

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
COMMISSIONED CORPS OF THE U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
OFFICE OF THE SURGEON GENERAL

OFFICE OF COMMISSIONED CORPS FORCE MANAGEMENT

**Women's Issues in the Commissioned Corps
Advisory Board**

CHARTER

I. BACKGROUND

Although over half of the Commissioned Corps of the U. S. Public Health Service (Corps) is comprised of female officers, the Corps has not systematically reviewed or addressed issues of concern to female officers. Therefore, Corps leadership lacks baseline data necessary to address possible issues and to develop responsive initiatives.

One of the major focuses of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) is strengthening the health workforce available to provide services to underserved populations. The Corps needs input from stakeholders and evidence on which to base policy decisions related to the Corps as a health workforce entity and, specifically, to address the concerns of women and minorities.

The armed forces and most civilian agencies address women's issues through specific internal programs or committees. The White House Council on Women and Girls also ensures that federal agencies take into account the needs of women and girls in policies, programs and legislation. Identified women's issues include leadership positions, (Flag/SES), distribution of women in certain professions/occupations, sexual harassment and/or sexual assault in the workplace, interpersonal violence, and work-life issues (e.g. breastfeeding).

Based on the current environment, it is important to research and address women's issues specifically in relation to officers who serve in the Corps.

II. MISSION

The mission of the Women's Issues in the Commissioned Corps Advisory Board is to identify and analyze key issues that impact women in the Corps and develop an action plan to address the issues (e.g. update existing and/or develop new policies).

II. RELATIONSHIP OF WOMEN'S ISSUES IN THE COMMISSIONED CORPS TO THE DEPARTMENT

Women's issues are public health topics regularly addressed and funded by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). However, issues that specifically affect and impact women in the Corps have not been fully researched and/or addressed.

III. OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the Women's Issues in the Commissioned Corps Advisory Board is to serve in a resource and advisory capacity to assist in the development, coordination, and evaluation of activities related to female officers in the Corps with specific objectives to:

1. Identify and analyze key workforce-related issues and provide recommended actions to the Office of the Surgeon General (OSG);
2. Identify and analyze other issues that affect female officers and provide recommended actions;
3. Keep OSG and stakeholders informed about the activities of other uniformed services, the White House, and veterans' organizations related to issues of women in uniform;
4. Evaluate the effectiveness of special emphasis activities conducted in support of women's issues.

IV. FUNCTIONS

In carrying out its broad mission and specific objectives, the functions of the Advisory Board shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Identify key workforce-related and other issues that affect female officers and recommend actions.
 - a. Participate on official and ad hoc committees of the OSG and provide advice, comments, and recommendations on identified issues;
 - b. Communicate regularly with the OSG and ensure dissemination of pertinent information to the Corps;
 - c. Promote and coordinate information, reports, and position papers related to female Corps officers to the broader HHS community through the OSG.

2. Keep the OSG and stakeholders informed about the activities of other uniformed services, the White House, and veterans' organizations related to issues of women in uniform.
 - a. Regularly conduct environmental scans via Internet resources (i.e. pertinent Web sites, online news articles, etc.); disseminate information via white papers or other communication formats.
 - b. Attend pertinent conferences, meetings and other venues sponsored by other uniformed services, the White House and organizations; disseminate information via White Papers or other communication formats.
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of special emphasis activities.
 - a. Develop survey instruments to assess the effectiveness of special emphasis activities related to women's issues in the Corps.
 - b. Analyze the survey results; produce report findings and recommendations.

V.

MEMBERSHIP

Initial membership of the Women's Issues in the Commissioned Corps Advisory Board shall consist of a chairperson at the Flag grade, a co-chairperson, an executive assistant and twelve voting members representative of the Corps from Operating Divisions, categories, and non-HHS entities.

The voting members shall be appointed by the Surgeon General and will include, at a minimum, members from the Categories with underrepresented women, including Medical, Engineer, Environmental Health and Dental categories.

The interests of all stakeholders shall be addressed, either through special consultation, briefings or other means, as determined by the chairperson. Board members are expected to attend meetings (in person or via conference call), review/provide feedback on identified issues, and participate in the drafting of reports and recommendations.

Special consultants shall be appointed to provide expert information on identified legal matters. Consultants shall have an open invitation to attend meetings and may be invited to provide presentations on special topics.

VI.

TERM OF APPOINTMENT

The term of the chairperson and Board members should be staggered two, three or four years, as determined by the Surgeon General.

Meetings shall be conducted bi-monthly or as called by the chairperson.

Telephone conferencing may be used as a communication medium if in-person meetings are not possible. If a member is unable to participate in a meeting, a designee may be named.

VII. CHAIRPERSON

The chairperson shall be appointed by the Surgeon General.

VIII. DELIVERABLES

1. The chairperson or representative shall present at the monthly Surgeon General Professional Advisory Committee & Chief Professional Officers/ Professional Advisory Committee Chairs meeting.
2. The Women's Issues in the Commissioned Corps Advisory Board shall submit regular progress reports to the OSG. The initial report should include a comprehensive review of women's issues in the Corps. Future reports should include a review of new or ongoing issues with recommendations on how best to address the concerns.
3. Annual report and other reports, as indicated.
4. New and/or revised policy drafting, as identified
5. Position papers with recommendations, as identified

IX. DURATION

This Board shall, upon signature, remain in force until such time when it is closed or reconstituted based on the status of deliverables or at the discretion of Corps senior leadership.

DECISION

Approved Regina M. Benjamin Disapproved _____ Date 20 MAY 2011

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Surgeon General