

## Minutes from Committee for Concerns of the Aging

Thursday November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019 @ Isabella Geriatric Center

Attendance:

**Committee – Present:** Yosef Kalinsky, Mary Anderson, Mariam James, Glennis Aquino-Gil.

**Public Members** – Fern Hertzberg, Carol Weeks. **Excused** – Jay Mazur

**Public:** Joseph Rosenbaum, Imogene Hooker, Gloria Vanderpool, Yoko Okubo, Constanica Ferraras, Maria Acevedo, Esperanza Ha, Benita Martinez, Joan Bowen

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- Meeting began at 10:35am with introductions by the chair
- Presentation by Licet Valois – Alzheimer’s Association
  - Misconception: Part of aging is losing memory and developing Alzheimer’s or Dementia.
    - This is not true. Many people age and do not suffer from dementia or Alzheimer’s
  - It is not only about older adults; all members of our community need to know about what is normal in terms of our memory and aging. Our responsibility to take care of ourselves and to take care of our health. If you notice something is not normal in terms of your memory you should see a doctor.
  - People younger than 65 can develop Alzheimer’s
  - There is a major difference between “forgetting” and developing Alzheimer’s. We all forget from time to time.
  - Dementia is a general term for many types of illnesses. Alzheimer’s is the most common cause of dementia. You can have dementia from a heart attack, depressed, UTI, Parkinson’s, stress etc. Some types of dementia have a cure, others do not. If you are diagnosed with dementia you need to ask the doctor what **type** of dementia you have. In short, if you have Alzheimer’s than you have dementia, but if you have dementia you do not necessarily have Alzheimer’s.
  - Four major types of Dementia that do not have a cure:
    - Alzheimer’s
    - Vascular dementia – can be caused by a stroke
    - Dementia with Lewy Bodies – memory loss that leads to Parkinson’s tremors
    - Frontotemporal dementia – memory issues that are accompanied with inappropriate social behavior (profanity, revealing parts of body in public, not able to remember simple words)
  - Types of Dementia that we do have a cure for:
    - UTI, stress, depression, alcohol
  - When we age, just as our physical body begins to deteriorate, so does our brain – so we need to keep our bodies and mind active!

- Some tips to keep our minds active:
  - Sense of humor
  - Social activity, cognitive activity (going to library or lecture), play cards, Sudoku, croquet [cell phones are not helpful since we no longer remember phone numbers or directions to places and spend more time on the phone than talking with people face to face].
  - Do not stay in your apartment alone. Get out a few times a week – be social.
  - Exercise. Dance.
  - Nutrition – eat healthy foods.
- Signs of Alzheimer's [If you notice 3-4 of these, go right away to be checked out for an evaluation]:
  - Memory loss that disrupts daily life
  - Challenges in planning or solving problems
  - Difficulty completing familiar tasks
  - Confusion with time or place
    - Instead of going to Church at 8am they show up at 7pm
  - Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships
    - keep bumping into the fridge when entering the kitchen
  - New problems with words in speaking or writing
  - Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps
  - Decreased or poor judgement
  - Withdrawal from work or social activities
  - Changes in mood and personality
    - someone who was typically cheerful now is quiet and more removed from their friends, or speak with harsher words
- An Alzheimer's Evaluation and Diagnosis is a long process and looks at medical history, interview family, mental and neurological testing, physical exam and lab testing, and brain scan.
- Although we do not have a cure for Alzheimer's today in 2019, there is a lot of research and hope for a future cure. But even without a cure there is the quality of life that medication and activity can improve with Alzheimer's disease.
- Resources:
  - Helpline – 800-272-3900
  - [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org)
  - Support groups, care consultations, education and training, medic alert safe return bracelet
- The committee reviewed the capital and expense budget rankings from the board.
- Upcoming events were announced to the audience.
- Meeting adjourned at 12:05pm