



WELLNESS COMMITTEE MEETING January 15, 2025

The Wellness Committee members convened virtually on January 15, 2025. Members and attendees joined the virtual meeting with video conference and conference call.

Members Present:

Gloria Miller-*Chair*
Catherine Trecek
Maureen Conrad
Christy Sanhuber
Carol Sibilski
Mark Behar
Tom Suchecki

Members Excused:

John Griffith
Eric Pampuch
Cherie Swenson

Staff Present

Jennifer Lefeber-*DHHS*
Vonda Nyang-*DHHS*
Ortrialla Paris-*DHHS*
Emily Peterson-*DHHS*

Attendees from the Public

Amanda Marcucci-Intern
Allen Darren-My Choice
Jim Sampson-Guest LGBT
Laurie Strube
Jacqueline Smith

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Jennifer Lefeber called the meeting to order at 1:38 p.m. Everyone was asked to briefly introduce themselves and their roles.

II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL of the November 20, 2024, Wellness Committee Meeting Minutes:

MOTION: To accept the November 20, 2024, Wellness Committee meeting minutes.

ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Conrad Moved, Sampson Second)

III. ACTION / INFORMATIONAL / DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. **Informational Item:** Jennifer Lefeber briefly discussed the facilitator trainings scheduled for 2025. Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging (WIHA), the license holder for various evidence-based programs, organizes these trainings and holds them annually. The trainings are offered statewide and including both virtual and in-person options. Trainings are active and live on the website. Jennifer

mentioned that there's plenty of facilitator opportunities for various programs that we have here in Milwaukee County.

Jennifer Lefeber briefly gave an overview on the funding guidelines that we have in place for our evidence-based programs. The main source is Title 3D funding under the Older Americans Act, which is dedicated to evidence-based programs. The funding is strict, with very specific guidelines for spending.

Jennifer Lefeber highlighted that programs eligible for funding must be on the National Council on Aging (NCOA) list of highest-level evidence-based programs. This is determined through all the research and the outcomes of the programs. The list includes around 75 programs, with some, like the diabetes program, having multiple variations English, Spanish, telephone, self - guided versions. Jennifer Lefeber stated Milwaukee County offers twelve programs, five of which are in Spanish, and available in multiple delivery formats...in-person, virtual, telephone, and self-guided.

Behar inquired about the documentation that defines what qualifies as evidence for certain programs, asking whether studies, such as those showing the benefits of hypertension screening, are required. Lefeber clarified that there are documents outlining what constitutes high, mid, and low-level evidence-based programs. Typically, high -level evidence-based includes years of research, randomized control trials, and other scientific data. She offered to share additional information.

Behar raised concerns about the potential effects of the new federal administration on Title 3D programming. Lefeber explained that in her 20 years of experience, she had not seen significant changes in what is considered allowable under different administrations. However, there was flexibility with the ARPA funding in 2022-2024, allowing for some additional spending not normally permitted under Title 3D funds. She noted that any future flexible spending would likely depend on other funding streams, not Title 3D.

B. Informational Item: Emily Petersen's presentation covered how Advocacy and Evidence-Based Wellness programs intersect, particularly in the context of fall prevention initiatives. She provided an overview of advocacy within the Older Americans Act, explaining the distinction between advocacy and lobbying. Petersen emphasized the importance of funding for evidence-based wellness programs, noting that the state currently lacks dedicated funding for initiatives.

Emily Petersen describes her role as an advocacy and policy manager, highlighting the collaborative efforts of her team. She emphasized that each member, such as the Transportation Coordinator and Caregiver support Coordinator, plays a vital role in addressing key responsibilities like transportation and caregiver support. Additionally, the Advocacy Committee meets monthly to

create comments and letters, working in partnership with state and national aging Advocacy groups to support their mission.

Petersen discussed the State-Level issues: The statewide Falls Prevention Coalition, *Falls Free WI*. This group is advocating for \$450,000 in funding for the Falls Free Wisconsin to support fall prevention programs. Fall prevention is one of the most impactful wellness programs, but it has faced challenges in securing state budget approval. Petersen highlights this is a state program that mirrors federal wellness programs like provide funding to local aging agencies for facilitators, training, and materials for workshops. Petersen mentioned that WIHA is a big partner in social isolation and loneliness prevention which is also a state level issue that we're working on.

Petersen discussed federal issues regarding funding for the 3D area of the Older Americans Act, emphasizing the push for increased funding, which will continue despite previous budget proposals not including it. Petersen highlighted the importance of evidence-based and evidence-informed programs and the need for their inclusion in the next Older Americans Act reauthorization. Petersen advised the Advocacy to reach out to legislators on the State and Federal side in attending Aging Advocacy events. She also encouraged signing up for Advocacy Alerts and mentioned that this presentation will be available to everyone.

IV. Discussion Item: Darren Allen inquired about the interaction between the ADRC and the Area Agency on Aging (AAA). Petersen explained that the ADRC acts as a gateway to access services offered by the AAA. While the AAA provides services such as nutrition, caregiver, and supportive programs, the ADRC offers information, assistance, and helps with long-term care qualifications. Both organizations collaborate to ensure individuals receive the necessary resources. Petersen added all our AAA programs and services have no income requirements. But yes, long term care and support does have income requirements for the reason of their Medicaid based programs. Member Conrad stated that the Wisconsin Board for Persons with Disabilities sent out an e-mail with links to look at what to expect or anticipate cuts in the federal budget. She asked Petersen if she will be sending out something similar. Petersen replied that there are not many cuts coming to aging programs and services. Behar and Sampson discussed which workshops state and federal officials should attend. Jennifer suggested they attend the Wellness workshops and mentioned she would inform the facilitators in advance. Sampson expressed interest in signing up as a facilitator and Jennifer will reach out. Darren asked about the Social Isolation & Loneliness programs. Lefeber stated she will give him the presentation on Social Isolation that was in the November presentation that was given by Kaisa. If there are any question or concerns Petersen has put her contact information in the chat, as well as the presentation will be added to the minutes.

V. 2025 WELLNESS COMMITTEE MEETING DATES

March 19, 2025, at 1:30 p.m. In-person, Coggs, 1220 W. Vliet St.
Milwaukee, WI 53202

- May 21, 2025, at 1:30-3 p.m. In-Person, Juniper Court 3209 S. Lake Dr. St Francis, WI 53235
- September 17, 2025, at 1:30-3 p.m. In-Person, location TBD
- November 19, 2025, at 1:30 p.m. In-Person, LGBT Community Center, 315 W Court St, Milwaukee, WI 53212

VI. WELLNESS COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND GUEST UPDATES ON RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR OLDER ADULTS

Conrad raised a question about how to record payments for workshops that are listed as donations instead of fees. Lefebber responded, acknowledging the complexity of the issue and stated she would follow up with Conrad and the other facilitators for clarification. Behar asked about 2025 and 2027 area aging plan. Lefebber explained that the goals were introduced at a previous meeting and developed with input from the Wellness Committee and the Commission on Aging. She notes that implementing these goals is part of her role as the program coordinator.

Behar mentioned that St. John's on the Lake will be hosting its annual Aging Symposium in March, a highly attended, interesting, and powerful two-day conference. Lunch is included, and it's free to participate. To register, simply visit their website. The event is scheduled for March 12th and 13th.

- VII. ADJOURNMENT:** Motion: Jennifer Lefebber Adjourn the meeting at 2:45 p. m.
Action: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Sanhuber moved, Sampson, second)

Respectfully submitted,

Ortrialla Paris
Clerical Assistant