Montgomery County – Department of Health & Human Services (MCDHHS)  
Asian American Health Initiative (AAHI) Steering Committee Meeting  
Tuesday, September 13, 2022

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<tr>
<th>Steering Committee</th>
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<th>AAHI Staff</th>
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<td><strong>Organizational Members</strong></td>
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<td>Nguyen Nguyen (Chair)</td>
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<td>Muhammad Hasan</td>
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<td>Hina Mehta (Vice Chair)</td>
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<td>Tammy Wan</td>
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<td>Pallavi Gowda</td>
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<td>Michael Lin</td>
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<td>Ji-Young Cho</td>
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<td>Wilbur Friedman</td>
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<td>Tho Tran</td>
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<td>Thao Bui</td>
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<td>Yuchi Huang</td>
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<td><strong>Individual Members</strong></td>
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<td>Shruti Bhatnagar</td>
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<td>Nerita Estampador</td>
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<td>Meng K. Lee</td>
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<td>Cynthia Macri</td>
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<td>Judy Wang</td>
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<td><strong>Affiliate Members</strong></td>
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**Welcome (Nguyen Nguyen)**
- Nguyen Nguyen called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.
- Nguyen asked for permission to audio record the meeting. There were no objections.

ACTION: Audio recording of the meeting was approved with no objections.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes (Nguyen Nguyen)**
- The Steering Committee meeting minutes from Tuesday, July 12, 2022, were shared with members prior to today’s meeting. A motion to approve the July meeting minutes was presented.
- Wilbur Friedman moved to approve the meeting minutes. Michael Lin seconded the motion. The meeting minutes were approved.

ACTION: July’s meeting minutes were approved with no objections.
Approval of Agenda (Nguyen Nguyen)

- Today’s meeting agenda was shared with members prior to the meeting. Nguyen asked if there were any objections to the agenda.
- Yuchi Huang moved to approve it and Wilbur Friedman seconded it.

ACTION: Meeting agenda was approved with no objections.

AAHI Program Updates (Sanjana Quasem)

- Sanjana Quasem shared AAHI program updates from July-September 2022. She highlighted activities AAHI has completed or is working on related to community engagement, community empowerment, capacity building, and change catalyst. She also mentioned various County opportunities including an open part-time Community Health Worker position at AAHI. See the attached presentation slides for her full update.

ACTION ITEM: AAHI will provide program update slides.

- MK Lee commented that the 988 service is critical in Asian communities. He asked, “how can it be ensured that there is someone on the other end of the line who can understand what the people are talking about?” Cynthia Macri answered that she’s on the state Suicide Prevention Commission and the task force. The group has had hours of discussion about this, which doesn’t just include translation, but understanding the culture as well. In addition, MK asked about the Minority Voices and whether it was limited to mental health. Sanjana answered that it is specific to mental health. MK asked if there were plans to expand to other issues. Sanjana said that it depends on the success and the quality of the final product and the community response.
- Michael Lin commented that he’s very impressed with all the work that has been going on. He asked if there was consideration in having the grantees network with each other. Sanjana answered, for the COVID-19 Fund, AAHI held a meeting with the grantees where they could network. In FY23 AAHI is planning on developing a platform to create connections between organizations and to have workshops and bootcamps. This platform will also allow organizational leaders to connect. Michael ended with, “Is 988 nationally used?” Sanjana answered yes.
- Thao Bui asked through chat whether the Minority Voices submissions must be in English. Sanjana answered that it doesn’t have to be in English. The form is available in multiple languages. Thao added whether the client has to write it in English. Sanjana replied that it’s fine if it’s not in English, it will be translated.
- Yuchi asked if we have statistical information of the impact/risk factors of the two issues of Monkeypox and suicide rates in the Asian American community.
Sanjana replied that with Monkeypox, that only 2 cases in Montgomery County were Asian Americans.

**ACTION ITEM:** Nguyen will share the DHHS briefing presentation when it is available.

- Yuchi followed up with “what about the information related to suicide?” Nguyen answered that data wasn’t presented at that meeting but asked Sanjana whether that information can be collected from somewhere else. Sanjana mentioned that she can look at Vital Statistics to get national data. She mentioned that the last time the statistics were reviewed, suicide rates were high for Asian American adolescent females.

**ACTION ITEM:** AAHI will research and provide current statistics on suicide rates amongst the Asian American population.

- In addition, Yuchi asked, “In comparison to other ethnic groups with Monkeypox, how do we compare in infection rates?” Sanjana replied that the amount is small—3.2%. Of the 1,222 individuals who received doses of the vaccine in the County, about 9.4% of those were Asian American.
- Cynthia asked whether the registration for the Monkeypox vaccine was in just English or other languages as well. She stated that fewer people from Asian groups would sign up if the information is not available in other languages, as seen through the COVID-19 vaccination sign up.
- Yuchi asked if people are infected with Monkeypox, would they need to go to the hospital? Cynthia replied that it’s mostly an outpatient diagnosis. She noted that an open sore from Monkeypox is the way to transmit the disease more rapidly. Cynthia suggested that the information be translated and shared in multiple languages to be more welcoming for other groups. Nguyen suggested that we should continue to be vigilant.
- Thao asked, if nail techs suspect that a customer has Monkeypox, can they refuse service or is it safe to do manicures and pedicures? Nguyen explained that this question is for the health county officer. Cynthia advised to use next the level up of personal protective gear and universal precaution. Nguyen said that based on the worker law, the tech has a right to be concerned and could refuse service. It is a question for the medical officer but be aware and note the concerns. Muhammad Hasan added that from the presentation, there is risk of getting the disease with prolonged exposure. He agreed with Dr. Macri to stick with universal precaution. Yuchi added that it was a good point and that the Steering Committee is not equipped/ has the authority to answer such a question. We could be giving misleading information, so it is best to consult the medical health officer. Nguyen suggested to wait for guidance on this issue before making decisions.
Planning for FY23 Steering Committee Retreat (Nguyen Nguyen)

- Nguyen shared the logistics for the FY23 Steering Committee Retreat.
- The retreat will take place in-person on Saturday in October. The options are the 15th and 29th. The day it will be scheduled on depends on the schedule of the keynote speaker. This year we hope to invite Councilmember Evan Glass. Due to the councilmember’s schedule, it will likely be on the 29th. The tentative time will be 9am-3pm.
- For this retreat, instead of identifying new priority areas, the SC will pick up from the goals identified at the FY22 retreat.
- The theme for the upcoming retreat is strategic implementation. It will be a time to review activities and progress as well as think about how to further the programs.
- We will also look at what resources are needed and what we should advocate for in the upcoming year.
- Gwen Crider will be the facilitator of the AAHI Steering Committee Retreat.
- Retreat subcommittees will be formed to discuss the retreat plan.
- Ji-Young Cho asked if there were any plans or intentions to invite non-Steering Committee members to the retreat who are interested in joining the group in the future. She added that it would be great for the prospective member to see what the group is all about and to think about membership. Nguyen doesn’t have any objection to opening it up but not opening it too broad where it becomes a 30–40-person meeting. Nguyen sees the value of bringing people from the community.
- Yuchi clarified that all Montgomery County committee meetings are supposed to be open to the public. Sanjana replied that the AAHI SC is not an official board, committee, or commission of the County, so the SC does not necessarily have to follow the rules.
- Cynthia added to Yuchi’s comment said that as part of other committees, they held hybrid meetings. Logistically, these hybrid meetings would work better because you could have the public use virtual means but still have in-person meetings without having a packed room of people.
- Ji-Young explained the reason why she asked that question was that she thought we should add a couple of new members to hear new perspectives and ideas. Nguyen ended that if you see a good candidate, please share it with AAHI.
- Nerita Estampador asked if it’s ok to run potential invitees past Sanjana and Nguyen for approval to attend the retreat. Nguyen stated that you should send the name of the person to both him and Sanjana.
- MK asked if SC members need to complete a COVID-19 test before coming to the meeting and whether they would need to wear a mask during the meeting?” Nguyen noted that we need to follow the County rules since we will be in a county building. Sanjana replied that the County does not require testing nor a mask. It will be based on the preference and the comfort level of the group. MK
said that some may be uncomfortable being maskless. Nguyen followed up that it’s up to the discretion of the person.

- Nerita suggested that we distance ourselves during the meeting. Nguyen asked Sanjana to look at logistics and make arrangements.

**Membership Guidelines (Wilbur Friedman)**

- Everyone has received a draft copy of the guidelines. We voted on the draft guidelines to be the final guidelines.
- The guidelines do the following three things:
  - Clearer goals of inclusivity and diversity.
  - Prescription of the nominating and election procedures.
  - Changes the third category of membership from affiliate member to honorary member
- Yuchi had concerns regarding the guidelines:
  - Some procedures we followed in the past are not listed in the current document.
  - This document does not mention the “Nomination Subcommittee”.
  - Each member is to serve for three years in the draft, but it doesn’t mention what happens after the three-year term.
  - People can cast a vote by email, which is proxy voting but it is not clear if that vote will count as quorum or not.
- Wilbur responded to Yuchi regarding the guidelines that while the guidelines are imperfect, his opinion is that a group of this size can move forward with these current guidelines.
- Nguyen posed the questions to the committee to either 1.) move on with the guideline as we are now or 2.) take a pause to go back and review.
- Nguyen noted that Yuchi brought up a lot of good points and invited everyone to make suggestions in the future regarding the guidelines as needed.
  - Those who want to move with the guideline as is: 5 votes
  - Take a pause and go back and review: 4 votes
- Since there was a large proportion of members who wanted to pause and review the guidelines, it was decided that the SC will continue to work on updating the guidelines. Those who had hesitations should get back to Wilbur within three weeks with comments and notes.

**Subcommittee Updates**

**Data Subcommittee**

- Judy Wang gave updates on the Data Subcommittee. Since the last Steering Committee meeting, they have met twice. The issue is with the state and lacking questions regarding Asian subgroups. She talked about efforts to collect better data in the County. She discussed the needs to educate the public about filling
Regarding COVID-19 Surveillance Report, Judy talked about the data in vaccinations and deaths with COVID-19 and that there are no disparities however, it was noted that the Asian American community faced different issues.

- Yuchi added that the key takeaway is that the Asian American community is different from other ethnic groups. Those elements listed in the report are relevant to those other groups. The Asian American community has its own issues that didn’t make it to the COVID-19 report and potentially can be viewed that the Asian American community has no problems.

Advocacy Subcommittee

- Nguyen mentioned that the Advocacy Subcommittee has been quiet. In late October/November, Nguyen will have a meeting with the Council.

Updates from Liaisons and Members

- Healthy Montgomery Steering Committee
  - Nguyen gave two highlights from Healthy Montgomery:
    - The hospital workgroup just released the report on their own community health needs assessment. It is available on Suburban Hospital site.
    - The County has its own community health needs assessment. The assessment has been delayed. Healthy Montgomery hopes data collection will start this month and they aim to finalize the report by the end of the year.

- Suicide Prevention Coalition
  - Cynthia mentioned that the 988 Suicide Prevention has been pushed out to communities to alert them of the new service. There is a new program that has been funded across the country to develop new jobs for veterans. She is not aware of any Asian-centric organizations.

- Montgomery Cares Program Advisory Board
  - Yuchi reported on two initiatives:
    - Value-based care: 2-3 years of a project.
    - Membership document—major issue is who is eligible to receive Montgomery Cares services.
  - Yuchi mentioned that Montgomery Cares has made tremendous improvement in dental services.

Adjourn

- Nguyen adjourned the meeting at 8:13 PM.

ACTION: Meeting adjourned at 8:13 PM.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, November 8, 2022