

**Contra Costa County Advisory Council on Aging  
Health Work Group Minutes  
Thursday, January 14, 2021**

**Call to Order:** Susan Frederick called the meeting to order at 9:30 am.

**Present:** Susan Frederick, Brian O’Toole, Terri Tobey, Fred Adams, Nuru Neemuchwalla, Caitlyn Sly, Nancy Leasure, Frances Smith, Jennifer Doran, Dennis Yee, Sara Shafiabady, Fred Adams, Jim Donnelly

**Guest:** Carlyn Oberinger, Blue Shield of California

**Absent:** Joanna Kim-Selby, Kathie Thompson, Lenore MacDonald

**Staff:** Anthony Macias

**Approval of Agenda/Minutes**

- Approve Today’s Agenda – Frances moved to approve agenda, Nuru motioned second, unanimously approved.
- December minutes revisions to Fred’s report on nursing homes: Jim moved to approve minutes as revised; Fred moved second; motion to adopt with revisions adopted by all.

**Announcements and Correspondence:** Susan Frederick, Chair

- Susan: Susan asking Fred remain as member who discusses nursing homes.
- Susan will advocate for Older Adult Mental Health.

**Public Comment**

- None

**Presentation:** Community Connect Program – Debbie Card

- Innovative health care model for county’s most vulnerable residents.
- State funded pilot program multidisciplinary model; 2,000 clients; high level of complex medical conditions, high ER visits and hospitalizations. The notes speak to the clientele being 2,000. The initial client enrollment was 14,000.
- Participants selected based on a data matrix from Health Care Services (CCHP).
- Participants followed by CC health care system in order to provide most comprehensive care possible.
- Results include improved self-care, self-sufficiency; reduced ER visits and hospitalizations. Reduces cost of care.
- Strategy: addressed by team of experts- nurses, SW, legal, mental health workers, etc.
- Specialists plan care and carrying it out under Health Services (Public Health).
- SW component in partnership with AAS/EHSD/IHSS.
- ACOA Planning committee has been receiving updates monthly on progress of program.
- Funding: CCC 1 of 25 organizations to receive a grant from state; 5 year grant, \$40M a year for 5 years; originally ended in 2020, but has been extended by 1 year.
- Health services applying for funding for further extension.
- State pleased with results of the county program.

- Questions: Fran- How does this compare to MSSP program?
- MSSP program is for individuals 65+ who qualify for nursing home admission; community connect is not as targeted population, no age limitation; Pilot for what CA can do.
- Fred- any element that addresses mobility issues, home adaptation? Team members have the duty to connect the clients with whatever services they need.
- Dennis- Distribution of participants? Countywide, no specific data of regions.
- Partnership with AAS/IHSS 4 SW; working with clients that belong to both CTCT and IHSS recipients; Need for equitable care for county residents.
- Jennifer- how did the care change during COVID19? Shift from PHN to SW as nurses were pulled to work on the pandemic.

### **AARP Updates** – Nuru Neemuchwalla

AARP –2021 Priorities for COVID-19.

- a. Vaccine administration and accessibility.
- b. Nursing home & long term care facilities reform to protect residents, staff, and their families including access and adequate PPE, staffing, testing, transparency, funding, accountability, no blanket immunity and virtual visitation.
- c. Paid sick leave & job protections.
- d. Support for state & local government funding.

### **Legislative Report** - Nancy Leasure

- No report today.

### **Dementia/Alzheimer's**: Jennifer Doran

1. Washington Post-Large scale global study to investigate links between Covid19 and cognitive decline:

- There is compelling evidence that Covid19 will have long-term effects on brain/nervous system of survivors. After decades of evidence from other respiratory viruses, Covid19 may increase risk of ALZ, Parkinson's, and other brain disorders.
- Researchers hope to enroll 40,000 Covid19 survivors from over 50/60 years old in 40 countries. ALZ Assoc. is funding initially with technical guidance from WHO.
- In the past year, doctors have noticed lingering post recovery conditions such as brain fog, forgetfulness, anxiety, depression, and psychosis. Abnormal brain imaging has emerged as a feature all over the world. Even in persons who complained of loss of sense of smell.
- The flu of 1918, SARS, and MERS connected to memory impairment, sleep disruption, anxiety, and psychosis. Covid19 triggers a huge release of inflammation signals leading to blood-brain dysfunction when can promote neuro inflammation and brain cell death.
- Covid19 enters cells via the olfactory bulb, the brain structure involved in the sense of smell. The olfactory bulb connects with the hippocampus, the brain structure responsible for short-term memory. Believed to be the source of cognitive impairment and part of the reason for accelerated cognitive decline over time.

- So far, 1-2 % of world population has developed Covid19 and perhaps 5% without symptoms. If a fraction of those has increased cognitive difficulties, the effects are devastating because of the numbers.
- From 1920-1960, there was an increase in brain afflictions, Parkinson's, cognitive decline, and psychosis. Scientists attribute the increase to the 1918 flu.
- This new study will include some survivors already enrolled in studies at Albert Einstein College, NY. Information collected over next 2-3 years with initial results expected in early 2022. Genetic backgrounds studied since African Americans and Latino groups hit hard. There is no evidence that more severe disease episode produced more problems with cognition.
- It is not clear now that taking the Covid19 vaccine prevents cognitive decline as pneumonia and flu vaccines assumed to do.

2. New York Times Alzheimer's Drug shows promise in small trial:

- The drug, Donanemab, a monoclonal antibody, binds to a small part of hard plaques in the brain made of protein, amyloid. 272 mild to moderate ALZ patients received an infusion every 4 weeks x 2yrs.
- Patients selected by showing significant accumulation of amyloid in their brains. Tau tangles also measured to insure mild to moderate progression of disease.
- Pts had a 32% deceleration in rate of decline, compared with those receiving placebo. In 6-12 months, plaques were gone and stayed gone. At that point patients received placebo instead.
- The main side effect was one regularly seen in patients given monoclonal antibodies for ALZ: accumulation of fluid in the brain; reported for 30% but no symptoms.
- This small study must be replicated.

3. Current Alzheimer Research: Is education attainment associated with increased risk of Mortality in People with Dementia:

- In Spain, 269 persons with dementia compared to 2944 participants without dementia.
- Results: After median follow-up of 5.4 years, 400 died (171 with dementia, 229 without dementia). Among these participants, those with higher education attainment had an increased risk of death than those with lower education. Educational attainment was not associated with increased mortality among participants without dementia.
- Conclusion: High educational attainment is associated with increased mortality in people with dementia. The observation implies that neuropathology is more advanced in patients with higher education at any level of clinical severity leading these individual to an earlier death after diagnosis.
- Terri Tobey raised the issue that some studies have contradicted these findings. She cited the term increased cognitive reserve. Jennifer will research for next meeting.

**Nursing Homes:** Fred Adams

- What's wrong with DPH?
- Licensing of SNF; hands off approach; illegal transfers and discharges; risk and reward is a non-issue;

- violations distilled down to only 1;
- DPH just approved license for new facility for owner with three closed SNF;
- 12 citations, extreme and deadly neglect.

### **Caregiver Resources:** Terri Tobey

- Was on Covid19 focus group call yesterday:
- Encouraged by vaccines open to home caregivers.
- Caregiving 101 course being offered on Feb 10, 2pm
- New York Times report on caregiving- 1 of 5 people Providing unpaid care; 25% more than 1 Person; 25% having difficulty; increase form 2015 study; 60% of family caregivers; also working FT jobs.

### **6 tips for caregiver**

- Be Patient centered
- Focus on Comfort Joy and Pleasure
- Listen to experts for advice
- Talk to other Caregivers (support)
- Take care of yourself
- Shed the Guilt- practice self-compassion
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### **Senior Nutrition**

- Caitlyn Sly reported update with MOWDR:
  - Weekly delivery of frozen meals continues;
  - help from Link/County connection small bus;
  - Home delivery of meals to Café clients.
  - Pilot program for grocery delivery.
  - Breakfast bag program added.
  - 40% Increase in number of clients served.

### **Public Comment**

- Dennis- having a difficult time getting mom a vaccine in Fresno.

### **Action Items for Executive Committee?**

- None

### **Future Meetings:** Next meeting: Thursday, February 11, 2021

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 am.