Committee on Women’s Rights Annual Report

November 2018 through October 2019 meetings recap

Members in attendance: Kimberly Narain, Chair; Constance Jackson; Cristina Lammers, Maria Aguiluz-Ab unto, Tamara Lewis Johnson, Kimberly Chang and Vina HuLamm, APHA liaison

History/Mission

The Committee on Women's Rights 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 2019

1. Recruit high-level speakers to moderate and/or present on all invited panels
2. Develop sessions that highlight and address structural challenges 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 social media presence

Strategies in support of the goals for 2019

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 6 sessions (5 oral and 1 poster) for the upcoming conference in Philadelphia (11/2-11/6). All oral sessions feature high-level panelists with national reputations for their contributions to their respective fields.

2. **Develop sessions that highlight and address structural challenges to women’s health, across the lifecourse:**
   1) Our poster session 3186.0 Evidence for Action on Improving the Mental and Physical Health of Women: A Life-course Perspective was created to solicit strategies to improve the mental and physical health of women across many phases of life. 2) Our oral session 3010.0 Fireside Chat-Public health leadership in evidence for action to improve aging women’s health outcomes: Research, policies, to a sustained sense of well-being, specifically addresses barriers to and highlights strategies for healthy aging in diverse populations, including women from Asian subgroups, black women and LGBTQ populations.

3. **Goal 3: Improve inclusion of populations that we have either not addressed or addressed less frequently:**
   1) As mentioned above, session 3186.0 is specific to aging issues among diverse populations. 2) Our oral session 3338.0 From Labor Trafficking to Exploitation to Healthy Work: The Impact of Labor on Women’s Health, and Strategies for Action in Policy and Practice features a speaker from the Asian Health Services organization. 3) Our oral session 4224.0 Furthering Women’s Health by Promoting Action on Women’s Leadership features the founder of SisterLove, an organization that uses an asset-based approach to foster leadership in the Reproductive Rights movement among women living with HIV/AIDS.

4. **Goal 4: Leverage collaborations with other groups to maximize our impact:** Four of the 6 sessions this committee has helped to organize were collaborative including 1) 3010.0
Fireside Chat—Public health leadership in evidence for action to improve aging women’s health outcomes: Research, policies, to a sustained sense of well-being 2) 3228.1 Empowering Equity 1: The Significance of Place & Place-based Initiatives 3) 3332.0 Empowering Equity 2: What’s Poverty, the Census & Community Engagement Got To Do with It? and 4) 4224.0 Furthering Women’s Health by Promoting Action on Women’s Leadership

5. **Goal 5: Bring a women’s rights lens to policies/procedures:** 1) Members of this committee reviewed the annual membership survey from 2018 and had meetings with the leadership of the Women’s Caucus to develop recommendations to submit to the executive leadership team regarding family friendly conference initiatives to consider adopting for 2019. 2) Members of this committee provided feedback to the Women’s Caucus on a policy statement in support of women’s reproductive freedom.

6. **Goal 6: Strengthen our social media presence:** We have not gained much traction on this goal but members of this committee plan on making use of social media outlets to advertise our sessions for the upcoming meeting and brainstorming on how to strengthen our capacity in this area.

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

1. 3010.0 Fireside Chat—Public health leadership in evidence for action to improve aging women’s health outcomes: Research, policies, to a sustained sense of well-being
2. 3186.0 Evidence for Action on Improving the Mental and Physical Health of Women: A Life-course Perspective
3. 3228.1 Empowering Equity 1: The Significance of Place & Place-based Initiatives
4. 3338.0 From Labor Trafficking to Exploitation to Healthy Work: The Impact of Labor on Women’s Health, and Strategies for Action in Policy and Practice
5. 3332.0 Empowering Equity 2: What’s Poverty, the Census & Community Engagement Got To Do with It?
6. 4224.0 Furthering Women’s Health by Promoting Action on Women’s Leadership

Duly submitted,

Kimberly Narain, MD, PhD, MPH

Chair, COWR