



**General Membership Meeting
September 1, 2016**

9:40 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Southcoast Center for Women's Health, 300 B Faunce Corner Road, North Dartmouth, MA

Members present (9): Barbara Acksen, Helena DaSilva-Hughes, Jean DeCoffe, Jay Kenney, Kerry Mello, Gloria Villalobo, Morissa Vital, Melissa Weidman, Kathleen Wilbur. *If your name does not appear on this list and you attended the meeting, please contact gnballies@gmail.com.*

Minutes

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:40 a.m. by Chair, Barbara Acksen, who welcomed round table introductions of those in attendance.

Presentation: Overview of HopeHealth and Hospice 101 (Melissa Weidman)

Melissa Weidman, Director of Community Relations and Outreach at HopeHealth, gave a presentation on her organization and hospice. Ms. Weidman said that HopeHealth (which was originally called Hospice of Cape Cod) was founded in 1981 when they received their official 501(c)(3) independent non-profit status, allowing the community to contribute to their ongoing services. Ms. Weidman said the organization's mission is to provide a wide range of services that enhance the comfort and quality of life for people experiencing the impact of serious illness and loss. These services include: hospice care, bereavement, dementia and Alzheimer's services, and education for healthcare professionals and community members.

With 35 years of experience in hospice care, Ms. Weidman said that people are often frightened when they hear the word "hospice," which is why hospice is generally underutilized in the United States. She said that hospice is the best kept secret in health care and is covered by Medicare and private insurance. She stressed that anyone with a potentially life-limited illness or combination of illnesses may be eligible for hospice care as long as they meet the Federal guidelines.

Ms. Weidman said there are a number of misconceptions regarding hospice care and distributed a handout describing many of the misperceptions. These include (1) Hospice is where you go when there is nothing more a doctor can do; (2) To be eligible for hospice, I have to be in the final stages of dying; (3) I have to wait until my doctor says I am eligible for hospice; (4) Hospice means giving up hope; (5) Hospice care runs out after six months; (6) Hospice is just for the elderly; (7) Hospice

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care is only for cancer or AIDS patients; (8) Hospice will accelerate the dying process; (9) If I chose hospice care, I have to leave my home; (10) There's no hospice in my area; (11) After the patient's death, hospice care ends; (12) Hospice is too expensive; (13) Hospice just sedates patients to manage their pain; (14) Patients must be bedridden to qualify for hospice; (15) Hospice includes 24-hour professional care; (16) Hospice patients can't resume traditional medical care; and (17) If my hospital or facility has its own hospice, I have to use that one.

Ms. Weidman said that HopeHealth serves thousands of people each year – delivering a wide range of services throughout eastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island. She said if anyone is interested in having her speak about HopeHealth or hospice in their community to contact her at mwediman@HopeHealthCo.org.

Ms. Weidman concluded her presentation by distributing copies of a booklet called Five Wishes. She said Five Wishes is a United States advance directive created by the non-profit organization Aging with Dignity. She said Five Wishes is a simple form that documents your instructions for your future medical care in the event you become unable to speak for yourself. It currently meets the legal requirements for an advance directive in 42 states, including Massachusetts and Rhode Island, and the District of Columbia.

Business meeting

Meeting minutes – approval

June 2, 2016 – Helena DaSilva-Hughes moved to approve the report as amended (month correction from September to December in the Health Equity Standing Committee Report section), Jean DeCoffe seconded, with no discussion all members present approved the June minutes.

Treasurer's Report – approval

- Bank balance 7/31/2016: \$206,966.33
- Total Encumbered Funds: \$164,386.18
- Unrestricted net assets: \$47,953.45

Kerry Mello moved to approve the Treasurer's report, Helena DaSilva-Hughes seconded, with no discussion all members present approved the report.

Standing Committee reports

Health Access – Barbara Acksen reported that four people recently completed their training in the mother-woman group model. She said they are now looking at potential sites for doing support



groups. Among the groups she mentioned were parenting teenagers, baby cafes and groups that are dealing with mothers with opioid issues.

Health Equity – Kerry Mello reported that the Capacity Building Cancer Disparities group is in the final months of the grant. She said the final date was supposed to be June 30, but the grant was extended through December with more funding. She said they still need to submit a final report by June 15 and give a PowerPoint presentation on June 20 at JSI Research & Training Institute in Boston.

Other Business

Update on youth concerns discussion

Barbara Acksen noted that GNB Allies sponsored Ben Gilbarg's "New Be, New Me" anthem video campaign at the \$800 level over the summer. GNB Allies is looking forward to seeing the video when it's complete.

Member Announcements

Members are always welcome to provide handouts for others and to share upcoming events.

- Kathleen Wilbur said the Marion Board of Health supports banning the sale of all types of flavored cigarettes, including menthol and mint, across town, even if it means being sued by the tobacco industry. She said a public hearing will be held on September 27 at 4 PM on the flavored cigarette regulations and urged GNB Allies members to attend and spread the word.

Adjournment

Helena DaSilva-Hughes moved to adjourn the meeting, Jean DeCoffe seconded, with no discussion all members present approved to adjourn the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on October 6, 2016 @ 9:30 a.m. at Southcoast Center for Women's Health, located at 300 B Faunce Corner Road in North Dartmouth, Massachusetts.