



**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE**

Ashwin Vasani, MD, PhD
Commissioner

May 20, 2024

**Gotham Center
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Queens, NY 11101-4132**

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Ethan Carrier, Esq.
General Counsel
New York City Conflicts of Interest Board
2 Lafayette Street, Suite 1010
New York, NY 10007

Re: §1-13(e)(1) Designation for Audrie King to the Board of National Coalition of STD Directors

Dear Mr. Carrier:

Pursuant to Rule §1-13(e)(1) of the Conflicts of Interest Board, I, as Commissioner of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (“DOHMH”), hereby designate Audrie King, in her official capacity as Director of Sexually Transmitted Infections (“STI”) Policy in the Bureau of Hepatitis, HIV, and STI (“BHHS”), to serve as a member of the Board of the National Coalition of STD Directors (“NCSD”), to assist in developing and sharing information regarding STIs with other health departments across the country.

NCSD is a national public health membership organization representing health department STI directors, their support staff, and community-based partners across fifty states, seven large cities, and five U.S. territories. NCSD’s mission is to advance equitable, effective STI prevention programs and services in communities across the country. NCSD provides their members with technical assistance and training; develops and shares informational resources; and facilitates peer learning and support. The organization educates policy makers, public health professionals, organizational allies, and the general public about why STIs are a public health priority and what is needed to address them most effectively.

DOHMH prioritizes the sexual health and well-being of New Yorkers. The Agency’s sexual health programming and services ensure that all New Yorkers have access to high-quality, affirming services and proven prevention and treatment interventions. DOHMH continues to expand its Sexual Health Clinics, which offer low- to no-cost STI testing and treatment, including universal HIV testing, PrEP and emergency PEP, and HIV treatment. As such, this Agency has a strong interest in

promoting routine STI testing and finding strategies to keep STI rates down, especially for young people and Black and Latinx communities.

Ms. King's duties are directly connected to this mission. As Director of STI Policy, Ms. King monitors and responds to local, state, and federal legislation, regulations, policies, and funding streams related to STIs; responds to STI and LGBTQ+ health-related policy inquiries from Agency staff and external stakeholders, including government officials, in the form of policy briefs, reports, presentations, literature reviews, and grant deliverables; and serves as a strategic advisor to the BHHS Director of Policy and External Affairs, BHHS Assistant Commissioner, Bureau of Public Health Clinics, and Division of Disease Control regarding STI and LGBTQ health-related policy matters and funding streams.

Ms. King's work as Chair on the Board of Directors for NCSD compliments her City role as STI Policy Director for BHHS. Being involved with NCSD allows Ms. King to connect with other STI professionals across the country, thus networking, brainstorming, and learning from one another about STI trends nationwide, therefore providing New York City the tools to continue preventing and treating STIs.

Excluding annual membership dues and fees, the City does not have business dealings with NCSD. Furthermore, I am advised that Ms. King does not anticipate or foresee any conflicts between her responsibilities at DOHMH and involvement with NCSD's Board. The Board meets monthly. Ms. King anticipates spending approximately ten hours a month fulfilling her NCSD Board duties.

Based on the foregoing, I have concluded that, pursuant to Rule §1-13(e)(1), (i) there is a demonstrated nexus between the proposed work with NCSD, Ms. King's City job, and the mission of BHHS; (ii) such work furthers this Agency's mission and is not undertaken primarily for the benefit or interests of NCSD; and (iii) Ms. King takes no part in NCSD's business dealings with the City or DOHMH. I support Ms. King serving in this role, subject to any required stipulations and/or recusals on her part. I also request that Ms. King be allowed the reasonable and incidental use of City time, equipment, supplies, and resources for her participation with NCSD as part of her City duties.

Thank you for your attention to and consideration of this matter. If you have any questions, please call Karrie Ann Sheridan, Deputy Director of the Employment Law Unit at (347) 396-6015.

Sincerely,



Ashwin Vasan, MD, PhD
Commissioner

AS/kas
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cc: Karrie Sheridan



**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE**

Ashwin Vasani, MD, PhD
Commissioner

May 14, 2024

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Ethan Carrier, Esq.
General Counsel
New York City Conflicts of Interest Board
2 Lafayette Street, Suite 1010
New York, NY 10007

Re: §1-13(e)(1) Designation for Maia Fitzstevens to the Board of WE ACT for Environmental Justice

Dear Mr. Carrier:

Pursuant to Rule §1-13(e)(1) of the Conflicts of Interest Board, I, as Commissioner of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (“DOHMH”), hereby designate Maia Fitzstevens, in her official capacity as Environmental Health Scientist in the Bureau of Environmental Disease and Injury Prevention, to serve as a member of the Beauty Inside Out Campaign Advisory Board of WE ACT for Environmental Justice (“WE ACT”), to assist in preventing and reducing exposure to hazardous ingredients in skin care products, especially in low-income communities and communities of color.

WE ACT’s mission is to build healthy communities by ensuring that people of color and/or low-income residents participate meaningfully in the creation of sound and fair environmental health and protection policies and practices. WE ACT envisions a community with strong and equal environmental protections, increased environmental health through community-based participatory research and evidence-based campaigns, and informed and engaged residents who participate fully in decision-making on key issues that impact their health and community. The Beauty Inside Out Campaign is WE ACT’s multi-year effort to address: (i) toxic chemicals in personal care and beauty products, particularly those marketed to people of color; and (ii) racism, systemic oppression, and societal harms perpetuated by Eurocentric beauty standards, targeted marketing, and social conditioning of harmful beauty norms.

DOHMH works to protect and promote the health of New Yorkers. The mission of the Bureau of Environmental Disease and Injury Prevention is to prevent environmental disease and injury in homes, communities, and the workplace, and to protect health by promoting healthy environments and health equity. Ms. Fitzstevens' unit, the Risk Assessment Unit, oversees the Bureau's community investigations of contaminated consumer products. As such, the environmental health and health equity goals of WE ACT and DOHMH are in alignment.

Furthermore, Ms. Fitzstevens' duties and goals are directly connected to this mission. As an Environmental Health Scientist, she conducts surveys to identify lead and other heavy metal contaminated consumer products on NYC store shelves and coordinate enforcement on hazardous products. Ms. Fitzstevens also develops methods for rapid screening of mercury-contaminated skin lightening products and works with over ten years of DOHMH data from continuous surveillance and product testing. There is much overlap between WE ACT's goals to prevent and reduce exposure to hazardous ingredients in skin care products and the Risk Assessment Unit's actions on skin lightening products.

WE ACT does not engage in business dealings with the City. Therefore, I am advised that Ms. Fitzstevens does not anticipate or foresee any conflicts between her day-to-day responsibilities at DOHMH and involvement with WE ACT's Board. The Board meets bimonthly. Ms. Fitzstevens anticipates spending approximately two hours a month fulfilling her WE ACT Board duties.

Based on the foregoing, I have concluded that, pursuant to Rule §1-13(e)(1), (i) there is a demonstrated nexus between the proposed work with WE ACT, Ms. Fitzstevens' City job, and the mission of the Bureau of Environmental Disease and Injury Prevention; (ii) such work furthers this Agency's mission and is not undertaken primarily for the benefit or interests of the not-for-profit; and (iii) Ms. Fitzstevens will take no part in any of WE ACT's potential business dealings with the City or DOHMH. I support Ms. Fitzstevens serving in this role, subject to any required stipulations and/or recusals on her part. I also request that Ms. Fitzstevens be allowed the reasonable and incidental use of City time, equipment, supplies, and resources for her participation with WE ACT as part of her City duties.

Thank you for your attention to and consideration of this matter. If you have any questions, please call Karrie Ann Sheridan, Deputy Director of the Employment Law Unit at (347) 396-6015.

Sincerely,



Ashwin Vasan, MD, PhD
Commissioner

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cc: Karrie Sheridan



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2 Lafayette Street, Suite 1010
New York, NY 10007

Re: §1-13(e)(1) Designation for Ilish Neely to the Board of CityMatCH

Dear Mr. Carrier:

Pursuant to the Conflicts of Interest Board Rule §1-13(e)(1), I, as Commissioner of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (“DOHMH”), hereby designate Ilish Neely, in her official capacity as Women’s Health Suite Site Coordinator in the Bureau of Bronx Neighborhood Health, Center for Health Equity and Community Wellness (CHECW), to serve as a member of the Board of CityMatCH, to assist in the dissemination of knowledge, issues, and solutions regarding maternal and child health.

CityMatCH is a national membership organization of the maternal and child health programs of the city and county health departments’ leaders representing urban communities in the United States. CityMatCH’s mission is to strengthen public health leaders and organizations to promote equity and improve the health of urban women, families, and communities. The organization creates awareness amongst a variety of both traditional and non-traditional maternal health-based topics. CityMatCH produces helpful solutions through software suggestions, national workgroups, leadership trainings, “lunch & learns,” and more.

DOHMH’s mission to promote health equity includes a comprehensive approach to improving maternal and infant health outcomes. This goal is carried out through community-based initiatives that increase residents’ knowledge and influence behaviors to improve maternal and infant health outcomes throughout New York City.

This is exemplified through DOHMH's CHECW and Sexual and Reproductive Health Unit, as well as the Agency's initiatives, including the Newborn Home Visiting Program and the maternal Health Quality Improvement Network Initiative. As such, this Agency has a strong interest in collaborating with local, state, and national health departments to gain knowledge on current maternal and child health trends and solutions.

As Women's Health Suite Site Coordinator, Ms. Neely builds new and strengthens existing community partnerships. She provides oversight of Family Wellness Suite programming in the Bronx and offers guidance to the Brooklyn and Harlem locations, as well as collaborates with internal, community, and governmental partners to engage in coalition-building activities to achieve a collective impact on racial disparities in maternal and infant birth outcomes.

Ms. Neely's duties are directly connected to this mission. Her participation on the Board ensures that DOHMH remains on the pulse of current best public health practices and emerging public health trends.

CityMatCH does not engage in business dealings with the City. Therefore, I am advised that Ms. Neely does not anticipate or foresee any conflicts between her day-to-day responsibilities at DOHMH and involvement with CityMatCH's Board. The Board meets monthly. Ms. Neely anticipates spending two hours a month fulfilling her CityMatCH Board duties.

Based on the foregoing, I have concluded that, pursuant to Rule §1-13(e)(1), (i) there is a demonstrated nexus between the proposed work with CityMatCH, Ms. Neely's City job, and the mission of CHECW; (ii) such work furthers this Agency's mission and is not undertaken primarily for the benefit or interests of the not-for-profit; and (iii) Ms. Neely will take no part in any of CityMatCH's potential business dealings with the City or DOHMH. I support Ms. Neely serving in this role, subject to any required stipulations and/or recusals on her part. I also request that Ms. Neely be allowed the reasonable and incidental use of City time, equipment, supplies, and resources for her participation with CityMatCH as part of her City duties.

Thank you for your attention to and consideration of this matter. If you have any questions, please call Karrie Ann Sheridan, Deputy Director of the Employment Law Unit at (347) 396-6015.

Sincerely,



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Re: §1-13(e)(1) Designation for Regina Zimmerman to the Board of the Bronx RHIO

Dear Mr. Carrier:

Pursuant to Rule §1-13(e)(1) of the Conflicts of Interest Board, I, as Commissioner of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (“DOHMH”), hereby designate Regina Zimmerman, in her official capacity as Senior Director of Data Governance and Informatics Unit (“DGI”) in the Bureau of Epidemiology Services, to serve as a member of the Board of the Bronx Regional Health Information Organization (“Bronx RHIO”), to assist in the efficient use of administrative health data to enhance patient safety and public health activities.

Bronx RHIO is a clinical information exchange established by the borough’s leading healthcare organizations, including hospitals, health systems, individual physician offices, home care, and more. The non-profit participates in the Statewide Health Information Network for New York (“SHIN-NY”), which enables statewide sharing of data. Bronx RHIO’s mission is to build a secure, interoperable health information exchange that will enable patients’ medical records to follow them wherever they go for health services in the Bronx. This transforms healthcare delivery in the Bronx to a patient-centered, rational, cost-effective system. Patients and clinicians will have vital health information when and where it is needed, enabling significant improvements in patient safety, health outcomes, and practice efficiencies.

DOHMH accesses and uses Bronx RHIO data for public health activities and periodically participates in projects that support the efficient and improved use of data. Specifically, DGI governs the use of these data for and with DOHMH, providing data users policies and resources to support user ability and track access as required. As such, this Agency has a strong interest in promoting a cost-effective clinical information exchange to enhance patient safety and efficiency.

Ms. Zimmerman's duties are directly connected to the Agency's mission. As Senior Director of DGI, she oversees the data governance of administrative health data received under legal agreements from the New York State Department of Health (e.g., Medicaid and hospital discharge), and electronic health record data received under partnership agreements from Regional Health Information Organizations. Additionally, Ms. Zimmerman oversees the Unit's coordination of operations; maintains compliance with NYC Open Data Local Law 11; upholds the department-wide Data Catalog¹; serves on the Data Modernization Initiative Core team; and coordinates the Agency's centralized data governance framework, including the acquisition and implementation of an Enterprise Data Catalog². As a board member of Bronx RHIO, Ms. Zimmerman advocates for the improved and efficient use of administrative health data and understanding how the non-profit can serve DOHMH to be more efficient in its public health activities.

Although Bronx RHIO has business dealings with DOHMH, Ms. Zimmerman does not participate in the funding or other fiduciary decisions related to these contracts. Furthermore, I have been advised that Ms. Zimmerman does not anticipate or foresee any conflicts between her day-to-day responsibilities at DOHMH and involvement with Bronx RHIO's Board. The Board meets bimonthly. Ms. Zimmerman anticipates spending one-to-two hours a month fulfilling her Bronx RHIO Board duties.

Based on the foregoing, I have concluded that, pursuant to Rule §1-13(e)(1), (i) there is a demonstrated nexus between the proposed work with Bronx RHIO, Ms. Zimmerman's City job, and the mission of DGI; (ii) such work furthers this agency's mission and is not undertaken primarily for the benefit or interests of the Bronx RHIO; and (iii) Ms. Zimmerman takes no part in Bronx RHIO's business dealings with the City or DOHMH. I support Ms. Zimmerman serving in this role, subject to any required stipulations and/or recusals on her part. I also request that Ms. Zimmerman be allowed the reasonable and incidental use of City time, equipment, supplies, and resources for her participation with Bronx RHIO as part of her City duties.

Thank you for your attention to and consideration of this matter. If you have any questions, please call Karrie Ann Sheridan, Deputy Director of the Employment Law Unit at (347) 396-6015.

Sincerely,



Ashwin Vasani, MD, PhD
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Re: §1-13(e)(1) Designation for Maura Kennelly to the Board of the New York State Association of County Health Officials

Dear Mr. Carrier:

Pursuant to Rule §1-13(e)(1) of the Conflicts of Interest Board, I, as Commissioner of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (“DOHMH”), hereby designate Maura Kennelly, in her official capacity as Deputy Commissioner of External Affairs, to serve as a member of the Board of the New York State Association of County Health Officials (“NYSACHO”), to assist in protecting and promoting the health of New Yorkers by connecting with other local health departments in New York State.

NYSACHO is a membership association of the fifty-eight local health departments in New York State. NYSACHO supports, advocates for, and empowers local health departments in their work to promote health and wellness and prevent disease, disability, and injury throughout New York State. They advocate for local public health professionals, seeking to keep health services a priority in New York State’s budget decisions and supporting media outreach for public education. The association is recognized as the collective voice leading policy, education, and advocacy to create healthy, safe communities in New York State. NYSACHO provides many public health resources in support of their member departments on their website.

As the State’s largest local health department, DOHMH plays a vital role in this mission. The Office of External Affairs (OEA) is comprised of the government and community affairs, marketing, publications, public affairs, and other units.

OEA communicates with City Hall, city agencies, elected officials, and other external stakeholders about DOHMH's priorities and projects. OEA has a strong interest in advocating for and promoting the Agency's wide range of initiatives and accomplishments, as well as sharing the Agency's goals for the future. Similarly, NYSACHO is a key advocacy partner for the shared goals and priorities with other local health departments.

Ms. Kennelly's duties are directly connected to this mission. Over the course of her tenure, Ms. Kennelly has worked closely with NYSACHO on advocacy efforts for the Agency's priorities in Albany and Washington, D.C. As such, NYSACHO's role as an advocacy partner for local health departments dovetails with Ms. Kennelly's job as Deputy Commissioner of External Affairs. She represents DOHMH on the Board, and thus relays key information on shared interests with the Commissioner and other senior leaders.

NYSACHO does not have business dealings with the City. Therefore, I am advised that Ms. Kennelly does not anticipate or foresee any conflicts between her day-to-day responsibilities at DOHMH and involvement with NYSACHO's Board. The Board meets once a month. Ms. Kennelly anticipates spending approximately five-to-ten hours a month fulfilling her NYSACHO Board duties.

Based on the foregoing, I have concluded that, pursuant to Rule §1-13(e)(1), (i) there is a demonstrated nexus between the proposed work with NYSACHO, Ms. Kennelly's City job, and the mission of the Office of External Affairs; (ii) such work furthers this Agency's mission and is not undertaken primarily for the benefit or interests of the not-for-profit; and (iii) Ms. Kennelly will take no part in NYSACHO's potential business dealings with the City or DOHMH. I support Ms. Kennelly serving in this role, subject to any required stipulations and/or recusals on her part. I also request that Ms. Kennelly be allowed the reasonable and incidental use of City time, equipment, supplies, and resources for her participation with NYSACHO as part of her City duties.

Thank you for your attention to and consideration of this matter. If you have any questions, please call Karrie Ann Sheridan, Deputy Director of the Employment Law Unit at (347) 396-6015.

Sincerely,



Ashwin Vasani, MD, PhD
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