

July 8, 2016



Emma
endnote

EMMA I. DARNELL

FULTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

DISTRICT 6

emma.darnell@fultoncountyga.gov
www.emmadarnell.com



@commdarnell



Commissioner Emma I. Darnell

Remember “Common Ground?”

Remember the County’s much publicized (by us) initiative to reduce or eliminate health disparities in Fulton County?

Remember the “integrated health care system” to be located in neighborhood health centers throughout Fulton County?

The approach, borrowed from King County (Washington) was based upon a finding by health professionals that health status, the incidence of heart disease, diabetes, cancer in an area is affected not only by behavioral factors, e.g., smoking, alcohol, etc. but also by certain social and economic factors within the client’s environment.

From a program standpoint, the implications were clear. In order to improve overall client care, public health had to be involved with much more than the distribution of WIC vouchers, pre-school immunizations and passport examinations. It called for “services integration” including primary care, behavioral health care, skills training, library services and quality, affordable day care and pre-natal education.

There was to be a common intake and screening process, a standard referral process, and supporting infrastructure.

It was an approach that also involved enhanced community involvement and engagement, in addition to on-going comprehensive program evaluation.

Speaking of evaluation and to the point: how are we doing with “Common Ground?”

We have talked the talk of “zero tolerance” for health disparities since 2008 but have we really “walked the walk?” Do we have a real return on the tax dollars we have spent to design and build (award-winning) health centers?

The findings of a “KPMG Common Ground Audit” have been disappointing. In every area, including Organizational Structure and Staff, Programs and Operations, we have made “minimal progress.”

No “Common practices for (integrated) service delivery that are consistent with Common Ground’s philosophy have been established,” the report states. Further, the audit indicates no models for integrated case management for target populations have been developed. Intake and referral processes are also underdeveloped.

Meanwhile, we hold our historic position as one of Georgia’s counties with the highest level of health disparity—and one of the richest.

TO READ the “KPMG Common Ground Status Update,” Anthony Nicks, County Auditor, April 13, 2015, go to www.emmadarnell.com, click HOME, then DOCUMENTS tab.

Contact Commissioner Darnell (404) 612-8222

Fulton County

Government Center
141 Pryor Street, SW
Suite 10023
Atlanta, GA 30303

DISTRICT OFFICES

Fulton County

Government Service Center
5440 Fulton Industrial Blvd.
Atlanta, GA 30336

South Fulton Service Center

5600 Stonewall Tell Rd.
College Park, GA 30349

