

**COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8 BRONX
MINUTES OF THE HEALTH, HOSPITALS & SOCIAL SERVICES
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON OCTOBER 18, 2010**

PRESENT	AFFILIATION
Steven Froot	Committee Chair
Michael Heller	Vice Chair
Maria Khury	CB8
Sylvia Alexander	CB8
Steve Balicer	CB8
Beverly Fettman	CB8
Philip Friedman	CB8
Karen Pesce	CB8
Herb Young	CB8
Alan Mucatel	Committee member, Leake & Watts
Bernice McFarline	Bronx Health REACH
Ying Guo	Bronx Health REACH
Alyssa Aguilera	NY Lawyers for the Public Interest

The Chair called the meeting to order and welcomed the attendees.

The minutes of the last meeting were considered and approved.

The Chair then introduced the presenters from Bronx Health REACH, noting that this was a follow-up presentation to one made at the February 17, 2010 HHSS Committee meeting.

Presentation

Bernice McFarline of Bronx Health Reach briefly reviewed for the Committee her organization's goal of reducing what they see as health disparities among racial/ethnic and income groups in New York City. She introduced Alyssa Aguilera of the New York Lawyers for the Public Interest, which is partnering with Bronx Health REACH in addressing what they have found to be disparities in primary health care between privately insured patients on one hand, and the uninsured and those who rely on Medicaid, on the other. They began their efforts by filing a civil rights complaint in June 2008 against Mount Sinai, Montefiore and NY Presbyterian hospitals, claiming a two tier system of care in academic medical centers. The lawsuit alleged that there exists a clinic system for poor patients where care is delivered by residents, as opposed to a higher level of care for privately insured patients delivered in faculty practices. Black and Latino patients are thought to be discriminated against under a legal theory of disparate impact (unintentional discrimination where practices have a discriminatory effect). No action on their lawsuit has taken place yet. Federal action is also being explored. The group also introduced a bill in state legislature asking to remedy the situation by expansion of the clinic system so that attending physicians treat all patients. The bill would require all patients to be seen in the same setting to eliminate the two-tier model. The idea is to improve continuity of care so that the same physicians are seen consistently. A vigorous discussion took place whereby board members presented a variety of questions with respect to the logistics, practicability and cost of implementing the proposed alternative system.

Agenda Items

Leake and Watts: Alan Mucatel, Executive Director of Leake and Watts Services, Inc., who is also a community member of the Committee, was asked to follow up on a discussion begun last spring about the opening of four group home residences. He said that the homes had opened over the summer, three in the Bronx and one in Yonkers, each housing 4-7 people. All are occupied and running well. Most of the clients have New York ties. The NY State Office of Persons With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD, formerly OMRDD) funded the renovations and operating costs. An open house will take place in the fall which will be announced to board

members. He went on to describe some of the services offered in the main campus in Yonkers: early childhood, day care, special education school for children with mental disorders, mental retardation services, and a residential treatment program. All special education children are referred from local public school districts, primarily NYC. Four hundred children are being served at the moment among various campuses. He also described a change in philosophy de-emphasizing group homes and emphasizing foster home placement.

Smoke-Free Parks & Beaches: It was decided that as the Parks & Recreation Committee is taking up the smoke-free issue, it will not be necessary for HHSS to consider this issue.

Budget Process: A brief discussion of the budget process took place. An explanation of the budget process to be presented by Phil Friedman was held in abeyance for the next meeting, where there will be a discussion of the status of priorities that were proposed by the Committee and selected by the full Board. Mr. Friedman will have more to say based on OMB's response to the Board's listed items in the current cycle.

Committee meeting location: There was a discussion of the advisability of conducting committee meetings at locations other than the board office. One approach would be to hold at least some meetings at locations in neighborhoods other than Riverdale (where the Board office is located) in order to make the meetings more accessible to other communities in CB 8, especially in light of issues surrounding consideration last year of the proposed methodone satellite clinic at Terrace Health Center. Another approach, used under past Committee chair Martin Katzenstein, was to hold meetings in health-related institutions, wherever located in CB 8, and tie the particular meeting to a presentation by that institution. The view was also expressed that it makes sense to conduct meetings at the board office for a variety of reasons – including ease of set up and parking – unless there is a reason for a meeting to take place in another particular location. Mr. Mucatel offered to inquire about the possibility of holding a meeting at one of the facilities operated under the auspices of the Jewish Board of Children and Family Services, including the Ittelson Center and the Beatman Center.

Outreach to NYC agencies: Mr. Froot suggested that it is contemplated that after the Health Forum in December, the Committee will reach out to the various agencies traditionally associated with the committee's jurisdiction to invite agency representatives to come before the committee to talk about their priorities. The agencies would include Administration for Children's Services, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Human Resources Administration and the Health and Hospitals Corporation.

Health forum update: A discussion took place about the upcoming health forum, to be held Wednesday, December 8 – location, speakers, planning status. Gary Axelbank will serve as the moderator. It was decided that the venue, Leo Hall on the South Campus of Manhattan College, one block west of Broadway, is convenient to public transportation, so the idea of contracting for private bus service was abandoned. The flyer and publicity materials are being designed. There will be coordination to minimize overlap among speakers. The structure of the evening will be 5-10 minute presentations by the panelists, followed by moderated Q&A based on written questions collected from the audience during the first half of the program.

Meeting Adjourned 9:10PM

Prepared by Michael Heller, Vice Chair
Approved by Steven Froot, Chair
Health, Hospitals & Social Services Committee