliate.

Links =

- Governor's Office of Healthcare Reform, "Prescription for Pennsylvania":  
<http://www.rxforpa.com/>

## **State = RHODE ISLAND**

Commission/Council = State of Rhode Island Commission on Women (RICW)

Contact = Shanna Wells, Director

Contact Info = [swells@ricw.ri.gov](mailto:swells@ricw.ri.gov); (401) 222-6105

Website = <http://www.riw.ri.gov/index.php>

Established = 1970, as a Permanent Advisory Commission on Women in Rhode Island; 1992, as a government agency, by statute

Women's Health Work =

- Works closely with the Office of Women's Health.
- Currently focused on supporting legislation that seeks to increase funding for research on, and treatment of, important health issues and conditions for women. 2007 Legislative Agenda included: Women's Health and Cancer Rights Conforming Amendments of 2007, a federal bill that would require group health plans to provide coverage for reconstructive surgery following mastectomies; Advocating for federal bills, including HR20, in support of post-partum depression research and care, and HR88, in support of eating disorder awareness, prevention and education.
- The Chair of the RICW Health Committee is also an employee at the Office of Health Disparities.

## **State = SOUTH CAROLINA**

Commission/Council = South Carolina Commission on Women (SCCW)

Contact = Melissa McQuillin, Project Administrator

Contact Info = [mmcquillin@gov.sc.gov](mailto:mmcquillin@gov.sc.gov); (803) 734-9404

Website = <http://www.govoepp.state.sc.us/sccw/>

Established = 1971, by statute; in 2004, the Commission and Columbia College joined together in a unique public/private partnership to form the South Carolina Alliance for Women.

Women's Health Work =

- Held the First South Carolina Summit on Women in April 2008, aimed at helping South Carolina women achieve their potential in economic autonomy, political participation, and health and well being. The Summit featured, among other events, wellness screenings.
- Alliance for Women is building an online Resource Center with topics including: Health Care, Teen Pregnancy and Domestic Abuse.

- Alliance for Women's 2007 Legislative Agenda includes advocacy for legislation to ensure insurance coverage for the FDA-approved Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) Vaccine.

Links =

- South Carolina Alliance for Women: <http://www.allianceforwomen.net/>
- Alliance for Women 2007 Legislative Agenda: <http://www.allianceforwomen.net/public/docs/LegislativeAgenda2007.doc>

**State = SOUTH DAKOTA**

Commission/Council = N/A

Other = All Women Count! Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening Program, South Dakota Department of Health

Contact = Patty Lihs, BS, All Women Count! Coordinator

Contact Info = [patty.lihs@state.sd.us](mailto:patty.lihs@state.sd.us); (605) 773-3622

Website = <http://doh.sd.gov/AllWomenCount/default.aspx>

Established = N/A

Women's Health Work =

- Coordinates the All Women Count! Wise Women program.
- One of 15 federally-funded programs that supplement screenings for breast and cervical cancer with heart disease and diabetes screenings.
- Partners with organizations like the American Cancer Society, the Comprehensive Cancer Coalition and the Women's Cancer Network throughout the year to coordinate activities for Women's Health Week and Breast Cancer Awareness Month.
- Has prepared fact sheets on, and policy recommendations for, breast and cervical cancer to help facilitate conversations between the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Division Directors.

**State = TENNESSEE**

Commission/Council = N/A

Other = Women's Health/Genetics Program, Tennessee Department of Health

Contact = Margaret Major, Director

Contact Info = [margaret.major@state.tn.us](mailto:margaret.major@state.tn.us); (615) 741-0377

Website = <http://health.state.tn.us/womenshealth/index.htm>

Established = N/A

Women's Health Work:

- The Women's Health/Genetics Section is responsible for the following women's health programs: family planning, prenatal, perinatal regionalization, genetics, and some general women's health.
- Selected county health departments, with assistance from the Women's Health Section, organize events in their geographic areas for national Women's Health Week, with an emphasis on screenings, outreach and education.
- Some county health departments organize events for Minority Health Month, including education and screening events for women in rural counties.



- In 2007, the Department implemented the Tennessee Non-Smoker's Protection Act, the SmokeFree Tennessee campaign and an enhanced QuitLine to provide assistance to citizens desiring to quit smoking and to decrease the incidence of smoking. The initiative established smoking cessation counseling and provision of medications at local health department clinics; aired media spots; and provided grants to counties for education. In 2007, the State increased cigarette taxes and banned smoking in workplaces and restaurants under most circumstances.
- Partnering with the March of Dimes, the Tennessee Folic Acid Council, Girl Scouts, and the 4-H programs, the Department developed a statewide folic acid initiative, including distribution of multivitamins to non-pregnant, reproductive-age women in health department clinics; development of educational materials for local health department clinics and other group serving childbearing age women and youth; and developed radio public service announcements and press releases.
- Other department programs and initiatives include breast and cervical cancer screening for uninsured women and the "1 for All" initiative to reduce the state's infant mortality rate.

#### Links

- Smoke Free Tennessee: <http://health.state.tn.us/smokefreetennessee/>
- 1 for All: <http://www.state.tn.us/health/infantmortality/index.htm>

### **State = TEXAS**

Commission/Council = Governor's Commission for Women

Contact = Leslie Guthrie, Director

Contact Info = [lguthrie@governor.state.tx.us](mailto:lguthrie@governor.state.tx.us); (512) 475-2615

Website = <http://www.governor.state.tx.us/women/about>

Established = 1967, by executive order

Women's Health Work =

- Works to increase education and awareness around cervical cancer and the HPV vaccine; distributed more than 7,500 brochures to all registrants at the 2006 Texas Conference for Women with useful information and preventative tips.
- Partnering with the Austin Commission for Women to host a seminar on osteoporosis in May 2008, featuring a speaker from the US Bone and Joint Decade – Fit to a T.
- Co-hosts annual breast cancer awareness press event and reception at the Texas State Capitol during National Breast Cancer Awareness Month; past speakers include Texas First Lady Anita Perry and Dr. Eduardo Sanchez, former Commissioner of the Department of State Health Services.
- Member of the Heart Hospital of Austin's "Her Heart" campaign Women's Advisory Council, which works to educate and raise awareness about heart health and women's risk of heart disease.
- At the last Texas Conference for Women, conducted glucose, blood pressure and osteoporosis survey screenings and invited a nurse to give a presentation on self- breast examinations.
- Addresses issue of childhood obesity by printing and distributing magnets and brochures.



## **State = UTAH**

Commission/Council = Utah Commission for Women and Families

Contact = No Response

Contact Info = [rmills@utah.gov](mailto:rmills@utah.gov); 801-526-4340

Website = <http://jobs.utah.gov/opencms/occ/womenscommission/index.html>

Established = Unclear

Women's Health Work = Unclear

## **State = VERMONT**

Commission/Council = Vermont Commission on Women (VCW)

Contact = Wendy Love, Executive Director

Contact Info = [wlove@women.state.vt.us](mailto:wlove@women.state.vt.us); (802) 828-2840

Website = <http://www.women.state.vt.us/>

Established = 1964, by executive order; 2002, by statute

Women's Health Work =

- Issues yearly report on the status of Vermont women, including sections on Health, Safety and Civil Rights, Women and Leadership, Education and Economic Security. In previous years, the Health section has highlighted issues ranging from the percentage of women in medical school in Vermont; to an analysis of uninsured women by age; to the rate of cervical cancer among older women; to the importance of breast-feeding for a full year. The highlighted sections are intended to influence legislation.
- Issued report on the importance of providing comprehensive coverage for women in health care reform proposals.
- Have been working closely with the Women's Legislative Caucus to highlight the issue of cervical cancer and publicize the need for HPV vaccination; efforts include an annual dinner, co-sponsored with the Women's Legislative Caucus for the past three years, to expand awareness around HPV vaccinations and cervical cancer.
- Legislative work has included efforts to secure health insurance for women and families for up to three years post-divorce ("Maintaining Health Insurance Post-Divorce Bill"); to ensure that businesses make a reasonable effort to allow women unpaid time-off to express breast milk in the workplace, and do not retaliate against women who want to express breast milk in the workplace; and to protect employee's confidentiality under the Family and Medical Leave Act.
- Other efforts include opposing a bill that would require co-pays from prisoners for health visits; working to achieve paid sick leave.
- Recent accomplishments include:
  - The successful passage of Vermont's Collaborative Practice Agreement, which allows pharmacists to dispense emergency contraception to patients without a doctor's prescription, based on established protocol between pharmacists and physicians;
  - The successful passage of public accommodation laws for breast feeding;
  - The successful passage of a bill setting a \$25 co-pay limit for women seeking mammograms; and
  - Successful opposition to parental notification requirements for abortion.

Links =

- The Vermont Guide to Parental and Family Leave:  
<http://www.women.state.vt.us/pdfs/familyleave.pdf>
- Accessing Health Care in Vermont: A Woman-Centered Approach (2005):  
<http://www.women.state.vt.us/pdfs/HealthAccess.pdf>

## **State = VIRGINIA**

Commission/Council = N/A

Other = Division of Women's and Infants' Health, Virginia Department of Health

Contact = Deborah M. Harris, Women's Health Coordinator, Division of Women's and Infants' Health

Contact Info = [deborahm.harris@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:deborahm.harris@vdh.virginia.gov); (804) 864-7770

Website = <http://www.vahealth.org/WIH/>

Established = N/A

Women's Health Work =

- In 2007, the governor signed a bill to instruct the Health Commissioner to designate a Senior Nurse Practitioner to coordinate and oversee all women's health activities through the Department of Health.
- The Division of Women's and Infants' Health houses breast and cervical cancer program and the Title X funded Family Planning Program.
- Plans events for National Women's Health Week.
- Working to address obesity through CHAMPION program.
- Participates in the Governor's Taskforce on Cervical Cancer, which issued a report in 2005 on the burden of cervical cancer.
- Was recently awarded a grant through the U.S. Office of Population Affairs to implement a pilot project to decrease rates of HIV transmission. Implementing rapid oral HIV testing in family planning clinics to all interested women; case-management services are offered to women who test positive.
- Implementing pilot project to address the public health impact of diabetes. Pilot sites are located in four family planning clinics, which ask female patients to report any history of gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM). Clinics are performing optional oral glucose tests to certain target groups. Women identified with prediabetes or diabetes are referred to appropriate community resources for treatment, and all women are educated on how to reduce their overall risk.
- Received grant from the CDC's women's health council to implement provider education for women with diabetes, and to raise awareness of the overlap among women of diabetes and depression.
- Work with the "Go Red for Women" Heart Health Campaign to promote heart disease awareness, including the publication of a featured section on this issue in the Common Health Initiative's newsletter, which reaches approximately 90,000 state employees.
- Working with the Governor's Health Reform Commission to determine steps that would help women reduce rates of infant mortality.

Links =

- For information on Women's Health Virginia, a women's health initiative established by the legislature in 1999 that works to enhance Virginia women and girls' health and well

being through outreach, education and research, see:

<http://www.womenshealthvirginia.org/>

- 2005 Report of the Governor's Task Force on Cervical Cancer:  
<http://www.vahealth.org/documents/2006/PDF/CervicalCancerTaskForceReport.pdf>

## **State = WASHINGTON**

Commission/Council = N/A

Other = Women's Health Resource Network, Washington State Department of Health

Contact = Polly Taylor, CNM, MPH, ARNP, Women's Health Contact and Public Health Nurse Consultant, Maternal and Infant Health

Contact Info = [polly.taylor@doh.wa.gov](mailto:polly.taylor@doh.wa.gov); (360) 236-3563

Website = <http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/WHRN/WHRNdefault.htm>

Established = N/A

Women's Health Work =

- Facilitates the Women's Health Resource Network (WHRN), a cross program workgroup that meets regularly to provide a forum for communication and coordination related to women's health issues in the areas of assessment, policy, and health promotion/disease prevention. WHRN focuses on bringing these programs together to improve collaboration, broaden the focus of women's health at the state level, provide a forum for DOH input, and respond to current and emerging women's health issues.
- WHRN:
  - Exhibits at statewide medical conferences and women's health events, sponsor educational offerings on women's health issues for DOH employees
  - Sponsors education offerings on women's health issues for DOH employees
  - Collaborates with DHHS Region X Office on Women's Health on special projects
  - Disseminates information related to current literature, programs and funding opportunities to stakeholders, contractors and partners
  - Sponsors National Women's Health Week events and activities for DOH employees
  - Explores activities for cross-division integration
- Other departmental women's health initiatives include:
  - Research and outreach around the HPV Vaccine
  - Outreach campaigns about contraception and healthy pregnancies
  - Domestic violence/sexual assault prevention
  - Nutrition program for women, infants and children
  - Promotion of policies and programs for HIV/AIDS prevention and care in maternal and child health
  - Teen pregnancy prevention efforts
  - CFH Division Preconception Health Team

Links =

- Washington State Department of Health: Community and Family Health: Women's Health Activities Update 2008:  
<http://www.doh.wa.gov/CFH/WHRN/documents/WomenHlthAct08.pdf>

## **State = WEST VIRGINIA**

Commission/Council = West Virginia Women's Commission

Contact = Kathy Pauley, Executive Director

Contact Info = [kathypauley@wvdhhr.org](mailto:kathypauley@wvdhhr.org); (304) 558-0070

Website = [www.wvdhhr.org/women](http://www.wvdhhr.org/women)

Established = 1977, by statute

Women's Health Work =

- Collaborates with organizations such as the West Virginia Health Promotions program and the Center for Excellence in Women's Health at West Virginia University.
- Refers women to partner organizations via website and telephone inquiries.
- Helps coordinate health promotion exhibit tables for "Women's Day" at the Legislature.
- Establishing a "Speaker's Bureau," which will provide contact information for women's health experts available to give presentations and workshops on issues such as osteoporosis and breast cancer.
- Advocating for a bill that would replace funding for the West Virginia Department of Health's cardiovascular program, which recently lost funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- Performs outreach around "Go Red for Women" Heart Health Day.

## **State = WISCONSIN**

Commission/Council = Wisconsin Women's Council

Contact = Christine Lidbury, Director

Contact Info = [Christine.lidbury@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Christine.lidbury@wisconsin.gov); 608.266.2219

Website = <http://womenscouncil.wi.gov/index.asp>

Established = 1983, by statute

Women's Health Work =

- Member, Statewide Advisory Committee on Healthy Birth Outcomes: Eliminating Racial and Ethnic Disparities, led by the Department of Health and Family Services, Wisconsin Department of Public Health.
- Member, Teen Pregnancy Prevention Oversight Committee, United Way of Greater Milwaukee.
- Member, Lieutenant Governor Barbara Lawton's Women and Depression Task Force, which works to reduce stigma around depression and mental health issues among women and expand education, awareness and access around mental health services.
- Partners with the University of Wisconsin's Heart and Vascular Care program and the American Heart Association's "Go Red for Women" Heart Health Campaign to expand education and awareness about women and cardiovascular disease.

Links =

- Birth Outcomes: <http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/healthybirths/>
- Teen pregnancy: [http://www.unitedwaymilwaukee.org/Teen\\_Pregnancy.html](http://www.unitedwaymilwaukee.org/Teen_Pregnancy.html)
- Mental Health: [http://ltgov.wisconsin.gov/issues\\_view.asp?issueid=6&locid=126](http://ltgov.wisconsin.gov/issues_view.asp?issueid=6&locid=126)
- Go Red for Women: <http://www.goredforwomen.org/>

**State = WYOMING**

Commission/Council = Wyoming Council for Women's Issues

Contact = N/A

Contact Info = (307) 777-2848

Website = <http://wyomingwomenscouncil.org/>

Established = 1965, by executive order; 1969, by statute

Women's Health Work =

- Website links to several women's health resources.
- Previously hosted workshops on nutrition and self-image among adolescent girls.

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**City Women's Commissions**

*\*For more information on City Women's Commissions, contact the National Association of Commissions for Women at (240) 777-8308*

**City = NEW YORK, NEW YORK**

Commission/Council = New York City Commission on Women's Issues

Contact = Ethelie Aruoture, Program Manager, Briana Collins, Executive Director

Contact Info = [cwi@cityhall.nyc.gov](mailto:cwi@cityhall.nyc.gov); (212) 788-2738

Website = <http://www.nyc.gov/html/cwi/html/home/home.shtml>

Established = 1975, by executive order

Women's Health Work =

- Works in collaboration with the City Council on a joint initiative called NYC Women First. Each month, for twelve months, NYC Women First reaches out to women of all ages and cultures across the city, educating them about a specific women's health risk and creating a dialogue on the ways New York City's women can maximize their health.
- Partnered with the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to release a report regarding women's health, "Women at Risk: The Health of Women in New York City." The report outlined health behaviors, health care access, and health outcomes among different economic and racial/ethnic groups of women in New York City. It was structured around the ten key areas from Take Care New York, the City's health campaign.
- Worked in collaboration with the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation, as well as other agencies, to develop the Step Out, New York City program. This free program encouraged New Yorkers to participate in walks, which took place through August at over 80 locations dispersed over each of the five boroughs.

Links =

- New York City Women First: [www.nyccouncil.info/html/womenfirst](http://www.nyccouncil.info/html/womenfirst).
- "Women at Risk: The Health of Women in New York City": <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/data/data-womenatrisk-2005.pdf>.
- Step Out NYC: [www.nyc.gov/stepoutnyc](http://www.nyc.gov/stepoutnyc)

## **City = SEATTLE, WASHINGTON**

Commission/Council = Seattle Women's Commission

Contact = Felicia Yearwood-Murrell, liaison between the Women's Commission and the Office for Civil Rights

Contact Info = [Felicia.Yearwood-Murrell@Seattle.gov](mailto:Felicia.Yearwood-Murrell@Seattle.gov); (206) 684-4537

Website = <http://www.seattle.gov/womenscommission/>

Established = 1971

Women's Health Work =

- Participated in the Women's Funding Alliance policy work group discussions in the fall of 2007 around the release of "A Closer Look: the Status of Women and Girls in the Puget Sound Region" report. Discussions focused on how to move forward with policy recommendations in 2008, with a particular focus on economic issues and addressing disparities that women of color and refugee/immigrant women face.
- Convened a meeting with Jerry DeGriek, the City of Seattle's Public Health Policy Manager, in April 2007 to discuss the City's community health investments and follow-up on the City's Healthy Communities Initiative.
- Worked with local non-profits, including the Refugee Women's Alliance and Asian Counseling and Referral Services, to discuss innovations in mental health services for refugee and immigrant women that are culturally appropriate and effective.
- Monitoring the status of, and developing initiatives to address, high rates of infant mortality in the Native-American community and other communities of color.

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## **County Women's Commissions**

*\*For more information on County Women's Commissions, contact the National Association of Commissions for Women at (240) 777-8308*

## **County = MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

Commission/Council = Montgomery County Commission for Women

Contact = Judith Vaughan-Prather, Executive Director

Contact Info = [judith.vaughan-prather@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:judith.vaughan-prather@montgomerycountymd.gov); (240) 777-8330

Website = [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cfw](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cfw)

Established = 1972, by statute

Women's Health Work =

- The Commission serves as an advisory board to the County Executive, housed in the Department of the Commission for Women. The Department of the Commission for Women also runs a Counseling Center that addresses various predictors of mental health among Montgomery County women, including divorce, relationships, change and transition, stress, career, work-life balance, domestic violence and substance abuse. Commissioners and Center staff often collaborate to identify trends and problem areas in the overall mental health of Montgomery County women.
- Have adopted NACW's osteoporosis education and awareness project.

- Commission newsletters often feature sections on women's health issues, such as women's heart health.
- The Commission's legislative committee has done considerable advocacy around a range of women's health issues, including reproductive health and freedom; in particular, has worked to expand access to emergency contraception.
- Released a June 2007 report on the status of women in Montgomery County, featuring a chapter on the status of women's health. The report included five legislative recommendations on ways to improve women's health in the county, including: increasing public education around the risks of heart disease for women and the dangers of unprotected sex, making the HPV vaccine available to all girls, regardless of their ability to pay, strengthening collaborative efforts around HIV/AIDS prevention and diagnosis, and increasing access to quality and affordable health care for low-income women.
- Initiated a successful advocacy campaign in February 2006 to convince the Governor to dedicate increased funding to the Maryland Breast and Cervical Cancer Diagnosis and Treatment Program (MBCCDTP) for the purpose of providing breast reconstruction services to low-income women, an intended—but previously unfunded—function of the program.
- One Commission member used the Commission as a springboard to mobilize the county and then state around the urgent need for comprehensive health care reform; subsequently creating the successful Maryland Women's Coalition on Health Care Reform.

Links =

- Report on the Status of Women in Montgomery County (June 2007):  
[http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/cfw/Publications/cfwswimreport6\\_7\\_2007.pdf](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/cfw/Publications/cfwswimreport6_7_2007.pdf)

