

Hawaii County Subarea Health Planning Council
Minutes of September 16, 2025
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Amy Feeley-Austin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X
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Legend: X=Present; O=Absent /=No Meeting *-Chair, **-Vice Chair

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION
Call to Order	The meeting was called to order at 2:02 p.m. with T. McKeague, Chair, HCSAC presiding.	
Roll Call	Member and staff roll call.	
Meeting Minutes	Chair welcomed our new HCSAC member and initiated a round of introductions: • Tamia McKeague: Senior Project Manager at Kamehameha Schools; serves as the board's community representative. • Dr. Hannah Preston-Pita: CEO of the Big Island Substance Abuse Council; co-leads the Hawaii Island Fentanyl Task Force. • Amy Feeley-Austin: Chief Operations Officer for the West Hawaii Region of HHSC, which includes Kona and Kohala Hospitals. • Stacy Haumea: Registered Dietitian, Nutritionist, and Certified Diabetes Care Educator in private practice and at Hawaii Island Community Health Center. • Roxy Rowe: Gerontological Nurse Practitioner from Hilo, specializing in home health care. • Dr. Jack Lewin: Administrator of SHPDA. • Terry Visperas: Comprehensive Health Planning Coordinator for SHPDA. Unanimous approval of July 15, 2025, meeting minutes. Public in person observer and testimony. Raymond Sin	

	Raymond Sin of the U.S. Air Force provided testimony, highlighting the recent Honolulu Technology Week and its emphasis on public-private collaboration. He discussed the Small Business Innovation Research Program (SBIR) and the Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) grant program, which provides federal funding for small business innovation and technology transfer and noted that the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation (HTDC) offers matching funds. Mr. Sin observed that many medical doctors are moving from clinical practice to bioinformatics and AI to improve health outcomes. He concluded by emphasizing the importance of technology, education, and healthcare for societal progress.	
Administrator's Report State Health Planning and Development Agency (SHPDA) Updates	The Administrator's Report was posted online at our SHPDA website. J. Lewin, Administrator, SHPDA provided an administrative report, focusing on legislative updates and SHPDA activities. AHEAD Grant: • Dr. Lewin provided an update on the AHEAD federal grant, which aims to improve Hawaii's healthcare system by transitioning from a fee-for-service model to a value-based payment model. He noted the start date has been moved to January 2028, giving the state an extra year for planning. The grant's goal is to double investment in primary care over the next decade and could bring in up to \$250 million annually between 2027 and 2035. Rural Health Transformation Fund & Hawaii's Proposals • Dr. Lewin briefed the committee on the newly established Rural Health Transformation Fund, a \$50 billion federal initiative to support rural healthcare from 2026 to 2030. The fund is a response to recent Medicaid cuts.	

	• Funding will be distributed in two ways: • Equal Allocation (\$25B): All states that apply will receive an equal share. Hawaii is eligible for approximately \$100 million from this portion. • Competitive Allocation (\$25B): The remaining funds will be awarded based on the strength of each state's proposals. • Proposed Initiatives for Hawaii: SHPDA has developed several key proposals to compete for this funding, focusing on workforce and care delivery: • Workforce Incentives: Proposals include up to \$200,000 in loan repayment or housing incentives for healthcare professionals who commit to working in rural areas for five years. • Training & Technology: Funds would be used to create new residency and fellowship positions and to invest in technological infrastructure for rural facilities. • Kupuna Aloha Program: This innovative program would use trained volunteers to provide in-home, non-clinical support for at-risk seniors to prevent hospital visits. Dr. Lewin stated that SHPDA is submitting its proposals for this funding by November 1st and is seeking feedback from the board on how to best meet Hawaii Island's needs. He also mentioned that SHPDA is pursuing state legislation to expand its staff in 2027 to better analyze healthcare data and issue public health reports.	
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Announcements and or Future Speaker Recommendations	Public testimony. Raymond Sin offered a comment, noting that Governor Josh Green's medical degree is a unique asset for Hawaii in navigating these healthcare initiatives. The council is actively seeking guest speakers for upcoming meetings. Members were encouraged to suggest individuals or volunteer themselves to present on topics related to Hawaii Island healthcare. • Tamia McKeague requested that members reach out to senators representing Hawaii Island and invite them to attend a council meeting to learn about the group's work. • Amy Feeley-Austin suggested inviting Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies of Hawaii to present. She also offered to give a presentation herself on the plans for a new hospital on the west side of the island, suggesting a formal presentation after October to allow time to finalize details. offered to contact her legislative delegation to extend an invitation and will follow up with Terry Visperas on this matter. • Terry Visperas shared information about recent and upcoming events, including a Workforce Summit at the John A. Burns School of Medicine and a mental health conference hosted by the Kauai Rural Health Association. He also noted the upcoming Community First Conference on October 2nd and 3rd, where Dr. Lewin will be a speaker.	
Next Meeting/Agenda Items Adjournment	Next HCSAC Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, October 21, 2025, at 1:30PM. The meeting was adjourned at 2:41 p.m.	