



Membership & Awareness Committee
April 20, 2022 Meeting Summary



Date: April 20, 2022
Location: Virtual Meeting **Time:** 11:03 a.m. – 12:11 p.m.
Attendance: MAC Members: Victor Acevedo, Stephen Feathers, Carl Ferris
Public Participants: None
CHPC Staff: Michael Nogelo

Meeting Accomplishments

1. The group approved the March Membership and Awareness Committee (MAC) meeting summary with no changes.
2. The group agreed on action steps based on the results of mid-year mentoring program check-in calls.
3. The group reviewed a revised draft of the CHPC membership application form.
4. The group agreed on article topics and possible authors for the June newsletter.
5. The group discussed progress and action items related to outreach to support groups statewide.
6. The group discussed plans to analyze strategies used by Connecticut's two local Ryan White Planning Councils to engage people with HIV (PWH).
7. The group reviewed membership-related issues and agreed on member retention action items.

Identified Tasks

1. Staff will draft the April MAC meeting summary.
 2. Staff will arrange and facilitate a mentoring phone call between Reggie Knox and Charles Hardy.
 3. Stephen Feathers will share the membership application form with the CHPC Executive Committee and ask for guidance on the process for approving the form for use.
 4. Staff will coordinate the production of a draft newsletter for review at the May MAC meeting.
 5. Staff will consider resuming mailing hard copy newsletters to agencies statewide.
 6. MAC leaders will prepare for and conduct visits to support groups while continuing to work to connect with other support groups statewide.
 7. CHPC leaders will invite leaders from each Planning Council to upcoming MAC meetings to discuss their efforts to engage PWH.
 8. Mr. Feathers will make a member retention call to a CHPC member who has missed recent meetings.
 9. Staff will issue warning letters to two CHPC members who missed their second meeting of the year.
 10. Staff will issue a discharge letter to one CHPC member who missed their third meeting of the year.
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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. All participants introduced themselves.

B. MARCH MEETING SUMMARY

The group approved the March 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.

- Carl Ferris said he saw his mentee, Wallace Daniels, recently. Mr. Daniels told Mr. Ferris that he is busy at the moment and may not have time to participate in the CHPC.
- Mr. Ferris noted that, typically, one or more new members never engages in the CHPC. He wondered if MAC should revisit the number of new members it brings on each year to anticipate some members not engaging.
- The group agreed with the suggestion to invite more than the desired number of members each fall.
- Mr. Feathers reported on his calls to mentors: Peta-Gaye Nembhard said she has had a positive experience with her mentee, who does not seem to need a lot of support. Reggie Knox said he has been unable to make contact with his mentee, Charles Hardy, despite attempting to text him and contact him via the CHPC meeting chat. Mr. Feathers was re-assigned to mentor Justin Gabino after Mr. Feathers' mentee and Mr. Gabino's mentor both resigned. Mr. Feathers said he has established contact with Mr. Gabino, who has not needed much support.
- Mr. Nogelo reported on his calls to mentees: Anthony Santella said Ms. Nembhard has given him the support he has needed. Mr. Gabino confirmed that he has been receiving the support he needs. Mr. Hardy said he has not received any contact from Mr. Knox. Mr. Nogelo asked the group what should be done to establish contact between Mr. Hardy and Mr. Knox.
- Mr. Feathers said MAC should try to make sure that mentors attempt to contact their mentees in every way possible, and noted that chat messages are particularly easy to miss.
- Mr. Nogelo noted that, in January, he had encouraged Mr. Knox to call Mr. Hardy because Mr. Hardy typically reaches out to Mr. Nogelo by phone. Mr. Nogelo asked the group if he should attempt to facilitate an initial phone call between Mr. Knox and Mr. Hardy. The group agreed.
- Mr. Feathers said more of an effort should be made to make sure all mentors participate in new member orientation, at least for a few minutes.

D. REVIEW REVISED MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Mr. Feathers reminded the group that it had, during its January and February meetings, discussed making changes to the CHPC membership application form to make sure it is welcoming and complete and uses



inclusive language. Mr. Nogelo also made some changes to the categories on the application form based on the federal guidance for the 2022-2026 HIV Prevention and Care Plan. A graphic designer helped update the design of the application form to make it easier to complete and more welcoming.

Mr. Nogelo shared his screen to walk the group through the new draft form, highlighting changes.

- The group provided positive feedback on the revised form.
- Mr. Feathers said he would share the form with the CHPC Executive Committee and would ask for guidance on the process for approving the form for use.

E. COMMITTEE MEETING BEST PRACTICES VIDEO

The group watched a short video created by CHPC Quality and Performance Measures (QPM) Team chair Peta-Gaye Nembhard offering best practices for effective committee meetings.

- Mr. Feathers stated that MAC meetings have recently had low attendance, but have typically functioned well. Mr. Feathers said Positive Prevention CT (PPCT) meetings will move to a different day, which may result in increased attendance at MAC meetings.

F. PLAN JUNE NEWSLETTER

Mr. Feathers said MAC produces a newsletter three times each year. The group would need to plan the articles and possible authors for the June newsletter. The CHPC Update and the Department of Public Health Corner are two standing articles, and PPCT will provide one page of content for the provider's corner. That leaves space for roughly five more articles. Mr. Feathers asked the group to discuss what should be in those five articles. The group agreed that:

- One or more panelists from the April CHPC main meeting should be invited to write an article about stigma and sexually transmitted infections (STI).
- An article should be included on the April 25 HIV Awareness Day Rally.
- Melanie Alvarez should be asked to write a tribute article about the late Shawn Lang, to accompany the Awareness Day Rally article, as Ms. Lang coordinated the rally for many years.
- An update on the routine HIV testing bill moving through the state legislature may be included, depending on the status of the bill at the time of the newsletter's publication.
- An article on the return to normalcy following COVID, focusing on the psychological toll of the pandemic, may be included.
- Dr. A.C. Demidont or Seja Jackson APRN may be asked to write an article on the person who was recently cured of HIV, and the broader implications of their case.

Mr. Feathers reviewed the results of the newsletter-related poll of CHPC participants during the March CHPC meeting. Tables 1 and 2 show the results of the two poll questions.

Table 1. Question: <i>In the past 12 months, have you seen hard copies of the CHPC newsletter at the agency where you work or receive services?</i>	Number	Percent
Yes	13	32%
No	22	54%
Not sure	6	15%



Table 2. Question: Do you usually read the CHPC newsletter?	Number	Percent
Yes, I usually read most or all of it	16	39%
Yes, I usually skim it and may read a few articles	11	27%
No, I usually don't read any of it	6	15%
I didn't know the CHPC produces a newsletter	8	20%

- Based on the poll results, the group agreed that it should consider mailing hard copy newsletters to agencies statewide.

G. SUPPORT GROUP OUTREACH

Mr. Feathers said MAC had agreed that it can support 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. In March, MAC talked about identifying a short list of support groups to reach out to. Mr. Nogelo summarized his efforts to reach out to several agencies and specific support groups to determine their interest.

- Mr. Nogelo will make an introductory visit to the Meriden Consumer Advisory Board on April 26.
- Mr. Feathers will make an introductory visit to a Hartford MPowerment group on April 26.
- Mr. Nogelo will draft high-level talking points to help guide these visits.
- Mr. Nogelo will follow up with support group contacts in New Haven, Waterbury, Norwalk, Willimantic, and Hartford.
- Victor Acevedo asked about the possibility of reaching out to schools to promote sexual education.
- Mr. Feathers responded that sex education does not represent the focus of the visits, but that the group may consider reaching out to youth prevention councils.
- Mr. Nogelo noted that youth ages 13-24 is one of the CHPC priority populations that MAC is trying to engage in support group visits, and that the Hartford MPowerment group includes youth.
- Mr. Ferris added that sexual education is a sensitive topic that has become highly politicized.
- Mr. Nogelo clarified the CHPC's role as a planning body rather than a provider of services such as sex education.

H. PWH ENGAGEMENT ANALYSIS

Mr. Feathers said the CHPC is interested in learning about how other HIV planning groups in Connecticut try to engage people with (PWH) and other community stakeholders and champions. MAC agreed in March that it would do a quick assessment of how each of Connecticut's two local Ryan White Planning Councils tries to engage PWH and other community members in their processes. The CHPC co-chairs approved a questionnaire designed to capture information from each Planning Council on their efforts to engage PWH. Mr. Feathers asked for feedback on the questions, and for feedback on the CHPC co-chairs' suggestion that MAC invite leaders from each Planning Council to upcoming MAC meetings to get more in-depth feedback and to increase participation in MAC.

- The group provided positive feedback on the questionnaire, and agreed that it should invite Planning Council representatives to upcoming MAC meetings.



I. MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Mr. Feathers reported that CHPC member Brian Datcher had to resign due to work scheduling conflicts.

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.

- Mr. Feathers agreed to reach out to Justin Gabino.

Mr. Feathers said 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 on member retention activities.

- Mr. Nogelo said he would send a discharge letter to Wallace Daniels, who missed his third meeting of the year in April, and would send warning letters to Mr. Gabino and Tom Butcher, who missed their second meeting of the year in April.

J. PROCESS CHECK

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

- Mr. Ferris responded that the meeting had gone well, as usual.

K. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Feathers thanked everyone for their participation and adjourned the meeting at 12:11 p.m.