



Membership & Awareness Committee
May 18, 2022 Meeting Summary



Date: May 18, 2022

Location: Virtual Meeting **Time:** 11:03 a.m. – 12:29 p.m.

Attendance: CHPC Members: Gigi Chaux, Stephen Feathers, Carl Ferris, Charles Hardy
Public Participants: Rich Radocchia, Danielle Warren-Diaz
CHPC Staff: Michael Nogelo

Meeting Accomplishments

1. The group approved the April Membership and Awareness Committee (MAC) meeting summary with no changes.
2. The group agreed to move the mid-year mentor-mentee check-in process to February each year.
3. The group discussed efforts to engage people with HIV in community planning efforts with representatives of the New Haven/Fairfield and Hartford Ryan White Part A Planning Councils.
4. The group discussed efforts to engage support groups in various communities.
5. The group reviewed a revised draft of the CHPC membership application form.
6. The group discussed the June newsletter and alternate ways to deliver the newsletter.
7. The group reviewed membership-related issues and agreed on member retention action items.

Identified Tasks

1. Staff will draft the May MAC meeting summary.
 2. Staff will send CHPC mentoring program documents to Rich Radocchia and Gigi Chaux.
 3. MAC leaders will suggest to the CHPC co-chairs that an upcoming CHPC meeting include a Zoom poll asking if people would prefer committee meetings to be on a different day than CHPC meetings.
 4. Staff and Carl Ferris will attempt to engage additional support groups.
 5. Staff will work with a graphic designer to finalize the new member application form and will put the new form into use.
 6. Staff will send out a draft of the June newsletter to the group by email for review, and will disseminate the newsletter as soon as it is complete and approved.
 7. Staff will disseminate the June newsletter as email attachments and see if emails are returned due to file size.
 8. Stephen Feathers and/or Carl Ferris will make member retention calls, as needed.
 9. Staff will issue attendance warning and dismissal letters to CHPC members, as needed.
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A. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Membership and Awareness Committee (MAC) chair Stephen Feathers called the meeting to order at 11:03 a.m. and welcomed committee members and guests. All participants introduced themselves.

B. APRIL MEETING SUMMARY

The group approved the April MAC meeting summary by consensus, with no changes.

C. MENTOR/MENTEE CHECK-IN FINDINGS

Mr. Feathers explained that the CHPC mentoring program helps new CHPC members feel more prepared and comfortable by matching each new member with an experienced CHPC member. MAC checks in with every mentor and new member after a few months to make sure that contact is being made and to identify any issues or needs. This mid-year check-in process revealed that contact had not been made between mentor Reggie Knox and his new member assignee Charles Hardy. In April, MAC agreed that Michael Nogelo would try to facilitate an initial call between Mr. Knox and Mr. Hardy. Mr. Nogelo was not able to contact Mr. Knox, so a decision was made to assign Carl Ferris as Mr. Hardy's new mentor.

- Mr. Hardy and Mr. Ferris reported that they have quickly established contact and rapport.
- Rich Radocchia requested CHPC mentoring program documents to inform New Haven/Fairfield Ryan White Part A Planning Council discussions about creating a mentoring program. Mr. Nogelo promised to send these materials.
- Mr. Feathers and Mr. Ferris provided a high-level overview of the mentoring program.
- Mr. Feathers explained that the CHPC brings on new members only once each year to align with the planning year, allow for a group orientation, and facilitate mentor matching.
- Mr. Hardy said the first three months of his membership term were the most difficult, so he suggested moving the mid-year check-in process earlier in the year to identify and address issues.
- Mr. Feathers said overall attendance at virtual CHPC meetings has been similar to (pre-COVID) in-person meetings, but attendance by community members has decreased.
- Mr. Radocchia reported that the Planning Council returned to a hybrid meeting format in May and that many community members stopped attending during the pandemic, despite outreach and the provision of tablets.

D. DISCUSSION OF EFFORTS TO ENGAGE PEOPLE WITH HIV

Mr. Feathers said MAC wants to learn about how other HIV planning groups try to engage people with HIV (PWH). The CHPC co-chairs are working with the leaders of Connecticut's two local Planning Councils to clarify the relationship between the planning groups and stimulate a higher level of coordination, collaboration, and accountability. MAC is assessing how each planning group tries to engage PWH and other community members in their processes. The CHPC co-chairs invited leaders from each Planning Council to upcoming MAC meetings to get more in-depth feedback. Mr. Feathers welcomed Mr. Radocchia and Gigi Chaux, co-chairs of the New Haven/Fairfield Ryan White Part A Planning Council Membership/Finance Committee.



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- Mr. Hardy stated that there is almost no participation in the CHPC by people from Middletown, and wondered how to get information to communities to encourage participation.
- Mr. Radocchia said the Planning Council suspended attendance requirements after meetings went virtual in 2020. He reached out to members to learn about barriers to participation in virtual meetings and tried to address barriers. He attended regional Ryan White continuum¹ meetings to try to recruit members from populations underrepresented on the Planning Council.
- Ms. Chaux noted that the Planning Council is more local than the CHPC, and relies on Planning Council support staff to attract members.
- Mr. Radocchia added that the Planning Council relies on front-line staff (e.g., Medical Case Managers – MCM) to recruit community members who receive Ryan White services.
- Ms. Chaux noted that the new Ryan White client intake process asks about the client's awareness of the Planning Council.
- Ms. Chaux said all applicants must attend a Planning Council meeting and a committee meeting before being accepted as a member. The Planning Council does not provide stipends to members.
- Mr. Radocchia explained that committees meet on different days than Planning Council meetings due to feedback that having all meetings on one day was too exhausting and to allow people to attend multiple committee meetings, if they wish to do so.
- The group agreed to suggest to the CHPC co-chairs that an upcoming CHPC meeting include a Zoom poll asking if people would prefer committee meetings to be on a different day than CHPC meetings.
- Mr. Nogelo noted that, when the CHPC resumes in-person meetings, committee meetings and the CHPC meeting would likely need to be on the same day due to transportation considerations.
- Mr. Feathers said local champions appear important to driving local involvement.
- Mr. Ferris suggested reaching out to social workers at clinics to ask them to promote involvement.
- Mr. Radocchia said regional case manager meetings may be useful to attend.
- Danielle Warren-Diaz from the Hartford Planning Council joined the meeting and stated that they have struggled to engage the trans community. The Planning Council wrote into their bylaws the ability to fast-track membership for applicants from underrepresented populations.
- Mr. Radocchia echoed that it is difficult to engage young people.
- Ms. Warren-Diaz added that youth tend to be busy, although a young person was a Planning Council co-chair recently. She said the Planning Council can reimburse members for missing work to attend.
- Ms. Warren-Diaz said a technical assistance team from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration has helped the Planning Council with strategies to engage community members. Ms. Warren-Diaz agreed to try to attend the June MAC meeting to continue the discussion.

¹ Regional Continuum meetings are held monthly by the 5 Regional Leads and are attended by the different stakeholders in the region. They are mostly RW white providers and consumers. The meetings are held at different times and follow a specific agenda required by the RW Part A office.

For information about CHPC, contact CHPC staff at Cross Sector Consulting, LLP (203) 772-2050 or gooding@xsector.com

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E. SUPPORT GROUP OUTREACH

Mr. Feathers said MAC supports the development of the Integrated Plan by connecting with support groups to: a) get community input into the important issues that should be addressed in the Plan, and b) share progress on the development of the Plan and get feedback.

- Mr. Feathers made an introductory visit to a Hartford MPowerment group on April 26. Members seemed interested in the CHPC's work, but not necessarily in applying for membership. Members provided feedback that the process to get onto pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is difficult. PrEP navigators can present a barrier by bringing another person into the process.
- Mr. Radocchia said [heimistr.com](https://www.heimistr.com) can allow people to get a PrEP prescription online.
- Mr. Feathers said heimistr can be challenging for people on state insurance.

Mr. Feathers said Mr. Nogelo was scheduled to meet with a Consumer Advisory Board in Meriden in April, but the group's meeting was cancelled, so a new date will be scheduled. Mr. Nogelo's outreach to other groups has not had any success yet.

- Mr. Nogelo said Ms. Chaux provided him with information on several agencies that run support groups in Fairfield County. None of the agencies he has reached out to have been able to help, but he will reach out to other agencies on the list.
- Mr. Ferris said he would connect Mr. Nogelo to a staff member at A Place to Nourish your Health in New Haven to find out about meeting with the MPowerment group there.

F. REVIEW REVISED MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Mr. Feathers reminded the group that it had reviewed the revised CHPC membership application form during its April meeting. The CHPC Executive Committee also reviewed the form and sent staff suggested changes. Staff made some changes based on those suggestions. Mr. Nogelo shared his screen to walk the group through the new draft form, highlighting changes.

- Mr. Feathers suggested making a change to the sexual orientation response options.
- Ms. Warren-Diaz suggested removing the "relevant personal information" header and integrating that section of the application into the demographics section.

Mr. Nogelo said he would work with the graphic designer to make those final changes, will make the form fillable, and will put the new form on the website and into use.

G. JUNE NEWSLETTER AND NEWSLETTER DELIVERY FORMAT

Mr. Feathers said MAC produces a newsletter three times each year. A draft of the June newsletter was not available for review because three of the articles had not been drafted in time.

- Mr. Nogelo showed the group unformatted drafts of the four articles that had been completed.
- Mr. Feathers said an article on the statewide Hepatitis C Awareness Day event could be drafted quickly if needed.
- Mr. Nogelo said he would send out the newsletter draft to the group by email for review, and would disseminate the newsletter as soon as it was complete and approved.



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Mr. Feathers said the CHPC Executive Committee asked MAC to consider possible changes to the newsletter delivery format. Executive suggested the newsletter be emailed as an attachment rather than a link, or as the body of the email so people do not need to click on a link to read it. Mr. Nogelo reached out to the graphic designer about these ideas.

- Mr. Nogelo said the graphic designer said the newsletter files should not be too big to send as attachments, but that the resolution would be poor if the newsletter was embedded in an email. Mr. Nogelo said an email newsletter platform (e.g., Constant Contact, Mail Chimp) could be considered to send the newsletter in the body of an email.
- The group agreed to send the June newsletter (English and Spanish versions) as attachments and see if the emails get returned because of the file size.
- Several participants said they do not listen to podcasts, and podcasts may not be accessible for many PWH, and suggested YouTube videos as a more accessible option.
- Ms. Chaux noted that youth (which the CHPC is trying to engage) tend to listen to podcasts.
- Mr. Feathers suggested recording an interview with a newsletter article author that expands on the article topic, including a link to the interview in the newsletter, and then creating a podcast and YouTube video of the interview. He said he did not know about the costs involved, but noted that the State Department of Public Health has a recording studio.
- Ms. Warren-Diaz suggested TikTok videos as a way to reach young people of color, and said a group of young people could even be enlisted to create the TikTok videos for the CHPC.
- Mr. Feathers and Mr. Hardy reported that the Positive Prevention CT group has been working to create TikTok videos, and suggested that this idea be shared with them.

H. MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Mr. Feathers reported that CHPC member Ms. Chaux was dismissed after missing her third meeting of the year in April. She appealed her dismissal, and the Executive Committee approved her appeal, so she has been reinstated with two absences. Mr. Feathers also reported that CHPC member Justin Gabino submitted a resignation email immediately prior to the May CHPC meeting.

Mr. Feathers said MAC is responsible for member retention. Sometimes MAC members call CHPC members who have missed meetings to encourage them to come and to check on them. CHPC members receive a warning after their second absence and are dismissed after their third absence in a calendar year. The group reviewed the 2022 member attendance chart, and agreed that member retention calls and member attendance warning and dismissal letters would be issued, as needed.

I. PROCESS CHECK

Mr. Feathers asked the group for feedback on the meeting.

- Mr. Nogelo said he appreciated having new voices and new faces at the meeting.
- Mr. Hardy said he felt like he had a good grasp of the discussion, as it was his first MAC meeting.

J. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Feathers thanked everyone for their participation and adjourned the meeting at 12:29 p.m.