**Date:** March 20, 2019

**Location:** Chrysalis Center, Hartford **Time:** 12:39 p.m. – 1:42 p.m.

**Attendance:** MAC Members: Kat Auguste, Carmen Cruz, Stephen Feathers, Carl Ferris, José Figueroa, Ann Galloway Johnson, Blaise Gilchrist, Clara Langley, Ron Lee, Waleska Mercado, Glenn Scott

Public Participants: Adriana Barrios, Jim Cataquet, Martina de la Cruz, Pamela Foster, Corey Gerena, Maribel Nieves

CHPC Staff: Michael Nogelo

# Meeting Accomplishments

1. The group approved the February Membership and Awareness Committee (MAC) meeting summary with no changes.
2. The group agreed to use the same mentor and new member mid-year check-in process that was used in past years.
3. The group discussed ideas for increasing member attendance and retention.
4. The group discussed strategies to recruit members of target populations to participate in needs assessment focus groups.

# Identified Tasks

1. Staff will create the March MAC meeting summary.
2. The MAC co-chairs will call each mentor and each new member to ask if contact is being made between the mentor and mentee, and to ask if the new member is receiving the needed support.
3. Carmen Cruz and Ron Lee will call selected CHPC members who missed the March meeting.
4. Staff will send a dismissal letter to a CHPC member who missed their third meeting of 2019 in March.

**A. Welcome and Introductions**

Membership and Awareness Committee (MAC) co-chair Clara Langley called the meeting to order at 12:39 p.m. and welcomed committee members and guests. Ms. Langley reported that new MAC co-chair Stephen Feathers would facilitate the meeting with her. All participants introduced themselves. Ms. Langley reviewed the meeting agenda and described the ground rules and processes used by MAC.

# February Meeting Summary

Ms. Langley asked members to review the February MAC meeting summary.

* The meeting summary was approved by consensus with no changes.

1. **Plan Mid-Year Mentoring Check-In**

Ms. Langley stated that MAC runs a mentoring program that matches experienced CHPC members with new members. To check on mentoring relationships in the middle of the planning year, the MAC co-chairs typically split up mentors and mentees and call each one to ask if contact is being made between the mentor and mentee, and to ask if both people feel the new member is receiving the needed support. Ms. Langley invited previous MAC co-chairs to talk about this process.

* Blaise Gilchrist said the purpose of the calls is to find out if mentors and new members have been in regular contact, if both feel comfortable with the relationship, and whether the new member is getting the support they need. After the calls are completed, the co-chairs report back to MAC to discuss any issues and to brainstorm ideas for improving the mentoring program.
* Kat Auguste noted that some new members have been coming to CHPC meetings for years and may not need much support, while others are brand new and need more attention.
* Ann Galloway Johnson said the process of matching mentors and new mentors must take into account work conflicts, as her mentee one year did not want to talk with her because they worked for different agencies in the same city.
* Mike Nogelo stated that the purpose of the mid-year check-in process is to identify issues such as the one mentioned by Ms. Galloway Johnson while time still exists to address them.

Ms. Langley asked for questions or suggestions related to the use of the same process in 2019.

* The group agreed by consensus that, if the check-in process has worked well in the past, it should be used again.

Ms. Langley said the MAC co-chairs would try to check in with all of the mentors and mentees and would report back on their findings at the April MAC meeting.

1. **Member Attendance and Retention**

Mr. Feathers stated that MAC is responsible for member retention and selection. Mr. Feathers announced that Tom Evans had recently resigned as a CHPC member because he got a new job that would not allow him to attend CHPC meetings.

Mr. Feathers said MAC members Carmen Cruz and Ron Lee sometimes call members who have missed meetings to encourage them to come to the next meeting.

* Mr. Lee reported that he had called two members, but one had passed away and the other was ill.
* Ms. Cruz said two members she called were absent because of a family emergency. She has been in touch with the wife of a member who is ill.
* Mr. Lee added that he was pleased to see Ms. Galloway Johnson back in attendance.
* Ms. Galloway Johnson shared that she no longer works for the City of Waterbury since the grant that funded her position ended. She expressed how refreshing it was to receive a phone call from Ms. Cruz.

Mr. Feathers stated that members receive a warning after their second absence and are dismissed after their third absence in a calendar year, and asked if MAC should reach out to any members who missed the March meeting.

* The group identified one member who had missed his third meeting due to an illness and would be automatically discharged.

Mr. Feathers said that, in February, MAC had discussed ideas for improving CHPC member attendance and retaining members. MAC had agreed that it would be helpful to understand why members stop coming to the CHPC. Mr. Nogelo had looked at the 15 CHPC members who have been dismissed for missing three meetings in a year since 2015, and found that seven of these members missed meetings for unknown reasons, four stopped coming because of job changes, two missed meetings for personal reasons, one stopped coming for health reasons, and one for multiple reasons. Mr. Nogelo also looked at the eight members who resigned from the CHPC in 2017 and 2018 and found that seven of them resigned because of their job responsibilities, losing their job, or getting a new job. One member resigned because of health reasons. Mr. Feathers asked the group to consider this information while discussing ideas for improving attendance and reducing the number of members who are dismissed or who have to resign.

* Mr. Gilchrist asked for confirmation that job-related issues represent the main cause of attendance problems. Mr. Nogelo confirmed that 11 of the 23 problems reviewed related to members’ jobs.
* Mr. Nogelo asked if reducing the number of meetings per year or the length of meetings might reduce work-related attendance problems.
* Mr. Feathers said the CHPC seems pressed to accomplish its work in eight meetings per year, but wondered if committee meetings could take place in the morning and continue to be required for members while presentations could take place after lunch and be optional.
* Ms. Auguste suggested that holding meetings at a more central location might make it easier for people from certain areas of the state to attend meetings.
* Corey Gerena recommended streaming meetings online for people who are not able to leave work. The meetings could be recorded so people could stream them live during work or after work.
* Some participants wondered how many members would have the capability to stream a meeting. Mr. Gerena responded that most people have a smart phone and everyone is teachable.
* Mr. Gilchrist suggested that while the option of streaming meetings might not be a solution for everyone, it could be an option worth exploring for those members who would benefit.
* Mr. Gerena said streaming might be an option only for people who are working.
* Carl Ferris asked how well new members understand the attendance commitment. Mr. Nogelo replied that the attendance policy is communicated on the application, when new members are invited to become members, and during new-member orientation.
* Martina de la Cruz said she had never seen the CHPC newsletter before coming to CHPC meetings, and suggested that it be disseminated more to agencies across the state.
* Ms. Auguste stated her opinion that the CHPC should meet every month, and should especially avoid the four-month break between the August meeting and the January meeting to maintain the continuity of the personal relationships that form at CHPC meetings. Ms. Auguste added that the CHPC should think of how to reach smaller towns, and suggested doing Facebook Live feeds.
* Ms. Galloway Johnson said the CHPC used to reach out to the community more to bring people to meetings. People grow as they become more involved in the CHPC. The CHPC gives people hope.
* Mr. Gilchrist agreed with Ms. de la Cruz that hard copies of the newsletter that are sent to agencies are typically scooped up quickly. He also noted that the number of annual CHPC meetings was reduced from ten to eight several years ago out of necessity due to reduced funding.
* Ms. Cruz said she tries to bring people from her community to CHPC meetings. She emphasized the importance of long-time members relating to new members to help them feel comfortable.
* Mr. Ferris asked why the CHPC no longer holds any meetings in New Haven. Mr. Nogelo replied that feedback forms consistently reflected participants’ preference for the Hartford meeting venue. Mr. Ferris suggested holding at least two meetings per year in New Haven to encourage participation from people from other parts of the state.

1. **Needs Assessment Focus Group Planning**

Mr. Feathers said that, at the February CHPC meeting, the CHPC co-chairs presented the preliminary results of the statewide needs assessment survey that the CHPC helped to run in 2018. During the presentation, the co-chairs said the CHPC is planning to run focus groups in 2019 to supplement the needs assessment survey results with more detailed feedback from members of specific populations. The CHPC Needs Assessment Projects (NAP) Team has been discussing the populations that should be included in these focus groups, and will develop the focus group questions. The co-chairs have asked MAC to develop strategies for recruiting members of the target populations and to help plan the locations of the focus groups. The two populations that need to be recruited to participate in focus groups are people who have been recently diagnosed with HIV and people living with HIV (PLWH) between the ages of 18 and 35. Mr. Feathers said NAP hopes to hold three focus group with people from both of these populations: one in the New Haven/Fairfield Ryan White area, one in the Greater Hartford Ryan White area, and one somewhere else in the state.

Mr. Feathers invited the group to discuss strategies to recruit newly diagnosed people and PLWH ages 18-35 from each of these areas to participate in focus groups. Mr. Feathers suggested thinking about piggybacking the focus groups onto existing meetings, such as CHPC meetings, Planning Council meetings, or support groups.

* Jim Cataquet said that members of the target populations would be the best recruiters, and reported that the Connecticut Children’s Medical Center (CCMC) runs a support group for young PLWH. Mr. Gilchrist said Nilda Fernandez would be a good point of contact for that support group.
* Mr. Gerena suggested reaching young people through Instagram, Facebook, and targeted communities on the Positive Singles dating site.
* Mr. Feathers said there is a moderated statewide Facebook group for LGBTQ events. There are also empowerment groups for young LGBTQ PLWH in Hartford (run by the Hartford Gay and Lesbian Health Collective) and New Haven (run by A Place to Nourish Your Health).
* José Figueroa noted that every newly-diagnosed person should have a case manager or APRN, and suggested reaching PLWH through these workers.
* Mr. Gerena recommended offering incentives for people to participate in the focus groups.
* Mr. Cataquet suggested sending an email announcement to the CHPC distribution list.
* Mr. Nogelo noted that several ideas had been shared to reach the target populations in the New Haven/Fairfield and Hartford areas, and asked for ideas to reach these populations elsewhere.
* Mr. Feathers suggested checking with Alliance for Living in New London and service providers in the Northwest Corner of the state.
* Ms. Auguste said she is connected to various medical associations, and suggested that a digital flier could be distributed to these associations.

Mr. Feathers thanked everyone for their ideas and said he would share them with the CHPC Executive Committee and MAC would continue to discuss this topic in April.

1. **Process Check**

Ms. Langley asked the group to evaluate the meeting.

* Ms. Cruz said the meeting went well and everyone had shared their opinions.

1. **Adjournment**

Ms. Langley thanked everyone for their participation and adjourned the meeting at 1:42 p.m.