



Our Optimal Health

**(Affordable & Sustainable Health Care for
all in Franklin County)**



**Record
Assembly 10
September 6, 2007
8:30–11:30 a.m.
The Fawcett Center**

Our Optimal Health

Affordable and Sustainable Health Care
for all in Franklin County

Assembly 10, the Fawcett Center, Columbus

**Calling Question: How will we, as a community, achieve optimal health
for our community and each of us?**

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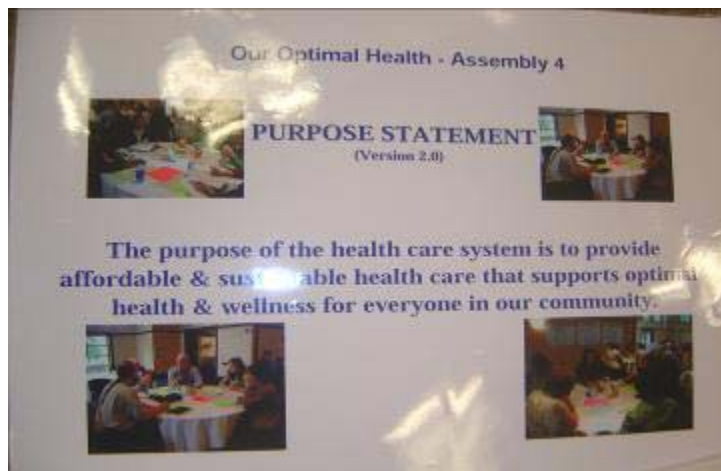
WELCOME

Marc Parnes welcomed the group and thanked everyone for attending. He reflected back to the beginning of the Our Optimal Health (OOH) project and the outcome of a study done by Generon, an international consulting company focused on social issues. Generon interviewed 58 individuals from all sectors of our community including health care, business, consumer and government, and identified that everyone felt like a victim in the health care system. The overall consensus was that the health care system was broken and not doing what it should be focused on, providing preventative care versus “sick care”.

The outcomes of this study encouraged those individuals involved in the OOH project (formerly known as the *Affordable and Sustainable Health Care* project) to move forward with the initiative by offering to host a community dialogue around a common purpose:

The purpose of the health care system is to provide affordable & sustainable health care that supports optimal health & wellness for everyone in our community.

As the conveners of this ongoing conversation, many think we have come into the room with the answers to fix the health care crisis. The objective of the assemblies is to provide an opportunity for the community, “Us”, to help identify what it is we want and expect from our health care system and be involved in the process to change it on a local level.



Check-In

Marc opened the check-in for the assembly. The check-in is a way to reconnect with each other. We come into the space from many different places with other things on our minds, both business and personal. The check-in is a way to put them aside and be present for the work at hand.

Marc asked the group a light-hearted question before we got down to a busy evening. He asked that we share our name and answer the following question:

“If you created a pill, what would it be and what would it do?”

The responses followed a common theme throughout the group focusing on change, collaboration, optimal health, and dignity for all. Some of the responses were:

- | | |
|----------------|----------------------------------|
| • Holistic | • Understand, respect & kindness |
| • Empowerment | • Access |
| • Synergy Plus | • Balance |
| • Erascism | • Do the right thing |
| • Action | |
| • Equal | |

The group felt that with knowledge, equality, support, and respect, individuals would feel supported by their community and have a desire to make changes for themselves.

Framing for the Day

Phil Cass framed the meeting by sharing with the group that the OOH project was at an impasse. We are here to ask for help in determining the next steps and direction for the project. Historically, solving problems with the health care system has been focused on band-aiding what currently exists and making incremental changes in response to new problems. The goal of OOH is not to shift the system as it currently exists, but to make transformative changes and create something new. This can only be accomplished by bringing new voices into the process, rather than holding conversations with the same individuals making all of the decisions.

The current health care system is based on sickness and isn't sustainable. How do we change the conversation to a system built on optimal health and prevention? Where do we begin hosting a dialogue with a group of people around the changes that need to occur?

In the past two years since the inception of OOH, the conversations around people's health has grown from health care access to access and prevention. Companies and cities are investing in prevention programs to reduce cost and promote health. Out of the assemblies two community change pilots have evolved and individuals from these groups are holding conversations around issues of public policy and optimal health for neighborhoods. There is growing energy in Franklin County and nationally around people's health.



The job of the OOH Core Hosting Group is to gather people and host conversations. We didn't come into the room with the answer. The expectation for action has frustrated many people involved in earlier assemblies and we are continuing to see fewer people in the room. For some of us, this is our day job while others volunteer their time in the hopes of making a difference. Our question is "How do we sustain this project and to give energy to the premise that the community will continue to guide the conversation?"

As we move forward our vision for the project is about the following:

- **Increasing Connections**—many companies are working on prevention policies and aren't connected to existing work. OOH could be a connector and create a learning environment.
- **Building capacity**—Providing trainings that provide the community with new skills and tools to organize around issues impacting them.
- **Collaborative Learning**—Identifying what we've learned so far and sharing it with the broader community.
- **Supporting Community Change pilots**—Provide resources, technical assistance and facilitation (as requested).
- **Structure**—Learning how to organize ourselves. What container do we build to hold the project?

We need your help in framing the best strategy to advance this initiative and how to move it forward with everyone from the community invested in the outcome.

Café

Tuesday Ryan-Hart led the conversation into café . The concept behind café is that of a gathering place where ideas are born and honest conversations occur. At each table someone is designated as a “host” and remains there for the duration of the designated time. Another individual offers to “harvest” or keep notes from the conversation. At the beginning of each session the host shares comments from earlier conversations to enhance the next discussion.

Café Rules
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on what matters • Speak from the heart • Voice your experience • Link & connect to ideas—cross pollinate between the groups • Listen together for deeper themes • Play, doodle & draw

The first question for café was **“What direction(s) does this initiative need to take?”**
The group went to work and the following themes emerged during the report out.

Build a solid foundation that is Sustainable—Slow the process	How can we create neighborhood advocacy? Tap into what currently exists.
Create a balance between offering & asking what should happen	Define measurable goals—What does it look like as we build a foundation?
I struggle with us meeting but no action, just theoretical discussion.	Strengthen the definition of wellness and take it to the streets.
Be the facilitator of discussions	Act as an incubator
Keeping the direction about consumers and future partners	Stay true to the purpose—credibility
Create a system to work with changing community demographics in Columbus	Support specific projects—Core Hosting Group may be connector for emerging work, like medical homes
How do we translate energy into action?	Bring people together to talk about existing policies
Join the conversation shift to wellness	Is this a movement? Is there something else we need to do?



Tuesday led us through the harvest and moved the group to the next question. She posed the question, **“How should a community organize now to move this initiative forward?”**

What is the tipping point to make this a movement? What would it take?	Recognize that movements start small and build energy—expand the circle
Are we willing to galvanize and make people uncomfortable with what we are saying and doing?	Is the community already organizing itself?
Link existing circles in the community to OOH work	Define “gathered community”
Need to have the 4 quadrants of the Generon community report present and in the room (health care, community, business, and government).	Trust—know that the individuals moving this forward are staying true to the purpose.
Build on what we already know works/ doesn’t work.	Communicate better with the community what OOH is doing. Connect with the existing groups.
For those not working on health, work with them to put it on their community agenda.	Pilot a project that has an action component and can be integrated into the community for sustainability.
Be intentional about work groups and have OOH be a conduit to the community	Are providers on board? How do we better communicate our objective to mobilize them?
Create incentives—give the community the opportunity to identify what’s important to them and help make connections to resources to move them toward ways to change things	Get an accurate assessment of consumers. Don’t blame the “victim”.
Create a web page of all of the resources available for health care.	Work with ERs and the Free Clinic around issues of not serving the uninsured.

The group wrapped up their café discussions by answering the question
“How could I utilize my time, resources, and skills to accomplish the purpose?”

What is the purpose? How do we work toward a common purpose?	I can better understand the goals of OOH and where my skills apply.
Be a connector to the community groups and bring others into the existing works.	Help build a network.
Build bridges one-by-one.	Work toward a common purpose.
Identify the needs of the community to move forward and provide/identify available resources.	What are we willing to give up so that others have equal access?
Help people figure out where they fit in to the process.	Plug into existing groups working on wellness as well as local work being done.
Hold a passion for holistic health.	Connect with the senior population on their health needs and impact of current system.
OOH act as the connector via a website—be the central point of information about existing health programs.	Bring positive and negative energy into the room to ignite conversations about the barriers to change.
Hold a “wellness summit” and have all stakeholders gather.	Hold the integrity of the purpose.
Link via a web site, voluntary opportunities within a community for individuals to connect.	

Assembly participants shared that they had energy for the OOH project but feel a need to move toward some action steps. As individuals many felt moved to stay engaged in the process and assess where they should apply their energy and skills.



Check-out

Phil brought the group back into the circle. He thanked them for their time, energy and effort in shaping the future direction of OOH. He made one final request of them for the night: respond to the following questions and leave their response on the chair.

“What are the best next steps for the initiative?”

and

“What are my best next steps?”

The responses once again articulate a need for OOH to begin framing their next step toward actions and creating a sustainable structure. Many of the answers to the best next steps for the initiative were similar to direction, regarding action, connecting with communities already organizing, continue to have a forum for dialogue and to keep moving forward.



We compiled the responses from the questions “What is my next best step (regarding the OOH initiative?)” and there is a clear message that people are willing to move through this process as a community in the hopes that outcome will take us to our purpose. Below are the next steps for the participants in the room.

Continue to show up.	Join the Core Hosting Group and determine what support I can provide.
Re-engage myself in the OOH process. Find opportunities to engage others in my community.	Leverage the work of OOH to achieve the goal of improving the health of Ohio.
Build useful relationships at the assemblies.	To reflect on where to invest my time and energy.
Help with the idea of a web site and meetings with the free clinics.	Attend the Neighborhood group to identify goals/objectives. Take this information to already established groups in the community.
To share knowledge with the Public Policy group.	Harvest ways & methods to make this initiative work.
Bring in my resources and skills.	Assess what wellness programs currently exist.
Continue to implement programs holistically from my own professional perspective.	Working toward changing the attitude of my own health care organization to affect change.

Appendix—1

We would like to thank everyone for all of their hard work and investment in making the Our Optimal Health project a community effort. Thank you for your time and energy.

Names of participants listed here:

Douglas Anderson
Linda Artis
Liban Bule
Philip Cass PhD
Katie Clark
Debera L. Diggs
Margit Dijkstra
Wanda Dillard
William Friday
Jerry Friedman
Lorraine Furtado
John Gregory
Deb Helber
Sarah Hudson-Disalle
Sandy Huntzinger
Isi Ikharebha
Ryan Johnson

Stephanie Jursek
Nancy Lee
Cathy Levine JD
Cynthia Marshall
Kathleen McGarvey
Zettawee Mix
Sherry Mori
Stacy Morton
Marc Parnes
Ellen Rapkin
Elizabeth Relyea
Tuesday Ryan-Hart
Ying Studebaker
Keith Vesper
Beth Whitted
Sherry Williams