Committee on Women's Rights 2021 Report on Committee Activity for the APHA Governing Council

January through October 2021 meetings recap

Members in attendance: Tamara Lewis Johnson, Chair; Kimberly Chang, Cherise Charleswell, Hannatu Dantata, Mary E. Fleming, and Vina HuLamm, APHA liaison

History/Mission

The Committee on Women's Rights (COWR) was created by the APHA Governing Council as a Standing Committee in 1971. Standing Committees are defined in APHA's Constitution, Article XIII, Section 1. as "..those Committees which are necessary for the continuing effective operations of the Association and which are charged with responsibilities for internal organizational, structural, and/or administrative affairs of the Association."

COWR's mission was broadly defined in the Constitution, Article XII, Section (d): "COWR relates the concerns of the entire APHA membership and all its organizational components to the problems associated with women in society which involve considerations of health, health services, and health career opportunity."

COWR also works to improve the health status of women through addressing social, cultural, economic, educational, environmental, and political conditions that impact families.

Values

The core values of the APHA Committee on Women's Rights for individuals and communities throughout the world are health; equity; diversity; integrity; dignity; self-determination; respect; ethical practice; and knowledge.

Vision

The APHA Committee on Women's Rights promotes and protects the health and well-being of all women.

Goals

To improve the quality of life for all women

To ensure access to health care and appropriate health care services

To improve services that focus on health promotion and injury/illness prevention for women

To promote and protect the physical and social environment

To preserve and protect the rights of all women

To promote equal rights and opportunities for women in health careers

Description of Issue

The mission of COWR relates the concerns of the entire APHA membership and all its

organizational components to the problems associated with women in society which involve considerations of health, health services, and health career opportunities.

Goals for 2021

1. Recruit high-level speakers to moderate and/or present on all invited panels
2. Develop sessions that highlight and address social connectedness as being important to women's health, across the lifecourse.
3. Improve inclusion of populations that we have either not addressed or addressed less frequently in the past.
4. Leverage collaborations with other groups to maximize our impact
5. Bring a women's rights lens to policies/procedures
6. Strengthen our marketing/social media presence

Strategies in support of the goals for 2021

1. **Goal 1: Recruit high-level speakers to moderate and/or present on all invited panels:** The Committee on Women's Rights has been involved in organizing 3 oral sessions for the upcoming hybrid conference (10/24-10/27). All oral sessions feature high-level panelists with national reputations for their contributions to their respective fields.

2. **Develop sessions that highlight and address social connectedness to advance women's health, across the lifecourse:** This year we have three oral sessions that elucidate the importance of social connections as a pathway to promote the health of women. The above-mentioned sessions are **3097.0 How Do Women Move Through Space: Safety and Security Concerns for Women and Girls in the Workplace, Community and on Travel, 4060.0 Immigrant Women and Parent Child Separation during COVID 19 pandemic, and 4145.0 Social Connectedness and Community Organizing as Principles to Empower Women and Girls and Improve Health Outcomes: From Practice to Policy.**

3. **Goal 3: Improve inclusion of populations that we have either not addressed or addressed less frequently**: Our oral session **4060.0 Immigrant Women and Parent Child Separation during COVID 19 pandemic** spotlights the physical and mental health of immigrant women at the border centers. This is a key population that has been in the news and a major public health concern that had not been addressed by the COWR in recent years.

4. **Goal 4: Leverage collaborations with other groups to maximize our impact:** All three sessions have been organized in collaboration with other groups such as APHA Women's Caucus, the APHA International Health Section and the APHA Mental Health Section. Additionally, all our sessions have been endorsed by multiple APHA components.

5. **Goal 5: Bring a women's rights lens to policies/procedures**: The COWR actively participated in policy reviews this year. The members of the Committee reviewed and provided feedback on the APHA Policy statements A1, B2, B4, B6, B8, D2 and D3.

6. **Goal 6: Strengthen our marketing/social media presence:** The APHA COWR worked with the APHA to issue a statement on the recent violence against low wage immigrant women workers in Atlanta, Georgia and Boulder, Colorado. Here is the link to the statement: https://apha.org/About-APHA/Governance/APHA-Committees/Committee-on-Womens-Rights. We will be cross promoting our sessions with APHA and Women's Caucus. Additionally, we have prepared marketing tweets for our sessions, to share ourselves and via APHA (should that avenue become available again this year).

Complete list of sessions the Committee on Women's Rights helped to organize:

1. **3097.0** How Do Women Move Through Space: Safety and Security Concerns for Women and Girls in the Workplace, Community and on Travel

2. **4060.0** Immigrant Women and Parent Child Separation during the COVID 19 Pandemic

3. **4145.0** – Social Connectedness and Community Organizing as Principles to Empower Women and Girls and Improve Health Outcomes: From Practice to Policy

Duly submitted,

Tamara Lewis Johnson, MPH, MBA

Chair, COWR