



## **Milwaukee County Commission on Aging Wellness Committee Meeting May 22, 2024**

The Wellness Committee convened in-person on Wednesday, May 22, 2024. Members and attendees joined at Greendale Health Department in the lower-level conference room.

### **Members Present:**

Gloria Miller-*Chair*  
Maureen Conrad  
Christy Sanhuber  
Carol Sibilski  
Tom Suchecki

### **Members Excused:**

Eric Pampuch  
John Griffith  
Carmen Pangilinan

### **Staff Present:**

Jennifer Lefeber *DHHS*  
Ortrialla Paris *DHHS*

### **Attendees from the Public**

Dr. Dessie Levy-*General Baptist  
State Convention*  
Ophelia Carr-*General Baptist  
State Convention*  
Aziz Abdullah-*INPOWER*  
Erika Villafuerte-*Salud First*

## **MINUTES**

### **I. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Chair Gloria Miller called the meeting to order at 1:42 p.m. Roll call was taken. Everyone gave a quick introduction of their titles and roles.

### **II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 20, 2024, WELLNESS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

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

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

### **III. INFORMATION ITEM: WELLNESS WORKSHOPS UPDATE (Jennifer Lefeber)**

## A. Living Well with Chronic Conditions

Evidence-Based Prevention Programs Coordinator, Jennifer Lefebber, gave a brief introduction to the Chronic Conditions workshop. The Living Well with Chronic Conditions Program was our first evidence-based program in Milwaukee County back in 2007 when we incorporated these workshops. The Living Well program, which originated out of Stanford University, is one of three Stanford self-management programs that we offer. The other two that we offer are the Healthy Living with Chronic Pain and the Healthy Living with Diabetes workshops. Living Well with Chronic Conditions teaches individuals how to manage symptoms related to chronic conditions, including medications, physical activities, and nutrition, sleep habits, and communicating with health providers. Anyone who is 18 years or older with a chronic condition can take this class. This class meets over the course of 6-weeks, 1 day a week for 2 ½ hours. Lefebber shared that it's great to hear stories of the improvement to people's lives through the program.

Lefebber asked Dr. Levy and Ophelia Carr to discuss a project that they have been working on in partnership with the Wisconsin Institute for Health Aging (WIHA), which licenses the Living Well with Chronic Conditions Programs in Wisconsin. They handle data collection, marketing materials, facilitator training, and facilitator support. Lefebber highlighted the opportunity to expand the Living Well program with the General Baptist State Convention, particularly for Milwaukee County, through funding for counties and organizations from WIHA.

## **IV. INFORMATION ITEM: GENERAL BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION & THE LIVING WELL WITH CHRONIC CONDITIONS PILOT**

Dr. Levy gave a brief introduction of their organization, the National Baptist Convention USA Incorporated. This organization is the largest and longest existing African American faith-based denomination in our country. Dr. Levy stated that they did not create a Power Point presentation, however it will be done later.

Dr. Levy mentioned their 140-year history, over 33,000 churches, 7.5 million members, and affiliation with the General Baptist Convention. The Hope Ministry was established to ensure at least one health ambassador is present at each Baptist church across the country. In 2011, the Health Outreach Prevention Education Ministry (H.O.P.E.) was established and funded by a nonpartisan White house Initiative, involving discussions with the Department of Health and Human Services and former first lady Michelle Obama.

Dr. Levy reported that facilitators underwent a 32-hour training session in September to conduct community workshops, equipping them with tools and information to meet people where they are at.

Ms. Carr facilitated a six-week workshop for eight participants. Carr shared her experiences and insights on health conditions, aiming to provide a platform for open discussion and understanding.

The community is requesting more public health & wellness workshops, with more workshops planned. The platform allows individuals to ask questions and set ground rules, while ambassadors are trained in confidentiality. The workshops have been successful, with one participant praising the platform. Data collection is ongoing.

Dr Levy asked if anyone had questions. Conrad asked if they had seven weeks or six weeks of the workshops. Dr. Levy stated that it will be six weeks. Conrad asked about the follow up with workshop participants. Dr. Levy stated that they have virtual follow up education topics. Christy Sanhuber asked if these are only for church members. Dr. Levy answered that because the church is in various communities, they can invite people that are not part of their churches. Dr. Levy stated that they have regular meetings in March, April, July, August, and October as an opportunity to kick off efforts and circulate information. Dr. Levy stated Ambassadors are connected to pastors who provide a list of attendees. They follow the curriculum for Living Well. They also introduce themselves and discuss their chronic illness. Gloria Miller asked when they do workshops. Dr. Levy stated in September 2023, meetings were established to avoid conflict with church activities. Pastors chose the best schedule for their congregations, considering their configuration, population, and age.

Everyone discussed the obligation for workshops, discussing how clients will be reminded to attend, including a reminder call and the distribution of books on the first night.

Jennifer Lefeber expressed excitement about the potential for continued support and growth of the partnership with the General Baptist State Convention and the evidence-based programs.

#### **V. INFORMAIION ITEM: INPOWER FINAL PROJECT UPDATE (Aziz Abdullah, INPOWER)**

Abdullah discussed the final update for the In Power project, which focuses on implementing Dr. Levy's strategies. The report includes a two-page version, a PowerPoint presentation, and a digital page with audio interviews. The county's health and wellness workshops aim to improve the health and well-being of individuals over 55 in Milwaukee County, particularly African American communities. The project aims to understand barriers and identify opportunities for innovation. The study analyzed data, satisfaction surveys, and facilitator interviews to understand facilitator satisfaction, perceived improvement of health control, and other topics.

Dr. Levy asked if Abdullah could speak about most interested to least interested programs and Abdullah provided the top three: physical activities, walking, and nutrition. Lefebvre stated these results came from the quality surveys that the facilitator gives out at the final session at their workshops.

Abdullah highlighted the significance of time commitment in African American workshops. Another finding from this project was, from a facilitator's perspective, it is crucial to possess organizational skills, competency, and the ability to engage with people.

Abdullah also mentioned that participants discussed the issue of physical disconnection after six weeks of a workshop, highlighting the need for ongoing engagement.

Abdullah stated that there were recommendations of having a mix of younger women and men. They also talked about the importance of who the facilitator was and how the relatability to the facilitator has a lot to do with people's ongoing level of engagement, even if they're initially interested.

Abdullah discussed the neighborhood-based and faith-based marketing strategies. Faith-based strategies are particularly effective, as people find out about the program through word of mouth. Neighborhood improvement districts and block clubs are becoming more integrated, and people from different backgrounds are more engaged in their health. Interviews with emotionally affected individuals about their living circumstances and isolation were conducted. The workshops were promoted through radio, interviews, and digital media, and people were eager to hang out. The sense of community is a good selling point for these workshops especially for those who are not currently connected to them. Information sources were primarily through print, media, direct mail, and health care providers.

Abdullah discussed the importance of peer-to-peer influence and storytelling in promoting community engagement and advocacy, as well as highlighting facilitators in the community and offering gifts for their contributions. Abdullah also suggested implementing community challenges, to recruit more facilitators. Physical therapists and nursing students need community hours in their junior year, which can be a strong recruitment pathway for those looking to gain work experience in the community. Collaboration with educational institutions can also be beneficial. Abdullah also highlighted another key point: The importance of partnerships, such as United Way's loan executive program. Abdullah discussed implementation messaging focusing on impact, personal growth, and recognizing community leaders through the health lens.

Abdullah spoke about new participants, highlighting the General Baptist Convention strategy as a great point that we have in our community. Abdullah

stated that the community ambassadors is a huge piece. Also, having pop up events and intergenerational events.

Abdullah will be sending out the presentation to this group.

Abdullah also stated that the website's third section on the ARC page is not easily accessible. So, he suggested that the third section be added as a dedicated page, along with facilitator videos.

Conrad suggested that everyone on the committee should take one of the workshops.

Lefebber stated that they send out the quarterly flyers to advertise all health and wellness workshops. Lefebber also spoke on the ARPA funding which continues through September 30<sup>th</sup> with the possibility of an extension.

Lefebber also mentioned that Jim Piontek emailed her with an update from AARP. There are some Walk with A Doc events coming up. She also mentioned next week Wednesday is National Senior Health and Fitness Day. It will be at the Wilson Park Senior Center. Lefebber will be participating in the Walk with A Doc event. She will speak briefly about Stepping On and Falls Prevention. Lefebber stated that there's a bunch of events happening at the senior centers next week.

## **VI. UPCOMING WELLNESS COMMITTEE MEETING DATES**

- a. July -No Meeting
- b. September 18 at 1:30-3:00 (Virtual)
- c. November 20 at 1:30-3:00 (West Allis Senior Center)

## **VII. WELLNESS COMMITTEE MEMBERS & GUESTS-UPDATES ON RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR OLDER ADULTS**

Sanhuber stated that many community newsletters feature a menu on the back, and some also include booklets, providing comprehensive information about events and activities. Some even have flyers.

Conrad and Suchecki attended Aging Advocacy Day in Madison, meeting with Chris Larsen's office and Nick and Christine's office, who are vital in addressing transportation funding issues.

## **VIII. ADJOURNMENT:** (Sanhuber moves, Sibilski seconds) Meeting adjourned at 3:05.

Ortrialla Paris

Clerical Assistant

Final