**Date:** June 19, 2019

**Location:** Chrysalis Center, Hartford **Time:** 12:42 p.m. – 1:46 p.m.

**Attendance:** MAC Members: Carmen Cruz, Stephen Feathers, Carl Ferris, José Figueroa, Ann Galloway Johnson, Clara Langley O’Quinn, Ron Lee, Waleska Mercado, Glenn Scott

Public Participants: Melanie Alvarez, Beasha Bartlette, Jim Cataquet, Lynette Gibson, Debra Lombardo

CHPC Staff: Michael Nogelo

# Meeting Accomplishments

1. The group approved the May Membership and Awareness Committee (MAC) meeting summary with no changes.
2. The group reviewed and approved a CHPC member “exit interview” process and changes to the letter sent to CHPC applicants when the CHPC receives their applications.
3. The group planned the articles and possible authors for the August newsletter.
4. The group reviewed CHPC member attendance and agreed on member retention activities.
5. The group discussed plans to recruit new CHPC members from needed populations.

# Identified Tasks

1. Staff will create the June MAC meeting summary.
2. Staff will connect with the identified newsletter article authors to pull together a draft of the August newsletter for review at MAC’s July meeting.
3. Staff will begin to implement the new “exit interview” process.
4. Carmen Cruz and Ron Lee will call selected CHPC members who missed the June meeting.
5. Staff will send warning letters to four CHPC members who missed their second meeting of 2019 in June.
6. Staff will bring a list of DPH-funded agencies to the July MAC meeting to identify agencies that have not had representation at CHPC meetings.
7. MAC staff and co-chairs will work with other CHPC leaders and staff to incorporate CHPC member recruitment into needs assessment focus groups.

**A. Welcome and Introductions**

Membership and Awareness Committee (MAC) co-chair Clara Langley O’Quinn called the meeting to order at 12:42 p.m. and welcomed committee members and guests. All participants introduced themselves. Ms. Langley O’Quinn reviewed the meeting agenda and described the ground rules and processes used by MAC.

# May Meeting Summary

Ms. Langley O’Quinn asked members to review the May MAC meeting summary.

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

1. **May Meeting Follow-Ups**

Ms. Langley O’Quinn said that, in May, MAC had discussed CHPC member Dante Gennaro taking professional head shots of CHPC members for the newsletter and other purposes. The CHPC Executive Committee approved this idea. Mr. Gennaro will bring a backdrop to the July CHPC meeting and will take head shots of CHPC members and August newsletter authors who would like one. Mr. Gennaro will also take shots of future newsletter authors at CHPC meetings, and of new members during orientations.

Ms. Langley O’Quinn said that, in May, MAC had agreed that it would be useful to try to conduct “exit interviews” with members who have been dismissed to learn about anything the CHPC might have done to offend the member or to make it hard for them to attend meetings. Ms. Langley O’Quinn asked the group to review a 1-page draft exit interview process.

* Jim Cataquet asked if members who are discharged can re-apply. Mike Nogelo responded that they can re-apply after waiting for one membership cycle. Stephen Feathers noted that members can also immediately appeal their discharge.
* Beasha Bartlette asked what the appeal process looks like. Mr. Feathers explained that it involves completing an appeal form and appearing before the CHPC Executive Committee. The appeal must occur at the CHPC meeting immediately following the individual’s third absence and discharge.
* The group approved the “exit interview” process as described in the draft document.

Ms. Langley O’Quinn said that, in May, MAC had agreed to add a line to the letter sent to CHPC applicants when the CHPC receives their applications. The proposed line explains to applicants that an incomplete application could hurt their chances of becoming a member, and invites them to contact MAC staff to fill in any missing information. Ms. Langley O’Quinn asked the group to review a draft of the revised letter.

* The group approved the letter with no changes.

1. **Plan August Newsletter**

Mr. Feathers said stated that MAC produces a newsletter three times per year, and that the group needed to plan the articles and identify possible authors for the August newsletter. The newsletter features seven articles in total, including two regular features (CHPC Update and Connecticut Department of Public Health Corner). Regular CHPC participant Danielle Warren-Dias has also committed to submitting an article about her coast-to-coast motorcycle ride to benefit the Pediatric, Youth and Family HIV Program at Connecticut Children’s Medical Center. Mr. Feathers asked the group to think about articles that could fill the remaining four spaces, and noted that MAC recently discussed the possibility of an article sharing information on how people living with HIV (PLWH) might be able to get life insurance.

* The group agreed that an article on life insurance would be useful, as the experiences of PLWH trying to get life insurance vary considerably. The group suggested relying on informational resources including a life insurance company, a private insurance broker, A Place to Nourish your Health (APNH), and the State Insurance Department.
* Melanie Alvarez offered to write an article about Overdose Awareness Day (August 31).
* Debra Lombardo offered to write an article on the new Connecticut AIDS Drug Assistance Program (CADAP) formulary and the new CADAP ad hoc committee.
* The group agreed to include an update on a range of topics related to pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), including: a) a class action lawsuit against Gilead related to side effects from a known defect in the drug formulation of Truvada; b) the Connecticut State Department of Public Health (CT DPH) endorsing the U=U (undetectable = untransmittable) messaging campaign; and c) a bill that passed in both the Connecticut House and Senate that would allow minors to get PrEP without parental consent.
* Mr. Feathers suggested including pictures from June National HIV Testing Day events.
* Carl Ferris said he was comfortable with his picture being displayed in the June newsletter, but that he did not like the picture that was used.
* Mr. Nogelo stated that everyone will have the opportunity to approve the headshots taken in July.
* The group agreed that the June article by a nutritionist was well-received, and resolved to include more articles related to health and diet in the August newsletter and future newsletters, space permitting. Ms. Alvarez suggested asking CT DPH about state-funded dieticians drafting articles.
* Ann Galloway Johnson said she liked the June newsletter, particularly the healthy eating article.

Mr. Feathers stated that Mr. Nogelo would work with the identified authors to pull together a draft of the newsletter for review at MAC’s July meeting.

1. **Member Attendance & retention**

Mr. Feathers stated that MAC supports member attendance and retention. The CHPC has a goal of an 85% attendance rate by CHPC members. For the first five CHPC meetings of the year, the member attendance rate was 81%. MAC members Carmen Cruz and Ron Lee sometimes call members who have missed meetings to encourage them to come to the next meeting.

* Ms. Cruz said all Waterbury members were in attendance in June, but the public participants from Waterbury did not have transportation available to them.
* Mr. Lee reported that he had called Angel Medina and Ms. Galloway Johnson, both of whom were in attendance in June.
* Ms. Langley O’Quinn asked if non-members could ride in a car provided by the CHPC. Mr. Nogelo replied that this was allowed if space was available in the car.
* Mr. Ferris noted that the feedback received on the CHPC meeting feedback form related to the location of CHPC meetings would likely be skewed towards meeting in Hartford because people from other parts of the state have a hard time coming to meetings in Hartford (and therefore could not provide feedback on the meeting feedback form).
* Mr. Feathers asked participants to share information about good, low-cost meeting spaces in other areas of the state. Ms. Alvarez reported that the United Way of Greater New Haven has a nice space that is free to nonprofits but that must be reserved well in advance.

Mr. Feathers stated that members receive a warning after missing a second meeting and are dismissed after missing a third meeting in a year, and asked the group to look at an attendance summary.

* The group identified four members who had missed their second meeting and would receive warning letters.

1. **New Member Recruitment**

Mr. Feathers stated that MAC is responsible for new member recruitment and selection. At MAC’s August meeting, MAC members will decide how many people to invite to join the CHPC from the applicant pool. Mr. Feathers explained how MAC uses a membership diversity chart to make sure it recruits from populations needed to fill gaps in membership, and walked the group through a copy of the diversity chart.

* Ms. Alvarez suggested that DPH should begin to enforce its contracts, which require DPH-funded agencies to send representatives to most CHPC meetings.
* Mr. Nogelo said he could bring the list of DPH-funded agencies to the July MAC meeting to identify agencies – particularly those in Fairfield County – that have not had representation at CHPC meetings and suggested making a plan to encourage participation and applications from these agencies.

Mr. Feathers reminded the group that, in May, MAC had agreed to work with other CHPC leaders and staff to incorporate CHPC member recruitment into upcoming needs assessment focus groups that will target young PLWH and recently-diagnosed individuals, both of which would help fill gaps in CHPC membership. The Executive Committee and CHPC Co-Chairs have agreed to include member recruitment as part of those focus groups. MAC staff and co-chairs will work with other CHPC leaders on the specifics when the focus groups are being planned.

* Ms. Bartlette asked how the current applicant pool compares to the CHPC’s needs. Mr. Nogelo replied that the pool includes several PLWH, but fewer people who meet other needed categories.
* Ms. Bartlette asked how case managers can assist member recruitment efforts. Mr. Feathers suggested case managers encourage clients who might be effective members to apply.
* Mr. Nogelo said that applications for 2020 should be submitted by early October of 2019.
* Ms. Alvarez suggested recruiting members from the New Haven/Fairfield County Ryan White Planning Council, which includes providers and PLWH from Fairfield County.
* Mr. Feathers said the CHPC provides PLWH the opportunity to make their voices heard on a statewide level.

1. **Process Check**

Ms. Langley O’Quinn asked the group to evaluate the meeting.

* Many participants stated their opinion that the meeting had gone well.
* Carmen Cruz said that Waleska Mercado wanted to know why it takes so long for new members to be selected. Mr. Feathers explained that new members are brought on only once per year because all new members receive orientation together just prior to the start of the planning year. Mr. Nogelo added that selecting new members once per year fits the mentoring program timeline.
* Glenn Scott reminded the group that people can participate fully in meetings without being members.
* Ms. Galloway Johnson said that some people want to join right away, and may lose interest when they have to wait. If MAC finds people who really want to join, they should figure out how to evaluate them and bring them in as members, if they are ready.
* Ms. Cruz reported that she only recruits people who she knows would be committed members.
* Mr. Feathers said MAC has discussed interviewing recruits but has decided not to try to screen people based on personality or anticipated level of commitment.
* Ms. Alvarez explained that, if staff cannot reach an applicant when it is time to invite them to be a member, staff moves to the next applicant on the list. She added that it is impossible to know who might be energized by the CHPC and become committed to the group.
* Ms. Bartlette suggested encouraging prospective applicants to come to meetings as public participants to see what it is all about before applying. Mr. Ferris agreed, but noted that transportation may prevent some prospective applicants from attending meetings.

1. **Adjournment**

Ms. Langley O’Quinn thanked everyone for their participation and adjourned the meeting at 1:46 p.m.