

Minutes from The Health and Wellness Committee March 1, 2022

Attendees:

Commissioners: Marsha Weber, Joyce Dubow, Wayne Berman, David Engel, Nikiru Ezeani, Eddie Rivas, Barbara Selter, Virginia Cain, Betsy Carrier, Laurie Pross

Guests: Marcia Pruzan

Staff: Tina Purser-Langley

Meeting called to order at 9:30

Eddie Rivas moved that the minutes from 2/1 be approved. Betsy Carrier added that she had attended the 2/1 meeting. Marsha Weber seconded approval of the minutes. Minutes were approved.

Topics for this year's focus: The agenda item for the meeting was to review and prioritize the topics that had been presented at the February 1 meeting and identify possible work products.

Topic 1: In Home Assistance for Older Adults- Presented by Wayne

To clarify this topic the committee discussed whether the difficulty of obtaining in home assistance was one of being able to match available services to needs or one of lack of availability and affordability of services. The consensus was that both items are an issue.

Possible strategies to address issue:

- Develop fact sheets, in multiple languages, questions to ask and things you need to know when seeking in-home services. Needs coordination with Communications Committee.
- Meet with hospital discharge planners to share our understanding of problems and obtain their perspective.

Topic 2: Prescription Drug Costs- Presented by Kendall

Kendall was not present to further describe this topic. Although of great concern the high cost of prescription drugs is an issue that is dealt with on a national basis.

The committee could take some action to increase awareness of issue.

Possible strategies to address include:

- On 50+ do a show about how to compare and select a Part D plan. Timing should be around the time (September or October) of Part D Open Season
- Promote take back prescription day.
- Have an expert from CMS or AARP address this committee, 50+ or the entire Commission on Aging on drug prices. Speakers are known to Joyce and Laurie on this topic.

Topic 3: Linking Seniors/ Older Adult Gap with Zip Codes- Presented by Rev

Rev was not present to discuss this proposal.

Possible strategy to address include: Can Tina distribute any data that has not been previously shared with us on zip codes with high numbers of seniors?

Topic 4: Palliative Care and End of Life Choices- Presented by Laurie

Laurie said this topic should be split into two initiatives, perhaps dealing separately with palliative care and end of life issues as they are different concepts.

Possible strategies to address include:

- This topic can be addressed by having educational speakers. At the CoA meeting in March there will be a speaker on hospice/palliative care.
- Participation on coalitions: Laurie Pross will serve as liaison to End of Life Coalition. Tina will contact Laurie with further information.
- Participation on health care decision day.
- Include issues around “Advance Care Planning” as part of Topic 5 below.
- Consider topics as possible subject for 50+ programs.

Topic 5: Health and Finances- Presented by Virginia

The consensus of the committee was that this topic should be the focus of the committee’s work this year.

Specific action item:

Create a document that has a CoA “brand”. There are a lot of materials already available that could be brought together that include information on financial literacy, family health histories, where people should keep important documents, advance planning, self help etc. These materials should be made available in multiple languages.

The committee voted to move forward on this topic. The first step was creating a workgroup to flesh out this topic and the product that could be produced.

Virginia, Barbara, Joyce, Marsha, Laurie and Tina volunteered to participate on this workgroup.

Other items discussed:

- The topic of mental health was raised as an important topic for the committee to consider. Possible next steps might be to have a speaker on the topic.
- Neal raised the issue of whether the “988” suicide prevention line was available. It was reported that this phone number would go live in July 2022. It was suggested that this committee write a letter of support for staffing this phone line.
- Question was raised whether there are ongoing unique interests about COVID19 for seniors and whether there might be a separate page on the county COVID website on this topic. Tina said she would look into this.

Next Meeting is April 5, 2022 at 9:30 am

Meeting was adjourned at 10:33