HAWAII STATE HEALTH PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (SHPDA)
1177 Alakea Street, Suite 402 • Honolulu, HI 96813 • Phone: (808) 587-0788
Kupuna Advisory Council

DRAFT
Meeting Minutes
October 9, 2026 | 2:00 PM Hawaii Time
Virtually via Zoom and Physical Meeting Location at
The Keoni Ana Building, 1177 Alakea Street, Suite 402

MEMBERS: (Chair) Ritabelle Fernandes, Melissa Ah Ho-Mauga, Marilyn Seeley, Lindsey Ilagan, Jinyong Lee, Stephen Kemble, Kevin Kawamoto
MEMBERS ABSENT: Warren Wong, Lawrence Nitz, Jeanette Koijane, Cullen Hayashida, Michelle Cordero-Lee, Nathan Hokama, Brandy Shima, Tani Salazar, Derrick Ariyoshi, Rick Tabor
GUESTS: Ashok Kannon, Caroline Cadirao, Joy Windham
SHPDA: John Lewin, Terry Visperas, Wanda Anae-Onishi, Jason Espero

ATTENDANCE RECORD

Date	10/9/26									
*Ritabelle Fernandes	X									
Melissa Ah Ho-Mauga	X									
Marilyn Seeley	X									
Lindsey Ilagan	X									
Jinyong Lee	X									
Stephen Kemble	X									
Kevin Kawamoto	X									
Ashok Kanno	X									
Wanda Anae-Onishi	X									
Caroline Cadirao	X									
Joy Windham	X									
Terry Visperas	X									
John Lewin	X									
Jason Espero	X									
Warren Wong	O									
Lawrence Nitz	O									
Jeanette Koijane	O									
Cullen Hayashida	O									
Michelle Cordero-Lee	O									
Nathan Hokama	O									

Brandy Shima	O									
Tani Salazar	O									
Derrick Ariyoshi	O									
Rick Tabor	O									

Legend: X=Present; O=Absent; /=No Meeting/Cancellation | *-Chair, **-Vice Chair

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION
Call to Order	Chair Ritabelle Fernandes called the meeting to order at **2:03 p.m.** Chair Fernandes welcomed attendees and introduced Jason Espero, SHPDA's new Comprehensive Health Planning Coordinator. Jason will oversee SHPDA advisory groups, including the Kupuna Advisory Council, and support updates to the State Health Services and Facilities Plan. Terry Visperas will continue overseeing the Sub-Area Health Planning Councils.	
ROLL CALL/ INTRODUCTIONS	A quorum was confirmed. **Members present included:** • Ritabelle Fernandes • Melissa Ah Ho-Mauga • Marilyn Seely • Jenny Lee • Stephen Kemble • Kevin Kawamoto • Lindsay Illigan • **SHPDA staff present included:** • Dr. Jack Lewin • Jason Espero • Terry Visperas • Wanda Anaya-Onishi **Guests included:** • Caroline Cadirao, Executive Office on Aging • Joy Windham, Executive Office on Aging • Dr. Ashok Kannan, Kauaʻi • Other attendees as recorded by SHPDA	

WELCOME & Approval of Meeting Minutes	Lindsay Illigan moved to approve the August 14, 2026 meeting minutes. Kevin Kawamoto seconded the motion. There was no discussion or requested correction. The minutes were approved unanimously, with no objections or abstentions.	
PUBLIC TESTIMONY	No written or oral public testimony was received.	
SHPDA UPDATES	Dr. Jack Lewin provided an overview of Hawai'i's Rural Health Transformation Program. Hawai'i is expected to receive approximately $190 million annually for five years, with SHPDA responsible for approximately $70 million annually. SHPDA's major **RHTP** efforts include: • Rural health information technology and interoperability. • Rural value-based care transformation. • Hospital and federally qualified health center infrastructure and readiness. • Development of a statewide clinically integrated network and management services organization to support independent providers. • EHR/EMR upgrades and network infrastructure. • Expansion and modernization of health information exchange capabilities. • Development of an Analytics and Technical Assistance Hub. • Community care coordination services. • Improved coordination and data support for individuals who are dually eligible for Medicare and Medicaid. Dr. Lewin noted that first-year RHTP funds must be placed under contract within the required federal timeframe and fully expended by July 2027. Council member Stephen Kemble raised the importance of reducing administrative burdens on primary care providers, in addition to increasing reimbursement. Dr. Lewin explained that RHTP resources may support practice-level staff such as care coordinators and population health personnel, allowing physicians and APRNs to spend more time providing direct patient care.	

AHEAD

Dr. Lewin provided a brief update on the AHEAD Model. SHPDA continues developing a payment approach intended to strengthen primary care, improve quality, better use health care data, and control total cost of care.

Current planning includes a potential hybrid reimbursement approach combining fee-for-service, value-based reimbursement, and quality incentives.

Dr. Lewin noted that federal Medicaid funding changes have created uncertainty regarding implementation of AHEAD. RHTP resources may provide some support for continued preparation.

Legislative Updates

Dr. Lewin identified primary care access and financing as a likely major health care issue for the upcoming legislative session. Particular concern was expressed regarding declining access to primary care, especially on the neighbor islands.

SHPDA is preparing for discussions regarding potential strategies to strengthen primary care capacity and reimbursement.

KupunAloha

Executive Office on Aging Director Caroline Cadirao and Joy Windham provided an update on the Kupuna Aloha Program.

The procurement was successfully completed and Ho'okele was selected to administer the program. Total funding is $2.55 million, consisting of:

- $1.8 million in State funding.
- $750,000 in Rural Health Transformation funding.

The contract was expected to be finalized the following week. Funds must be expended by June 30, 2027.

The program will support vulnerable kūpuna who may not otherwise qualify for traditional home- and community-based services. Program performance and outcomes will be monitored to determine lessons learned and whether additional future funding should be pursued.
Ho'okele is expected to establish a steering committee. Kupuna Advisory Council members

	may have an opportunity to participate. **Long-Term Care Financing** Stephen Kemble reported that he has attended several meetings related to the long-term care financing initiative. The work remains early in development, and there were no substantive updates to report at this time.	
ANNOUNCEMENTS	Terry Visperas recognized Chair Fernandes for her recent promotion to Captain in the U.S. Navy Reserve.	
RECRUITMENT DISCUSSION	SHPDA provided an update on efforts to increase neighbor island representation on the Kupuna Advisory Council. Jason Espero and Terry Visperas have contacted neighbor island Offices on Aging and planned meetings with county aging offices to identify potential representatives or community members interested in joining the Council. Dr. Ashok Kannan, a geriatrician practicing on Kauaʻi, attended the meeting and expressed interest in contributing to the Council. He described his work providing home-based geriatric services and coordinating with local aging, public safety, and community organizations. Chair Fernandes encouraged Council members to recommend additional qualified individuals from the neighbor islands.	
NEXT KUPUNA ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING	The next meeting is scheduled for: **November 13, 2026 at 2:00 p.m. via Zoom.** Future meetings are planned for the **second Friday of each month from 2:00–3:00 p.m.** Jason Espero will ensure the Zoom meeting information is scheduled and distributed. Council members were invited to recommend future agenda topics. Suggested presentations included more detailed updates on individual Rural Health Transformation initiatives, including: • Pharmacy-related programs benefiting kūpuna. • HOME RUN workforce initiatives. • Rural respite services.	

	• Other RHTP programs relevant to older adults The Council expressed interest in using future meetings to better understand these initiatives and identify opportunities for Council members to provide advice or participate in related steering committees.	
ADJOURNMENT	With no further business, Chair Fernandes adjourned the meeting at **2:46 p.m.** **Next Meeting:** November 13, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.	