



**Date:** September 21, 2022

**Location:** Virtual Meeting      **Time:** 11:03 a.m. – 12:36 p.m.

**Attendance:** CHPC Members: Victor Acevedo, Stephen Feathers, Carl Ferris, Dante Gennaro, Charles Hardy, Marcelin Joseph

Public Participants: Danielle Warren-Dias

CHPC Staff: Michael Nogelo

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### Meeting Accomplishments

1. The group approved the August Membership and Awareness Committee (MAC) meeting summary.
2. The group discussed plans to secure feedback on the 2022-2026 HIV Plan from three support groups.
3. The group discussed the progress of MAC recommendations to increase the engagement of people with HIV (PWH) in the CHPC.”
4. The group planned for the CHPC’s annual Voice of the People panel scheduled for October.
5. The group reviewed the results of year-end surveys for mentors and new members.
6. The group planned CHPC member recruitment and selection activities.

### Identified Tasks

1. MAC co-chair Stephen Feathers and staff will schedule support group follow-up visits.
  2. Danielle Warren-Dias and Dante Gennaro will recruit potential Voice of the People panelists.
  3. Mr. Gennaro and staff will develop a Voice of the People panel facilitators’ guide.
  4. Ms. Warren-Dias will provide 1-on-1 support to panelists to help prepare for the panel.
  5. Staff will request that every CHPC member complete the current member application form to allow staff to update the member diversity chart to align with the current application form criteria.
  6. Marcelin Joseph and Mr. Gennaro will develop a CHPC member recruitment flyer.
  7. Staff will send a scheduling poll to the group to identify a date and time for a short MAC meeting to conduct new member selection.
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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. AUGUST MEETING SUMMARY**

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

## **C. SUPPORT GROUP OUTREACH**

Mr. Feathers said MAC is supporting the development of the new Integrated Plan by connecting with support groups to get community input into the important issues that should be addressed in the Plan and to get community feedback as the Plan develops.

- Danielle Warren-Dias asked if any of the support groups were in Hartford.
- Mr. Feathers replied that he met with an MPowerment group in Hartford in April and hopes to hold a follow-up visit in October. Other Hartford-area support groups did not respond to outreach.
- Ms. Warren-Dias offered to connect MAC with support groups comprised of Black and (Spanish-speaking) Latina women to ensure that the voices of Hartford-area women are heard.
- Mr. Nogelo met with a Consumer Advisory Board (CAB) in Meriden in early July, and was working to schedule a follow-up visit as the group resumes meeting following a staff transition.
- Charles Hardy reported that the Meriden CAB was scheduled to meet at 3 pm that afternoon.
- Mr. Nogelo said he would reach back out to the new facilitator to ask about the possibility of a follow-up visit.
- Victor Acevedo offered to help Mr. Nogelo connect to the facilitator, if needed.
- Mr. Nogelo said he held a follow-up visit with the Black Men and Resiliency group in Stratford on September 8. Mr. Feathers had shared an overview of this group's feedback during the main CHPC meeting earlier in the day.

## **D. FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION OF STRATEGIES TO ENGAGE PEOPLE WITH HIV (PWH)**

Mr. Feathers said that MAC has been discussing various strategies to engage people with HIV (PWH) in the CHPC that came out of recent discussions with the Hartford and New Haven/Fairfield Ryan White Planning Councils. MAC had agreed to recommend to the CHPC Executive Committee that, starting in 2023, potential CHPC members be required to attend at least one CHPC meeting before being eligible for membership. MAC had also agreed on a recommendation that the CHPC increase participation stipends for CHPC members who are not employed or are not paid by their job for attending CHPC meetings. Both of these recommendations were on the agenda for that afternoon's Executive Committee meeting.

- Dante Gennaro said the pay rate for eligible CHPC members should be above minimum wage.
- Ms. Warren-Dias noted that MAC had agreed in August that eligible members who become CHPC leaders (e.g., committee chair, community co-chair) should receive a higher pay rate.
- Mr. Nogelo shared an updated overview of MAC's recommendation that reflected this change.



- The group agreed to recommend that written expectations (“a job description”) be created for CHPC leadership positions.
- Ms. Warren-Dias said this action would strengthen the resumes of CHPC leaders.
- Mr. Nogelo noted that this would support the Plan strategy to support the leadership development of CHPC members.
- Ms. Warren-Dias added that it would also support the Plan’s HIV workforce strategies.
- Mr. Gennaro reiterated that he would advocate to the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) for additional funding to increase incentives for eligible CHPC members.
- Mr. Gennaro expressed support for the recommendation that potential CHPC members should be required to attend at least one CHPC meeting before being eligible for membership, as new members should have an understanding of what they are getting into.
- Ms. Warren-Dias noted that the Hartford Planning Council requires applicants to attend three meetings before they can become members.
- Marcelin Joseph expressed support for requiring applicants to attend two or three meetings, noting that one meeting may not give a potential member a good sense of the CHPC.
- Mr. Nogelo noted that the cost of transporting applicants could become a limiting factor if the CHPC returns to in-person meetings.
- Mr. Gennaro stated his expectation that future in-person meetings would include the option to participate virtually.
- The group agreed to keep the current recommendation to requiring attendance at one meeting.

#### **E. VOICE OF THE PEOPLE PANEL PLANNING**

Mr. Feathers said MAC is helping to plan the annual “Voice of the People” panel discussion at the main CHPC meeting in October. MAC is using a similar recruitment and panelist screening process to the process that worked well in 2021. A flyer created by Positive Prevention CT designed to recruit potential panelists was sent out to the CHPC listserv and was included in the CHPC newsletter. The flyer includes a QR code that takes potential panelists to a questionnaire that collects background information and information about topics the person would like to talk about. No one has completed the questionnaire, so the CHPC co-chairs encouraged people to recruit panelists during the morning CHPC main meeting. Mr. Feathers asked for other ideas for recruiting at least three or four panelists.

- Mr. Gennaro said he would reach out to a potential panelist in New Haven.
- Ms. Warren-Dias said she would reach out to a potential panelist in Hartford.
- Mr. Nogelo promised to send the flyer to Ms. Warren-Dias and to confirm the stipend amount that panelists will receive.
- Mr. Gennaro said he would ask Johnny Rivera, who recently participated in another DPH-sponsored panel, about the possibility of participating.

Mr. Feathers stated that the panel will focus not only on HIV but also – to reflect the Integrated Plan’s syndemic approach – on substance use, hepatitis, and sexually transmitted infections. Panel themes might



include: a) Stigma, especially related to healthcare for minority communities; and b) The mental health challenges of dealing with COVID on top of living with HIV.

- Mr. Feathers said the panel could touch on the impact of telehealth on access to healthcare, including its usefulness in overcoming HIV stigma as a barrier to care.
- Ms. Warren-Dias stated that stigma exists for female PWH who have children, as many medical providers do not believe that women with HIV should be sexually active or have children.
- Mr. Gennaro said the panel format can be relatively open-ended, but the facilitators should have a guide with themes and potential questions.
- Ms. Warren-Dias suggested that the term “syndemic” be explained before the term itself is introduced.
- Mr. Nogelo said the panel might start by asking each panelist to share their story, followed by open-ended questions about the themes and interactions between the various epidemics.
- Ms. Warren-Dias offered to provide 1-on-1 support to panelists to help them prepare.
- Ms. Warren-Dias suggested asking each panelist to list their relevant lived experiences when they introduce themselves.

#### **F. MENTOR PROGRAM SURVEY RESULTS**

Mr. Feathers said the CHPC mentoring program helps new members feel more prepared and comfortable. In 2022, there were six new members who were assigned a mentor to start the year. Several of the pairings never took hold because the new member never attended a meeting or had to resign early in the year, or because the mentor had to resign. MAC sent short surveys to each mentor and mentee to get their feedback on their experience and the program. The group reviewed a summary of the results of the new member survey.

- Ms. Warren-Dias noted that mentors are not the only support for new members, explaining that experienced members and public participants are also resources to new members.
- Mr. Feathers noted one new member’s suggestion to hold a small-group “break the ice” session with mentors and new members.
- Mr. Gennaro suggested organizing a social event for CHPC members, such as a pharmaceutical-sponsored dinner with a presentation.
- Mr. Feathers said it would be important to ensure that all members can access any CHPC-sponsored events.
- Mr. Gennaro replied that CHPC members with cars could be asked to carpool with other members.

#### **G. MEMBER RECRUITMENT & SELECTION**

Mr. Feathers said MAC had previously agreed to gently encourage members of the support groups it visits to consider applying. MAC had also agreed that Mr. Nogelo would reach out to people who have attended several CHPC meetings as public participants to encourage them to apply and to challenge them to invite PWH from their communities to apply.



- Mr. Nogelo reported that this outreach had resulted in a few applications from frequent CHPC meeting attendees, as well as agreement to encourage PWH to apply – but no applications from PWH. Mr. Nogelo said he had followed up with the frequent attendees the week before, and was told that they would circle back to the PWH who had expressed interest in applying. Frequent attendees told Mr. Nogelo that a member recruitment flyer would help them and other staff recruiting potential applicants.
- Mr. Nogelo shared a document showing the projected CHPC membership in January 2023, the membership goals, and how the current applicant pool meets the CHPC’s membership needs.
- The group discussed the possibility of placing flyers and other materials in infectious disease clinics and community health center waiting rooms, or on television monitors in waiting rooms.
- Mr. Joseph said hard copies of the flyer could be displayed in agency waiting rooms and sent digitally for display on waiting room monitors.
- Mr. Hardy said he received a personal invitation to apply to become a CHPC member, and added that, to attract PHW, the flyer should highlight the CHPC’s need for PWH members.
- Ms. Warren-Dias suggested that the flyer include language about needing the voice of consumers to end the various epidemics (e.g., “Your voice is needed to end HIV. Your voice is needed to end substance use disorders...”), noting that touching on all of the epidemics would reduce HIV stigma as a barrier to participation.
- Mr. Nogelo emphasized person-to-person recruitment as the most effective recruitment strategy.
- Mr. Joseph and Mr. Gennaro agreed to develop a CHPC member recruitment flyer.
- Mr. Nogelo stated that, because several criteria were added to the member application form, the diversity chart does not align with the application since MAC does not have information on how many current members fit each new criterion.
- The group recommended that every CHPC member be asked to complete the current member application form to allow staff to update the member diversity chart to align with the current application form criteria and to reveal the membership gaps that will inform new member selection.
- Mr. Feathers suggested setting the default membership goal to two members for each of the new categories, and then scheduling time for further discussion of these goals in 2023.

Mr. Feathers said MAC’s final major task for 2022 is making a recommendation about how many applicants to invite to join the CHPC as new members in 2023. In 2021, MAC finished member recruitment and then convened for a special, short meeting just to review the diversity chart and membership needs against the applicant pool and to make that recommendation.

- The group agreed to find a time for a 30-minute meeting in late October or early November.
- Mr. Nogelo said he would send out a scheduling poll to identify the best date and time to meet.

## H. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Feathers thanked everyone for their participation and adjourned the meeting at 12:36 p.m.