



**General Membership Meeting
September 7, 2017**

9:40 a.m. – 11:10 a.m.

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

Members present (12): Barbara Acksen, Stan Brajer, Jennifer Chaves, Jenny Costa, Louise Croteau, Jean DeCoffe, Rebecca Levasseur, Kelsey McEntee, Kerry Mello, Connie Rocha-Mimoso, Amy Sylvia, and Gloria Villalobo. *If your name does not appear on this list and you attended the meeting, please contact gnballies@gmail.com.*

Minutes

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: *Opioid Recovery Approaches* (Connie Rocha-Mimoso, Director of Community Health Services, Seven Hills Behavioral Health)

Connie Rocha-Mimoso discussed New Bedford Opioid Task Force's project that was started eight months ago with a SouthCoast Hospital Grant. Eleven individuals have received a recovery coach training. These individuals are paired with someone struggling with addiction. The recovery coaches are meant to help remove barriers such as transportation to meetings and appointments. There are currently three recovery coaches at SouthCoast right now. This is a volunteer job unless they have been hired by an agency. There is also a special training to become a supervisor. Connie is currently a supervisor and has been urging others to become one as well.

Rebecca Levasseur asked if the individuals struggling with addiction have been receptive to this program. Connie reported that a lot of what they do is to speak with the family of the affected individual but that they have also never been turned away by the affected individual. She also said they do follow ups on Thursdays and try to refer these individuals with agencies that will be able to help them. Jean Decoffe asked if it would be possible to follow up with individuals once they have gone through treatment. Connie stated that because of HIPAA laws this is not really possible. They have information at these facilities but it is up to the individual to reach out to them if they feel they need it.

Connie stressed the importance of getting good media around the subject of opioid addiction. The media focuses on the negative so it is difficult to get anything positive out. She said that last week there was an overdose awareness event that over 200 people attended. At this event there were many people who gave testimonials which can be very effective. Jean DeCoffe asked if they have been able to get into the classroom with this information. Connie said they have been able to give some presentations in auditorium settings which have been effective but have not done any on the



classroom level. She said it is also difficult to partner with public schools because of the stigma surrounding the topic. They have been able to work with UMass Dartmouth, Normandin Middle School, Durfee High School and Diman Regional Vocational-Technical High School in the past.

Connie ended by saying that this will take a whole community to make a difference. When they started it was just a group of about six individuals and has now grown to about fifty. She urged agencies who are not already involved to attend meetings to see how they could become involved and help this movement grow.

Meeting Business

Meeting minutes – approval

June 1, 2017 – Kerry Mello moved to approve the report, Jean DeCoffe seconded, with no discussion all members present approved the June minutes.

Treasurer's Report – approval

- Bank balance 7/31/2017: \$194,523.11
- Total Encumbered Funds: \$157,206.29
- Unrestricted net assets: \$42,032.23

Kerry Mello moved to approve the Treasurer's report, Amy Sylvia seconded, with no discussion all members present approved the report.

Standing Committee reports

Health Access – Barbara Acksen reported that the Health Access Committee has continued to discuss expanding their provider network. In the past, individuals were sent to Mother Women trainings. The committee would like to set up a training program of their own that is local. The Health Access Committee meets every 3rd Thursday of the month at 9:00 am at the Kennedy Donovan Center.

Health Equity – Kerry Mello reported that the Health Equity Committee has been regrouping since the completion of the last grant. The committee meets the 2nd Thursday of the month at 9:00 am at the Immigrants Assistance Center.

Member Announcements

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

- Barbara Acksen reported the strategic planning meeting will be taking place at either the October or November General Membership Committee meeting. This meeting will be to discuss topics such as areas to focus on, meeting structure, committees, and directions for the future. Dr. Acksen also reported that the annual meeting will be coming up and that the Steering Committee is looking for volunteers or suggested individuals to join the committee.



- Jennifer Chaves from Health Imperatives reported that they have begun to prescribe Pep and PrEP for potential exposure to HIV. PrEP is given pre-exposure to reduce the risk of contraction. Since July 1st, it has been prescribed to four patients. PrEP can reduce risk by up to 70%. Pep is given post exposure. It is most effective if given within 72 hours. Possible side effects of each are headaches and nausea but it has been reported to disappear within a few weeks. The process to get these medications is easy and patients leave their facility with a week's worth of the medication.
- Gloria Villalobo from WIC reported that their office has become a book distribution center. They have also started leaving baskets of books at laundromats throughout the city which they check each month. The program is going well so they may be looking to expand.

Adjournment

Amy Sylvia moved to adjourn the meeting, Jean DeCoffe seconded, with no discussion all members present approved to adjourn the meeting at 11:10 a.m.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on October 5, 2017 @ 9:30 a.m. at Southcoast Center for Women's Health, located at 300 B Faunce Corner Road in North Dartmouth, Massachusetts.