



**General Membership Meeting  
November 2, 2017**

**9:40 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.**

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

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**Members present (13):** Barbara Acksen, Olivia Botelho, Stan Brajer, Arthur Briggs, Gloria Cardona, Jennifer Chaves, Rachel Collins, Krista Cormier, Jenny Costa, Alyssa DaCunha, Jean DeCoffe, Darlene Dymsza, Anne Lynch, Kerry Mello, Kathy Spear, Christine Sullivan, and Amy Sylvia. *If your name does not appear on this list and you attended the meeting, please contact [gnballies@gmail.com](mailto:gnballies@gmail.com).*

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**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: *Southcoast Health Needs Assessment 2016 (Kerry Mello, Southcoast Hospitals)***

Kerry Mello presented on a portion of Southcoast Hospital's most recent needs assessment. The assessment focused on health equity and the impact of the place you live. The results were put into tables with comparisons to previous years. Kerry discussed some of the key findings to the group.

The first few tables showed different demographics from the area. One table showed that 41% of families in New Bedford are female-led single family households. Also, nearly 60% of New Bedford's population is under the age of 44 while the aging population is shown to be living mostly in the suburbs.

The next few tables focused on education. Dropout rates in Fall River and New Bedford have dropped from over 50% to less than 30%. Great improvements have been made at the high school level and now there should be a focus on the higher education level as well.

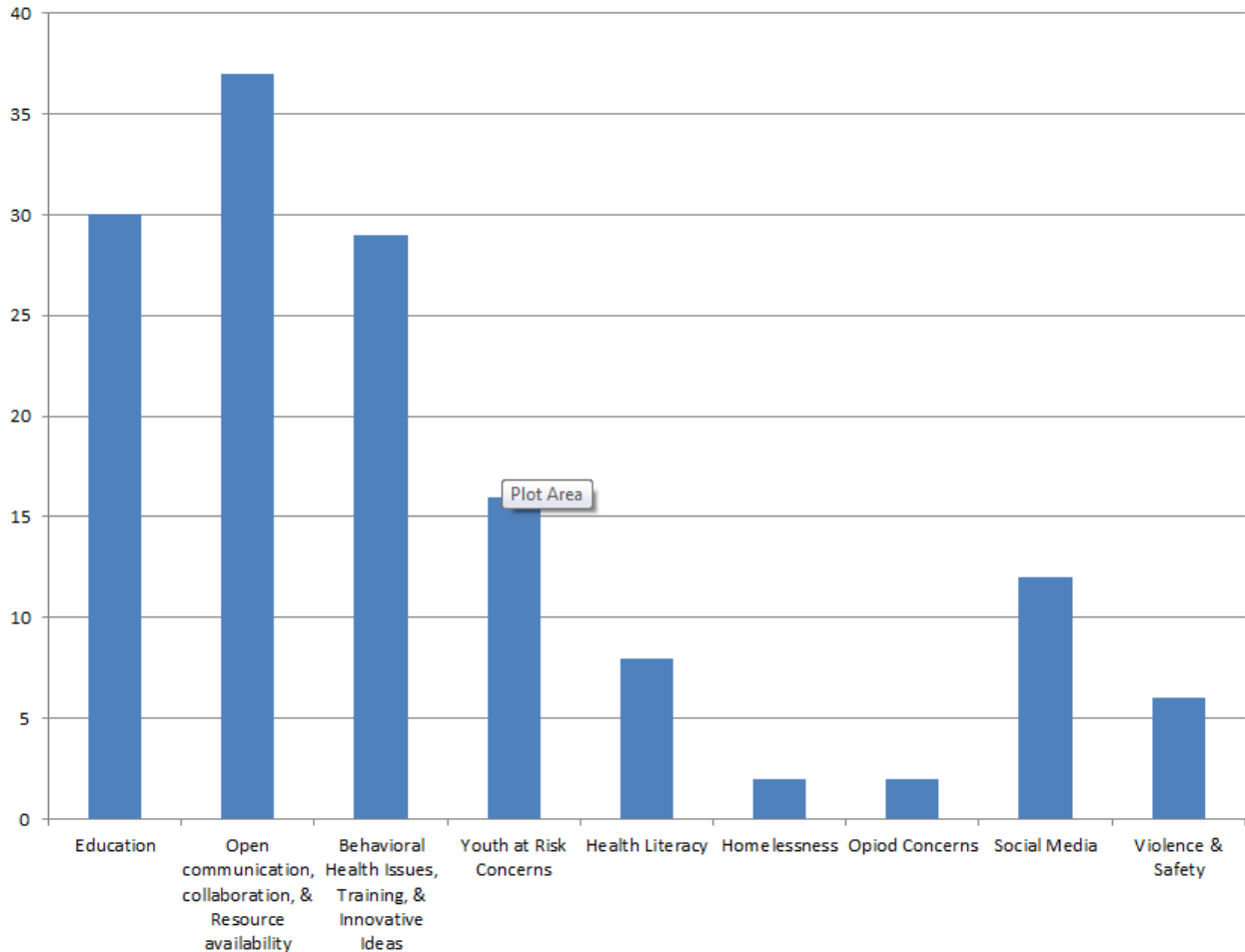
The next several tables showed a variety of information. New Bedford is one of the most diverse cities in the state. Health Access in the area has improved over the years. There has been a decline in non-violent crime while violent crime has remained steady. New Bedford is the second in the state in serious Brownfield sites.

Next, the tables focused on a snapshot of community health. One very important statistic is that New Bedford went from one of the highest percentages of residents who smoke to about average. Obesity rates in the area have reduced which has also led to a decrease in hypertension and diabetes. One table showed that while suburban youth had healthier eating habits and less bullying than urban youth, suburban youth were more likely to participate in risk behaviors such as alcohol and sex than urban youth.



The last few tables were community impressions on different issues. These tables were word scatters where the bigger the word the more frequent it was used by respondents. When asked about the most pressing issue the two most used words were obesity and smoking. Stress and low income were the most frequently used words when talking about health disparities. The area’s greatest asset was reported as collaboration by respondents.

Barbara Acksen continued the meeting stating GNB Allies was having this strategic planning meeting to identify areas in need. The group currently has subcommittees for health access and health equity. She asked that those present break into three smaller groups to discuss important issues in the community and what GNB Allies could do to focus on those issues. The groups were then asked to vote on the issues that were identified that they thought were most important. The following table shows the issues and their importance to the group.



**Next Meeting**

The next meeting will take place on December 7, 2017 @ 9:30 a.m. at Southcoast Center for Women’s Health, located at 300 B Faunce Corner Road in North Dartmouth, Massachusetts.