



MILWAUKEE COUNTY  
**Department on Aging**

**Milwaukee County Commission on Aging  
Wellness Committee Meeting  
September 16, 2020**

The Wellness Committee held its monthly meeting on September 16, 2020 at 1:30pm virtually through MS Teams.

**Members Present:**

Dr. Ellen Danto-Noton  
Kim Lombard  
Willie Mitchell  
Eric Pampuch  
Jim Piontek  
Mary Ellen Schlax  
Catherine Trecek  
Judith Troestler

**Staff Present:**

Dan Idzikowski  
Jennifer Lefebber  
Bekki Schmitt

**Attendees from the Public**

**Commissioners Present:**

Gloria Miller

**MINUTES**

- I. Meeting called to order at 1:34pm**  
Gloria welcomed the group and asked for someone to approve minutes. Jim Piontek approved them. Mary Ellen Schlax seconded the motion.
- II. Informational Item: Wellness Workshop Highlight – Stepping On (Jennifer Lefebber)**  
Jennifer talked about the virtual Stepping On for Fall Prevention class. Eight participants joined for two sessions, each session lasted 90 minutes with a focus on just 4 of the regular 8 exercises that normally happen in the in-person workshops. A Physical Therapist presented the exercises and a leader and peer leader worked together to deliver the rest of the content and keep the group on task. WIHA plans to have the virtual workshops ready to go by January 2021.
- III. Discussion Items:**
  - a. Liberating Structures Activity (Gloria Miller)**  
Gloria introduced the Liberating Structures activity as it was presented in the fall of 2019. Each participant introduced themselves and shared what inspired them to join the committee.  
Gloria asked if there is a senior calendar of events that includes all programming for seniors. She wants to see this group be creative to do something like this.

*What Inspired Me to Join the Wellness Committee:*

- Networking and finding opportunities for seniors (Stepping On & Living Well with Chronic Pain)
- Looking for an opportunity for MCDA & AARP to work together on a Wellness project
- Work together on initiatives
- I was on the MCDA Commission on Aging
- I work with all different ages, but often the older population
- To expand the reach of the evidence-based programs and increase number of leaders and participants
- To seek out and build opportunities for collaborative wellness events, offerings and partnerships with everyone on this committee
- Build awareness of each other's work and programs

*A Bold Idea I have for the Wellness Committee*

- The more connections we have the better
- Resources for hospitals on programs available to patients, including Advanced Care Directives.
- We should focus on all aspects of health, not just physical (including mental health)

Bekki would like to invite anyone to be a speaker or suggest a topic for future meetings. Please contact Bekki if you are interested.

**b. Falls Prevention Week (Bekki Schmitt)**

September 21-25 is National Falls Prevention Week. Here in Milwaukee we are organizing a series of events together with the Milwaukee County Falls Prevention Coalition (MCFPC). All of the Wellness Committee members' organizations present today are part of the MCFPC. The goal for the week is to increase awareness about the need for fall prevention and share resources and strategies for fall prevention. The flyer for the week's activities will be shared with this group. There will be Facebook Live events on Monday and Friday, as well as Zoom meetings with a panel speaking on different topics Tuesday through Thursday. Fall prevention toolkits will be distributed to area organizations (fire departments, senior dining, health departments, etc). They will also be available electronically. If you watch any of the webinars or get one of the kits, please share your feedback with Bekki. Visit [www.mcfpc.net](http://www.mcfpc.net) for more information from the Milwaukee County Falls Prevention Coalition

**c. Virtual Wellness Workshops (Jennifer Lefeber)**

Jennifer shared that we need help spreading the word on the virtual Living Well workshops that are scheduled to start in October. The flyer will be shared after the meeting. There will be a Healthy Living with Diabetes workshop scheduled to hopefully begin later this year as well. Complete details on the current wellness workshops can be found at [county.milwaukee.gov/aging#Wellness](http://county.milwaukee.gov/aging#Wellness)  
The group discussed challenges and barriers to participants joining for these virtual workshops. These include: lack of interest in the topic, lack of interest in a virtual workshop vs. inperson, lack of access to a computer or internet, fear of using Zoom or online platform, and also isolation caused by COVID reducing awareness and communication channels. Suggestions were brought up about educating older adults on

how to use Zoom. Serving Older Adults has shared a Facebook post with a tutorial on joining a Zoom call for the first time, this can be found at:

<https://www.facebook.com/344422536472253/posts/600218644225973/>. NCOA has

also posted instructions on using Zoom at:

<https://www.ncoa.org/resources/instructions-for-accessing-your-virtual-workshop-through-zoom/>

#### **IV. Wellness Committee Members & Guests – Update on Resources and Opportunities for Older Adults**

Jim offered to add anyone to the AARP Activity Email List (for virtual and in-person classes). He needs your name, email address and organization. You can contact Jim at: jronfriday@gmail.com

Jim shared info on the upcoming AARP tax season. At this point, in-person tax prep would not be allowed if we are still in the stage we are in with COVID-19. It's looking like they won't even be able to do it with physical distancing. They will continue watching it to see if things change. But they don't expect to do even half of the tax returns that they normally would do.

Kim Lombard from Froedtert Trauma Center is requesting your assistance in completing a survey to assess the injury and violence prevention needs of our community. Feedback from this survey will be used to help prioritize and direct future injury and violence prevention efforts. You can access the survey here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BQW86DG>. It should take less than 10 minutes to complete. Please consider forwarding this email and survey link to individuals whose input matters. We want to hear from individuals currently working to prevent injury and violence, and/or, those who serve community members affected by injury and violence in Southeast Wisconsin.

Dan shared the MCDA Advocacy Meeting will be held on Monday 9/21 and then the Commission on Aging will meet on Friday 9/25. Open enrollment for Medicare is starting earlier this year (October 15). People should be encouraged to call the Aging Resource Center to help get them enrolled. MCDA is also doing a promotional campaign to spread the word on Medicare Savings Programs that help to pay for Medicare premiums and prescription drug costs.

Gloria shared that St. Ann Generational Center has "Refreshment Fridays". Friday 9/25 is the last day from 10am-12pm if you would like to join. Flyer will be shared.

#### **V. Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 3:00pm.

The next Wellness Committee meeting will be November 18 at 1:30pm and will be held virtually.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Lefeber, Evidence Based Programs Coordinator

Bekki Schmitt, Community Programs Coordinator