



Membership & Awareness Committee
May 19, 2021 Meeting Summary



Date: May 19, 2021

Location: Virtual Meeting **Time:** 11:03 a.m. – 12:26 p.m.

Attendance: MAC Members: Victor Acevedo, Gigi Chaux, Taylor Edelmann, Stephen Feathers, Carl Ferris, Dante Gennaro, Clara O’Quinn

Public Participants: None

CHPC Staff: Michael Nogelo

Meeting Accomplishments

1. The group approved the April Membership and Awareness Committee (MAC) meeting summary.
2. The group agreed on action steps for engaging support groups from A Place to Nourish your Health (APNH).
3. The group reviewed a draft of the June CHPC newsletter and agreed upon several changes.
4. The group discussed plans to organize local awareness day events with a common statewide theme, including a pilot effort on National HIV Testing Day (NHTD) on June 27.
5. The group heard an update on Positive Prevention CT (PPCT) activities.
6. The group reviewed the attendance of the CHPC membership.

Identified Tasks

1. Staff will draft the May MAC meeting summary.
 2. Staff and Dante Gennaro will follow up with staff from APNH to schedule a discussion about MAC’s collaboration with APNH support groups and to schedule MAC representatives to meet with the APNH Aging Positively group in mid-June.
 3. Staff will make the agreed-upon changes to the newsletter, request approval from the Connecticut Department of Public Health (CT DPH), get the newsletter translated into Spanish, and disseminate the final newsletter in early June.
 4. Taylor Edelmann will draft a 1-page “blueprint” of the planned Waterbury NHTD event for the purposes of statewide event planning.
 5. Dante Gennaro will invite agencies from various regions of the state to participate in planning meetings to help organize regional NHTD events based on the Waterbury regional event model.
 6. Staff will contact Clara O’Quinn to identify any member retention calls that should be made.
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A. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Membership and Awareness Committee (MAC) co-chair Clara O'Quinn called the meeting to order at 11:03 a.m. and welcomed committee members. All participants introduced themselves.

B. APRIL MEETING SUMMARY

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

C. COMMUNITY OUTREACH DISCUSSION

Ms. O'Quinn said that community participation, including participation from people living with HIV (PLWH), is critical for the CHPC, but community participation and membership applications have both decreased since the CHPC had to switch to virtual meetings because of the pandemic. MAC has been discussing ways to increase community engagement in the CHPC. Dante Gennaro has been in contact with the facilitators of support groups at A Place to Nourish Your Health (APNH) in New Haven to talk about meeting with those groups and to share best practices for engaging PLWH.

- Mr. Gennaro reported that he emailed the APNH support group leads to invite them to attend the May MAC meeting to discuss common objectives and goals for the collaboration. None of the leads were able to attend, so Mr. Gennaro will schedule a separate discussion.
- Carl Ferris said the APNH Aging Positively group meets each Tuesday at 10 am and was expecting someone representing MAC to attend their May 18 meeting. Mr. Ferris added that group members seem upset that no CHPC or MAC co-chairs or staff members have shown up.
- Mr. Gennaro stated that he has been in contact with the support group leads to set up a discussion about engaging with the CHPC and to share best practices for engaging PLWH in meetings.
- Michael Nogelo said that scheduling a date for MAC representatives to visit the Aging Positively group before the June CHPC meeting should be a priority.
- Stephen Feathers stated that he would be available to visit the Aging Positively group on June 15.
- Mr. Gennaro said his goal for this collaboration is not only to promote the CHPC but also to explore ways to work together towards common goals related to the successful engagement of PLWH.
- Mr. Gennaro noted that the Positive Prevention CT (PPCT) Pulse social media survey is still live. People who complete the survey can receive a \$5 Dunkin gift card.

D. PLAN JUNE NEWSLETTER

Ms. O'Quinn said MAC produces a newsletter three times each year, and asked the group to review a draft of the June newsletter.

- Mr. Feathers and Mr. Gennaro asked questions about the HIV prevention medications mentioned in one of the articles. Mr. Nogelo said he would pose those questions to the article's authors.
- Mr. Gennaro suggested adding a link to Diedre McDaniel's slides in the CHPC Update article.
- The group agreed that the COVID-19 mask-wearing guidance in the PPCT section should be re-examined to reflect the recently-updated guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) about mask-wearing.



- The group agreed that the picture of Ron Lee and Carmen Cruz should be moved outside of the text box with the quote from Debi Lombardo.
- Victor Acevedo asked about the status of the annual AIDS Awareness Day Rally. Mr. Nogelo promised to ask Shawn Lang, and to add a text box about the Rally, if it is planned to occur.
- The group agreed that all links should be clearly click-able.
- Mr. Gennaro suggested that the COVID-19 vaccine update article replace some of the text with infographics. Mr. Nogelo said he would ask the graphic designer to do this.
- The group discussed an option to include data comparing COVID infection, hospitalization, and death rates for vaccinated people and unvaccinated people, but ultimately agreed that solid comparison data are not easily accessible or likely to be approved for publication by CTDPH.

Mr. Nogelo will make the agreed-upon changes, request approval from the Connecticut Department of Public Health (CT DPH), get the newsletter translated into Spanish, and disseminate the final newsletter in early June.

E. STATEWIDE EVENT PLANNING

Mr. Feathers reminded the group that, in April, it had started to discuss a pilot effort to coordinate local agencies to celebrate National HIV Testing Day (NHTD) on June 27. The goal is to provide resources and technical assistance to agencies to help them organize and promote local events with a common statewide theme. PPCT also discussed this at its May 10 meeting, when some agencies announced that they have already scheduled their own NHTD events because June 27 is so close.

Mr. Gennaro said he was hoping MAC meetings could be a forum for agencies to share their plans, compare similarities, learn about differences, and plan to fill in gaps in local event plans.

- Taylor Edelmann said Apex Community Care, StayWell Health Center, and Waterbury Health Department are collaborating on a NHTD event in Waterbury on Friday, June 25 from 10 am to 2 pm.
- Mr. Gennaro asked if Mr. Edelmann could draft a 1-page “blueprint” of the planned event for the purposes of statewide event coordination. Mr. Edelmann agreed to do this.
- Mr. Gennaro said he is willing to invite agencies from various regions of the state (e.g., Hartford, lower Fairfield County, Bridgeport, Northeast, Southeast, New Haven) to participate in planning meetings to help organize regional events based on the Waterbury event model.
- The group looked at the AIDS awareness day calendar and agreed to organize a statewide celebration of National LatinX AIDS Awareness Day on October 15, 2021 and National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day on February 7, 2022.
- Mr. Gennaro suggested that MAC conduct a poll across agencies to find out which other awareness days would be best suited for a statewide celebration.
- Gigi Chaux recommended organizing a statewide celebration of NHTD every year because NHTD covers all demographics. The group agreed with this recommendation.



F. POSITIVE PREVENTION CT (PPCT) COORDINATION

Mr. Feathers reminded the group that MAC meetings have a standing agenda item for PPCT updates.

- Mr. Feathers reported that the PPCT anti-stigma, superhero-themed video campaign is deep into the planning stages.
- Mr. Gennaro said someone to play the role of the Intergalactic Prophylactic character (preferably a non-binary person of color) still must be identified.

G. MEMBER ATTENDANCE

Mr. Feathers said MAC is responsible for promoting member attendance. The group reviewed a member attendance table and agreed that Mr. Nogelo would follow up with Ms. O'Quinn to identify any phone calls that should be made to support consistent member attendance and member retention.

H. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Feathers thanked everyone for their participation and adjourned the meeting at 12:26 p.m.