

**General Membership Meeting
April 7, 2016**

9:37 a.m. – 10:37 a.m.

St. Anthony's Parish Hall, 22 Barstow Street, Mattapoisett, Massachusetts 02739

Members present (12): Barbara Acksen, Gail Brennan, Arthur Briggs, Darlene Dymysz, Deirdre Healy, Jay Kenney, Bill McCoy, Claudia Soares, Christine Sullivan, Gloria Villalobo, Melissa Roberts Weidman, Kathy Wilbur. If your name does not appear on this list and you attended the meeting, please contact gnballies@gmail.com.

Minutes

Call to Order and Member Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 9:37 a.m. by Chair, Barbara Acksen, who welcomed new member introductions, as well as round table introductions of those in attendance. New member included:

- Melissa Roberts Weidman (Director of Community Relations and Outreach, Hope Health)

Dr. Acksen also welcomed the community nursing students and their instructors. Students included Kathryn Gibb, Adam Hamel, Lucy Jensen, Emily Leary, Alexandra Rosher, Marissa Manning, and Dominique Wiegman. Instructors included Stephen Padgett and Marianne McAuliffe.

Presentation: *Food Insecurity, Malnutrition, and Healthy Outcomes in Seniors (Christine Sullivan)*

Christine Sullivan, Tufts Grants Coordinator for Coastline Elderly Services, gave a presentation on food insecurity, malnutrition and healthy outcomes in seniors. She said Coastline Elderly is the administrator of a three-year grant for the 4C Collaborative. She said the goals of the grant include: (1) asset mapping of nutritional resources; (2) increasing access to quality foods; (3) increasing nutrition education; (4) decreasing hospital readmissions; and (5) hosting a forum and disseminating the results at the conclusion of the grant period.

Ms. Sullivan said food insecurity and malnutrition in the senior population is a very serious issue and impacts the whole community. She said food insecurity is a limited or uncertain ability to acquire safe and nutritious food in socially acceptable ways, while malnutrition is a state of nutrition imbalance, in which a deficiency or excess of energy, protein or other nutrients cause measurable adverse effects on body function and clinical outcomes.

She said statistics are alarming, with 15% of seniors nationally (10 million) having low food security, which approximately matches the poverty rate. She noted that one-third of seniors are admitted to hospitals in malnourished condition, 38% of adults become malnourished while hospitalized, and "food anxiety" often doubles during their hospital stay.

Ms. Sullivan said the social determinants of health and diet include education, poverty level, household

status, and advanced age. She offered statistics of seniors in New Bedford. She said 53% of seniors have less than a high school degree (education), 15% fall below the Federal Poverty Limit with 47% having an income of less than \$20,000 (poverty level), 35.7% live alone (household status), and 53% have complete tooth loss (advanced age). Furthermore, she said 76% of seniors in New Bedford are living with four or more chronic diseases, such as diabetes, hypertension, congestive heart failure, anemia and obesity.

She said malnutrition leads to functional and cognitive declines, slower healing rates, increased length-of-stay at hospitals, increased rates of all-cause readmission, institutionalization and all-cause mortality, and a number of diseases. Malnutrition and food insecurity adds \$51.3 billion in healthcare spending with an estimated \$2,000 to \$10,000 added cost per patient. She said nutritional screening and interventions are effective.

Among the challenges for seniors to a healthy diet are anxiety, chronic disease, depression, isolation, money, functional limitations, and a number of other factors.

She said focus groups have indicated the greatest need is affordable “healthy” food. She noted the community resources currently available to seniors. They include SNAP enrollment assistance, food pantries, Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB) Surplus Commodity Foods Program, RD assessment, and home delivered and congregate meals.

Business meeting

Meeting minutes – approval

March 3, 2016 – Christine Sullivan moved to approve the report, Arthur Briggs seconded, with no discussion all members present approved the March minutes.

Treasurer's Report – approval

- Bank balance 2/29/2016: \$223,291.95
- Total Encumbered Funds: \$175,339.71
- Unrestricted net assets: \$47,953.45

Bill McCoy moved to approve the Treasurer’s report, Darlene Dymysza seconded, with no discussion all members present approved the report.

Standing Committee reports

Health Access – Gail Brennan reported that four people are currently being trained in the mother-woman group model. She said the goal of the program is to be able to provide more group training in the long run by having new members train others. She said the final training session will take place in May.

Gloria Villalobo is currently being trained. She said the program is intensive but very exciting.

Health Equity – Arthur Briggs said the Capacity Building Cancer Disparities group is in its second phase and are continuing to distribute FIT kits for colorectal cancer screening. He said they are working closely with community health workers to get more of them out into their communities.

Other Business

Update on youth concerns discussion

While there was no formal discussion on this topic, Barbara Acksen noted that Ben Gilbarg, co-founder of 3rd EyE Unlimited, is making a social impact video of youth doing positive things from the Greater New Bedford Area. Deirdre Healy added that the video will star local favorite Samantha Johnson who was a contestant on *America's Got Talent*.

Member Announcements

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

- Deirdre Healy noted that the LeDuc Center for Civic Engagement at UMass Dartmouth is hosting the Rev. Dr. Robert Lawrence Civic Engagement Summit on Friday, April 15, from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. General admission tickets are \$25 and includes a continental breakfast. To register, visit <https://webapps.umassd.edu/events/campus>.
- Darlene Dymaza noted that WIC is involved with a bunch of day care centers and will be kicking off the Week of the Young Child by offering its 16th annual Family Discovery Fair on Saturday, April 18, from 10 a.m to 2 p.m. at the Greater New Bedford Vocational Technical High School, located at 1121 Ashley Blvd., in New Bedford.
- Arthur Briggs noted that Mercy Meals and More is having a dinner fundraiser on May 14 at 7 p.m. at Pilgrim United Church, located at 635 Purchase Street in New Bedford. Tickets are \$10.
- Melissa Roberts Weidman gave a brief overview of HopeHealth, which is a non-profit organization that provides services that enhance the comfort and quality of life for people experiencing the impact of serious illness and loss for over 35-years. She noted that HopeHealth will host a three-mile Walk for Alzheimer's on Sunday, May 15, at DCR Scusset State Beach. Registration begins at 9 a.m. The walk begins at 10 a.m. To participate or donate to a walker, visit HopeHealthCo.org/Walk. Additional info can also be obtained by calling 508-957-0282 or e-mailing Walk@HopeHealthCo.org.

Adjournment

Gail Brennan moved to adjourn the meeting, Christine Sullivan seconded, with no discussion all members present approved to adjourn the meeting at 10:37 a.m.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on May 5, 2016 @ 9:30 a.m. at Southcoast Center for Women's Health, located at 300 B Faunce Corner Road in North Dartmouth, Massachusetts.