

AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY AND HEALTH SERVICES WORKGROUP MINUTES



Date: 07/21/2020

Time: 09:00 AM

Facilitator: Ayse Tokbay and Karen Basinger

In Attendance

Terri Hansen

James Gutman

Kathleen Krintz

Ayse Tokbay

Heidi Weiss-Beedie

Mary Jo Neil

Michele Millican

Manuel Evangelista

Karen Basinger

Amy Spanier

Susan Hailman

Minutes Approved

With the following change: **Bullet –that stated Shortage of physicians should be Shortage of primary care physicians**

First: Jim Gutman

Second: Ayse Tokbay

Announcements:

Terri informed the group that she will be meeting with Co-chairs from all the domains on July 23, 2020. They will be able to share ideas and make sure we are not duplicating information.

Dr. Ball attended the Housing workgroup meeting and was very impressed and would now like to attend a meeting with each of the workgroups. The members will be notified when the date for him to attend the group has been determined,

Old Business:

- Terri reviewed the following:
 - Vision statement. The first sentence seems to be your vision statement and the rest is the mission statement. All members agreed and it will stand as such.
 - Reminded everyone put their volunteer hours in consistently

New Business:

How to look at the process of building the Action Plan for Age-Friendly Howard County:

- Terri spoke about how we can learn from others. The best way to do that is looking at the AARP and the World Health Organization websites and look at different action plans. As an

example, in Howard County the Horizon Foundation has the SpeakEasy easy program which addresses issues of end of life. Perhaps, the work group would look at that program and find it important to support it put something specific regarding it in our action plan.

- Also, it is important to recognize that Howard County did not start off at square one. We have made many steps toward being age-friendly and we want to identify them (e.g. Complete Streets, Universal Design guidelines in 55+ Communities, Senior Tax Credit, Livable Homes Tax Credit)
- When we write an action plan task, we will identify a party responsible for implementation. It can be a government agency, a business, a non-profit, private citizens or a faith-based community.
- Ayse has looked at other communities' action plans. She found some consistency in the different action plans with what we have been discussing, including the importance of promoting successful existing health programs. One common theme was promoting what is already out there.
 - Susan stated if we are only going to promote what we already have, then there is no reason for task force.
 - Ayse stated that is not all that we would do. Additional, new recommendations would be made as well.
- Both Susan and Ayse spoke about the need to identify gaps. Susan noted that sometimes programs appear on paper but that does not mean they are being used well. Ayse agreed and stated that some programs may be available in only certain parts of the county. The goal of the assignment we sent out was to identify what services we know of and then where gaps exist.
- Susan felt the questions are good to identify where there are waiting lists, but she wants to know what the demand for services is
- Karen acknowledged that we need to look at what is there, what is being provided and what area is being served. We want to be a County that serves all not just a select few. We want to look at what services are out there and the types of insurances they accept. All that information is piecemeal in different places and needs to be put in one spot so that we know where future needs are going to be.
 - Susan wanted to know how that intertwines with the Resource Guide that already exists.
 - Karen stated the resource guide is a start. But a lot of services are not there.
 - Mary Jo lives in the Western part of the County and is noticing a gap between the fully functional senior and the senior who lives in an Assisted Living and has limited capabilities. There is that space in the middle that is missing, and we do not have a lot of services for that bracket.
- Heidi Weiss-Beedi is the Psychogeriatric Coordinator at the Health Department and the Immigrant Behavioral health Coordinator who is responsible finding resources for people. The resources are here and available in Howard County and when you add Neighbor Ride and Heart to Heart transportation you then have accessibility to the resources. So, if the question is how to produce the best community guide and get it to the people then possibly consider mailing it to older adults (but this can be expensive). When we identify a service as missing, then we can collaborate with like services and try to develop it.
- Karen stated in her experience the older adults do not know how to work through the system and need to have somebody as a navigator. What is missing is a navigator for seniors to put

all those services together for a family. People don't know what to ask for or how to put it in terms that our agencies are used to hearing. That's where a social worker comes in; she knows the lingo.

- Susan agrees the services are there. She believes it is important to make the web site more transparent for those that can use it. And for others mail the Resource Guide. She stated people do not look for services until they need them.
 - Heidi stated she serves in a navigator type role through the Howard County Health Department and the Office on Aging and Independence has the MAP Specialists that can help people look for services. Put a navigation services through the Office on Aging and Independence.
- Karen noted that people are hesitant to go the Health Department because there is a stigma, and that prevents people from using services. We need to break down barriers and make sure the services are being utilized like they should be. Heidi agreed that sometimes going to the Health Department does not fit for many people. But there is Office on Aging and Independence. Kathleen suggested having a MAP specialist do a presentation about their role.
 - Jim mentioned the County SHIP Program has a role in this too. He is one of the SHIP Counselors. Some things are covered by Medicare and people are not aware of what is covered. It would be good to look at another way to get information out there.
- Karen when seniors are in the hospital you have social worker or case managers helping to figure out discharge planning when you are not at your best or thinking straight.
 - Susan mentioned that when they are discharging at the Hospital a lot of weight is being put on the care team. You would need to have a compliant patient to be able to work with that system. If a disconnect happens the services are discontinued, and the patient loses services. It is easy to fall through the cracks with the system.
- Heidi stated it seems that the follow up piece is what is needed. Need to have a weekly, monthly calls so that patient does not fall through the cracks so that they have access to services that are appropriate and that are affordable to them.
 - Susan stated the role needs to be clear.
 - Karen stated if we can get services in the home to prevent a hospitalization, that is also an area that needs to be looked at.
- Heidi mentioned the AERS program. They will come out to the home do an assessment and may put services in as needed. The AERS program is underutilized. Strongly recommend that we help others in the community that refer older adults to services to learn about this program and the benefits it can have for the patient.
 - Susan asked how the Health Department lets people know this is available and how would anyone know to ask for it.
 - Heidi not sure about everything that department does to get the word out. We have recently developed promos that have gone on the Health Department website. We are trying to get more word out there. The foreign-born immigrant program has partnered with Howard County College radio station. May run articles in the local newspaper.
- Karen stated with the immigrant population she believes the reason there may not be a lot of response in this political environment is that they do not feel safe.
- Heidi agrees with that except that the immigrant behavioral program is booming right now. Once the quarantine started, they have had many new clients come into the program.

- Michele stated there is some information that can be done on an informational level. People plan their lives with their education, work and really do not plan their retirement years. There are different phases and you can make some personal choices of how you would like to be treated when you are in a crisis.
- Mary Jo asked about communication. How are seniors and families getting communication? Are seniors getting information through the internet, library, should they get it at the grocery store? Are they going viral, and what is the paper information they are getting?
- Susan mentioned that they just did a revamp of the Howard County website and it does list the MAP resources. There are many seniors who are active on the Internet. More older adults are having vision issues. There is level of access with people who have vision impairments. It is more than people just not being comfortable with computers; it is all different issues.

Homework Assignments:

No homework was given

Next Meeting:

August 18, 2020 – 9:00 AM - (will be a WebEx invitation will be sent before the meeting).