

AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION WORKGROUP MINUTES



Date: 08/20/2020

Time: 1:00PM

Facilitator: Kim Henry and Lucki Sohi

In Attendance

Scott Ripley

Lucky Sohi

Kim Henry

Terri Hansen

Mae Beale

Jenna Crawley

Stuart Rosenthal

Kelly Kesler

Debbie Burgio

Minutes Approved

First: Mae Beale

Second: Stuart Rosenthal

Announcements:

Kim welcomed everyone to the meeting and stated that the group needed to wrap some things up to refine the direction in which this workgroup is going forward. Need to make specific decisions about the direction and find some useful things that can be included in an action plan for Howard County. Also, would like to complete the discussion of the Age-Friendly Survey. A lot of the items relate to this group as they dealt with how people are getting their information and how they prefer to get information. What they don't know about - particularly about Maryland Access Point (MAP) - is not nearly as well known.

Old Business:

Lucky will share the survey results and go through the parts that relate to this workgroup.

- Kim asked Jenna if she had any overall comments about the survey results. The group has been discussing how it was largely female respondents. Need to get the male perspective. When dealing with programs for families need to have a variety of viewpoints. Also feel the survey does not necessarily reveal a wide demographic or multicultural sample.
- Jenna said we recognize where the survey results are skewed and where additional outreach is needed to ensure that all voices and the community members are heard.
- Terri and Jenna along with others are thinking about ways to engage the community (despite COVID) and what focus groups and listening sessions can look like, and to broaden the perspective of our survey results. Would be interested to hear from this workgroup about how we move forward in this environment.
 - Best Practices in getting public input.
 - What can be done as alternatives (assuming no in-person gatherings at this time)
 - If the results are drastically different from the original demographics, how does that influence the process and timelines going forward?

- Lucky stated in accordance with what Jenna and Terri said the effort is to look over what we currently have and consider what are the needs. Will be reexamining pages 9 through 14 and page 21 as it relates to the Communication aspect of the survey.

- Lower Income
- Lower Education
- Issues not addressed
- Disadvantaged in some way

Chart on page 9 for Communication is about information and sources for Aging issues.

- How older adults get their information
- And what the social media tool is
- Mae stated this does not address the segment of the population 65+ - how to get them on board, since most are not interested in social media. And need to have direct instructional pieces to help them navigate the different systems.
- Kim asked Mae what are the barriers?
 - ✓ Is it Connectivity?
 - ✓ It is financial
- Mae replied that many people don't feel valued.
- Kim asked what is the main source for information for those not using the internet?
- Mae said reading the newspaper, watching the news. Most are up on current events.
- Lucky mentioned working in the 50+ centers and putting out virtual newsletters. Of all the different centers there are two centers that take advantage of online programming. And most 65+ do not use the internet, rather read newspapers and watch television for their information.
- Stuart stated that the survey was never put out in a print media which reflects the results as well.
- Debbie stated that there needs to be a wide variety of ways to communicate.

Lucky went over the chart for information Sources by Race/Ethnicity. What is the takeaway from the chart?

- Mae stated that as group need to find a way to bridge the gaps.
- Terri stated that we have to appreciate what we have.
- Kim mentioned that we were disappointed to see that MAP was not cited as a source of information. Work is needed to get the word out about MAP.
- Terri wanted to point out that it is interesting that the people who do use MAP as their information resource is people of color and people who identify as Hispanic. Also, the faith based community. This says something when we want to get information out to targeted populations.
- Mae mentioned that more information is always helpful.
- Lucky stated that her takeaway from the chart is that the Hispanic community seems to be engaged across the board.

The next chart for review is Interest in Various Educational Topics.

- Lucky mentioned that for Seniors the most important educational topics were
 - Financial Scams
 - Health Insurance
 - Retirement Planning
- Kim said that Jill who currently works for MAP but is not here today would tell you that those topics tend to be the most common calls to MAP.

Next chart for review is Education and Training related to Employment.

- Mae stated that it was mostly job training, skill training
- Lucky mentioned that for those retired there was not much interest in job training.

Chart on Percent Unaware of MAP by Income Level.

- Lucky stated that people at high income levels maybe tapping into more private resources.
- Stuart stated that MAP has a reputation as being a Government run program.
- Kim reminded the group what Mae has said at the last meeting it may be perceived as a service for lower income.
- Both Kim and Lucky stated this is a big focus for the group and especially on issues that relate to everyone regardless of income such as Hospice and Medicare; a lot of things MAP does are not related to income levels.
- Mae mentioned that should be published that everyone can use MAP regardless of income.

Chart on Percent Reporting Completed Planning by Level of Education Attainment

- Lucky stated that most people plan when they have something plannable.
- Stuart pointed out the fact that activities are low among the lower income and education.
- Terri stated that she does not believe people plan for retirement. When people are planning for retirement they think about it financially. One of the things at the Office on Aging and Independence (OAI) is how to help people think about planning for their retirement above and beyond the financial aspects. One thing that was talked about in several of the other groups is Volunteering, Encore Careers, social participation, being with others, and doing something meaningful in life. Also need to plan for medical and Health which not enough people do in advance.
- Lucky stated that to her it is a personal issue. People of lower or average income can't plan for retirement. A lot of different funds and things have been developed so that people can invest in them with lower payments. High school students should be taught financial planning.
- Mae stated that early planning is very important.
- Terri said keep that idea in mind and maybe this group and another group can come together and figure out how to make that happen. Financial planning from generations back.

Last chart is on Interest in Health-Related Activities/Classes.

- Lucky mentioned that Health reminders was most important for 65+.
- Kim stated that programs that are more informational are not getting the attendance virtually.
- Lucky stated that is also how it is presented, and the information given.
- Kim wanted to remind the group that when these surveys were done these were all in person offerings. Need to have more ways for people to attend classes online.
- Stuart wanted to raise the possibility that COVID could be around for a while and that there will be a new normal.
- Kelly stated that we will need more information as it relates to the new normal. There has been an amazing increase in participation in such programs as the Chronic Disease Self-Management classes.
- Terri talked about a meeting with Jenna possibly revisiting the survey concept at this point.

Terri wanted to let everyone know that Dr. Ball will be coming to the September meeting for this work group. He has attended a number of Age-Friendly meetings. Dr. Ball takes a couple of

minutes in the beginning to make a statement to the work group. Then the group will have an opportunity to share what this group has been doing and what the future plans are as it relates to this domain. Would like to start the meeting a few minutes early to make sure everything is ready to go and then do the presentation. Lucky and Kim wanted input on how to do the presentation - it has been done in several different ways. Housing had the co-chairs talk about the structure of the group and then had the co-chairs for each subgroup speak since it was a very large group that was broken into three subgroups. Work and Civic engagement did a very brief four or five slide power point about topics that had been discussed. When Outdoor Spaces and Buildings presented (smallest group) since it was such a small group they were able have each individual speak about why they joined this particular group. Have to present something a few days in advance in writing to Dr. Ball about what your group has been doing.

- Kim stated when she first started thinking about this, need to have Dr. Ball understand that we have reviewed current County communications, including his newsletter. Looked at some of the methods being used during COVID such as doing virtual. And need to be realistic as to what some of the barriers are.
 - Possibly a knowledge issue with older adults
 - ✓ Accessible training to learn more technology
 - Connectivity issues
 - The whole cultural ethnic barriers
- Mae brought up about the people cannot benefit due to their income level.
- Kim stated that would fall under Connectivity issues.
- Kelly mentioned overarching programs and resources across the community and believes this County Executive and his Administration are really intentional about trying to leverage partnerships. And also reinforce that how the Age-Friendly initiative is in tandem with other groups within the County.
- Kim mentioned a point Jim Sanders brought that up that he felt community agencies and non-profit groups were often marketing to one another. We are not unified.
- Kelly mentioned that the Healthy Aging work group of LHIC would become the Age-Friendly communities' people.
- Mae suggested sharing the information and combining with the other work groups.
- Kim mentioned the meeting with the co-chairs showed there was a lot of duplication of efforts. Our work group is trying to refine our work towards actual items that will go in an action plan.
- Stuart mentioned that he served on the DC Age-Friendly committee and that they had monthly meetings of representatives of all the groups so that they could exchange information. The Communication group was the method and the means for bringing all the other information out to the public.
- Kelly stated that is the way we are transitioning for LHIC.
- Jenna stated that makes a lot of sense and how much duplicative work there is a Community engagement piece that goes behind this. Having one entity that is working on linking and then dispersing information to the parties that have broader next works. One of the goals is to increase the awareness and education of the Age-Friendly initiative. Would like to see us communicate better as a community.
- Terri stated that goes to creating those partnerships and getting the buy in; it is an upward climb.
- Kim stated that she would be happy to include these points as part of the summary and then decide in what manner to present. Also reminded Terri to put up the timeline to go over it.

- Terri presented the timeline at the co-chairs' meeting; it is a modified timeline with a six-month extension. Now looking at May 2021 to present the action plan. Listening sessions and focus groups are now scheduled for late September into early November as well as the plan for a modified session of a townhall telephone concept with smaller groups of people, about 12 to 15. We want to target those people that were not well represented in the survey, and partner with groups that are already meeting with those individuals.
- Kim mentioned some items that are action items that need more investigation. One of the key things that the group agreed on is to have speakers whose viewpoint would be beneficial to the group. Have someone from FIRN for the multicultural aspect. Think about your networks and who would be a good speaker for this group. Please email potential speaker names and contact info to Kim and Lucky with a brief summary of their roles.
- Stuart mentioned that the keynote speaker at the Beacon's 50+ Expo just came out with a book called *What Retirees Want* based on years worth of research. There are tapes of his lectures online we can watch as a group and then discuss.
- Kim would rather have the group watch it on their own and then discuss at the meeting. Asked Stuart to send out a link. When Jarrett Carter gave his presentation, being able to have that interaction with the group was valuable.
- Jenna asked Stuart about having someone give a presentation from the DC Age-Friendly communication group about what they have learned which could be helpful.
- Kim mentioned having speakers and or more investigation as to how to reach out to the low vision population, as well as those who speak other languages and cultural communities. OAI has published ads in a Korean newspaper and I am sure there are other publications that we do not know about. Talked about having someone from the Howard County Library system talk about partnering to increase visibility. Also consider linking to Faith-Based Communities.
- Mae mentioned having a letter to send out to the different Faith-based communities. Also mentioned someone at the St. Johns Baptist church who works with the Seniors. Mae and Debbie will get together regarding other Faith-Based Churches.
- Kim stated this group needs to be more specific about what information we are seeking from groups such as these.
- Terri talked about the Community Support and Health Services presentation by MAP which was excellent. That meeting was recorded; she can provide each of you with the recording so you can watch the presentation and hear the questions. Really good information came out of it. And Kelly Kesler will be speaking about what LHIC does at the Community Support and Health Services group in September.
- Kelly said LHIC is part of the Health Department and co-chaired by the Health Department and the Hospital.
- Kim stated that social media has really benefited LHIC not only to increase its visibility but to gain a better understanding of what LHIC does.

Homework Assignments:

Lucky will assign six jurisdictions to each of you. Go to the AARP or the World Health Organization and review these and pick out one or two to report on at the September and October meetings.

Next Meeting: September 17, 2020 – 1:00 PM (via WebEx)