

**REPORT OF THE
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

Creation of the Virginia Center for Community Health

**TO THE GOVERNOR AND
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA**



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**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
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COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Health

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E. ANNE PETERSON, M.D., M.P.H.
STATE HEALTH COMMISSIONER

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January 8, 2001

To: The Honorable James S. Gilmore, III

and

The General Assembly of Virginia

Through: The Honorable Claude A. Allen
Secretary of Health and Human Resources

The report contained herein is pursuant to Senate Joint Resolution 157 and House Joint Resolution 260, agreed to by the 2000 General Assembly.

This report provides an update on the creation of the Virginia Center for Community Health (Center). The development of the Center was a primary recommendation from the Virginia Turning Point initiative, a strategic planning effort aimed at strengthening public health in the 21st century.

Turning Point brought together representatives from a variety of sectors essential to improving the health of Virginians. Their vision was the creation of an autonomous not-for-profit organization that could sustain the public-private partnership gains made through Turning Point and seeks to support and strengthen community health improvement efforts around the Commonwealth.

Enclosed, please find a short summary of the efforts to formulate a vision, mission and values as well as specific projects we hope to accomplish in the first year. In addition, we have engaged pro bono legal counsel to guide the Center through the incorporation process at the state and federal level.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "E. Anne Peterson, MD, MPH".

E. Anne Peterson, MD, MPH
State Health Commissioner

Virginia Center for Community Health

Networking, Coordinating, Cooperating, Collaborating

Senate Joint Resolution 157 and House Joint Resolution 260 requested that the Governor, with the support and assistance from participants in the Virginia Turning Point initiative, to encourage and facilitate the development of a Virginia Center for Community Health between the public and private sector.

Membership

At the conclusion of the 2000 General Assembly session, primary stakeholders from the Virginia Turning Point initiative identified organizations and individuals they felt would be critical to the success of this new venture. Members were identified and agreed to serve on the initial Board of Trustees of the Virginia Center for Community Health. They are:

The Honorable Bill Bolling
Senate of Virginia
Sandra Bowen
Virginia Chamber of Commerce
The Honorable George Broman, MD
Virginia House of Delegates
Don Combs
Eastern Virginia Medical School
Michael Dudley
Virginia Association of Health Plans
Randy Gordon, MD, MPH
Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association
The Honorable Daun Hester
Norfolk City Council
Charles Hickey, DVM
Virginia Board of Health

Jane Norwood Kusiak
Consultant
Lester Lamb
Former Turning Point Steering Committee Chairman
E. Anne Peterson, MD, MPH
Virginia Department of Health
Laurens Sartoris
Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association
Reverend Cessar Scott
Baptist General Convention
Dennis Treacy
Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
Jane Woods
Commonwealth Health Research Board

Note: Board members also indicated an interest in representatives from the Medical Society of Virginia and the Information Technology sector. Individual members have not yet been identified.

Purpose

The following statements capsule the Board members' opinions regarding the role of the Virginia Center for Community Health.

Draft Vision

Communities exercising abundant opportunities to create a healthier Commonwealth.

Draft Mission

Facilitating practical solutions for today's and tomorrow's health problems in the Commonwealth.

Draft Values

1. Quality – The Virginia Center for Community Health will strive for excellence in all we do.
2. Prevention – We will focus on deliverables/activities that maximize our potential to avert health problems.
3. Leadership – We recognize that the acceleration of change demands strong vision and resolve to impact health.
4. Efficiency – We believe that health care resources must be allocated and applied effectively.
5. Community – We will foster innovation by connecting grass roots initiatives.
6. Collaboration – We consider broad participation across sectors crucial.
7. Resources – We will identify diverse sources of funding to sustain community health improvement initiatives.

Incorporation

The Virginia Center for Community Health initially obtained legal counsel from a member organization, the Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association. It was determined that the services of an attorney who specialized in incorporation would be beneficial to the interests of the organization. Pro bono legal counsel was secured from a major Richmond-area law firm. The Center and its agent are currently in the process of preparing the necessary state and federal documents to register as a not-for-profit corporation within the Commonwealth of Virginia. Because there is no guarantee that the name Virginia Center for Community Health is currently available, the Board of Trustees has indicated a willingness to look at other possibilities for a formal name for the organization.

Projects

Board members agreed that the development of a website to provide technical assistance and link community health improvement initiatives was a critical first step for the organization. A consultant has been retained to conduct a comprehensive survey to identify existing community health improvement efforts as well as level of interest for technical assistance topics. This information will be used to focus the development of a website. Implementation is expected Summer 2001.

The Center also agreed to participate in the Healthy Virginians 2010, linked to Healthy People 2010, the national health improvement initiative. A committee has been formed to assist the State Health Commissioner in articulating a vision for the Commonwealth.

Administrative

The Board of Trustees is in the process of developing a set of by-laws and has agreed to meet quarterly. Co-Chairs have been identified that are reflective of the public-private partnership that the Center hopes to promote. Currently, the Turning Point Coordinator and Turning Point Assistant as well as officials from the Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association and the Virginia Department of Health staff the Board. Initial funding has been earmarked from the Turning Point implementation budget, supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The Board of Trustees has set sustainability for the organization as a priority and stable funding is a key element of that strategy.

