



CITY OF NEW YORK  
**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10**  
215 West 125<sup>th</sup> Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor—New York, NY 10027  
T: 212-749-3105 F: 212-662-4215

**CICELY HARRIS**  
Chairperson

**SHATIC MITCHELL**  
District Manager

## **Health and Human Services Committee Meeting Minutes**

Held: Monday, March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020 -6:30pm  
Hon. Hazel Duker Chair  
Hon. Michelle Booker, Vice-Chair

Attendees: Michelle Booker, Karen Dixon, Donna Gill, Dr. Cheryl Smith, Deborah Yates  
Excused: Hazel Duker, Christina Curry, Cicely Harris  
Absent: Troy Gethers, Joshua Clennon  
CB Member(s): Mari Moss

### **Presentation(s)**

#### **Pauline Ferrante, Office of External Affairs-NYC Dept. of Health & Mental Hygiene**

Ms. Pauline Ferrante, provided an overview of the current issues that arose due to the Coronavirus/COVID-19 outbreak in New York. She stated that this is an overall emergency and there is some preparedness due to prior outbreak such as Ebola and SARS. The Agency is able to learn from the past challenges. However, new information will continue to evolve due to the nature of this virus. DOHMH will disseminate information via its website and plans to hold webinars for the public to quell fear about this situation. On a daily basis the agency will be in contact with Federal and NY State government for updated information, as well as guidance on messaging to prevent people from panicking during this difficult time in order to maintain public safety and reduce community transmission of the virus.

There were some questions from Committee Members:

- The first question addressed the issue of distribution of information

DOHMH explained that the agency will push out guidance via its website and will not flyer information on Coronavirus as it is changing rapidly. The agency will be sending posters to community boards regarding messaging. As for behavioral habits to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, DOHMH is strongly encouraging the public to wash their hands and cough into the elbows.

- The second question addressed the issue of recovery zones to be set up, support for parents regarding childcare, EBT cards, groceries, cash assistance

The DOHMH stated that the Governor and the Mayor are working on solutions for these issues.

- The next question was about the test kits for the Coronavirus

The CDC will send over test kits and at this time Syndheim is a testing facility. However, if a person believes they are experiencing symptoms, they must call 311 first to undergo a screening as well as not to overwhelm medical facilities, especially now that we are experiencing community transmission. It is also still flu season, and allergy season is starting so we need people to call 311 before going to a medical facility to determine if their condition warrants further medical attention.

- The final question addressed concern for the Homeless population

The Dept. of Homeless services will be providing beds for the homeless. Although portable stations in the subways would be a good idea to provide a way for them to wash their hands, some concerns might arise: where is the water going, how to keep it clean, would it end up in the city sewer system. Therefore, the best option is to give them hand sanitizers.

**New Business**

Karen Dixon, Harlem Dowling-West Side Center for Children and Family Services

Ms. Dixon, shared that three (3) of the offices were closed temporarily. Staff are working remotely as they are equipped with agency laptops and cell phones. The center will do outreach for its clients, acknowledging that there are risk factors to consider. The center will have conference calls with staff to stay abreast of the situation and client needs. The center will also have a food pantry but handing out pre-packed bags to keep staff and people safe with social distancing. As an essential provider, face-to-face contacts will continue to be facilitated for their families receiving preventive services via the Administration for Children's Services.

The agency also has reached out to the families in their four after school programs in Harlem to assess their understanding of remote learning and impact on school closure on child care. The agency is working with the Department of Youth and Community Development and NYS Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) to implement alternate program services to support the children and families.

**Old Business**

N/A

Submitted by Michelle Booker