

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD No. 8
MINUTES OF THE HEALTH, HOSPITALS AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING
Held on Wednesday, November 13, 2019
Bronx Community Board No.8
Conference Room
5676 Riverdale Ave, Suite 100
Bronx, NY 10463

PRESENT

Omar Murray
Steve Froot
Martin Gluck
Tao Moran
Karen Pesce

AFFILIATION

Chair- Health, Hospitals and Social Services Committee
CB8- Committee Member
CB8-Committee Member
CB8-Committee Member
CB8-Committee Member

GUESTS

Erica Peralta- Downing
Jean-Pierre Kamwa
Martha Morales
Gabrielle Milner
Julia Reyes
Laura Spalter

Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
NYC Cares
Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
Montefiore Hospital BOLD Program
Community Resident/CB8 Member
Vice-Chair, Bronx Community Board No. 8

ABSENT

Julia Gomez

Vice Chair- Health, Hospitals and Social Services Committee

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 PM. Committee members and guests signed the attendance sheet on arrival. The meeting is started by committee members and guests introducing themselves and their affiliation. The previous committee meeting minutes was approved:

Yes	5
No	0
Abs	0

For over 2 to 3 months the board office has received numerous complaints about rat infestation from community residents who have either called or sent emails to the board office. The residents were then redirected to call 311 and file a report and get a ticket number so the board office can then expedite this issue with the departments of health and sanitation. There have been numerous sightings of rats at 2287 Johnson Ave, Cannon Place and Jerome Park Reservoir.

The Bronx Borough Coordinator for the Department of Health Mrs. Erica Peralta-Downing begins by explaining the procedures for rat infestations as follows:

1. The Health Department must receive a complaint with the address of the infestation.
2. There will be a first initial inspection
3. Then a second inspection, if the second inspection fails, the owner of the property will be issued a summons.
4. fines for failure to comply with summonses can range from \$300 to \$2000.
5. If the owner of the reported property hires a pest control agency before the case is heard the case will be dismissed.
6. If the Department of Health conducts the clean up the owner will be billed the total cost for the clean-up.

Bronx Community Board No.8 Vice Chair Laura Spalter states that rat infestation has been present around and within construction sites in CB8 and this is due to the garbage that has been left over. Spalter also states that the Environment and Sanitation Committee will be creating a resolution for the E/S Committee and the entire Board to vote on to require rat abatement materials at construction sites within CB8.

Rats can only reproduce with food and garbage. Rats tend to seek out places to live that provide them with everything they need to survive such as food, water, shelter and safe ways for them to get around. To keep rats out of your property or neighborhood, residents can take steps to make life more difficult for rats such as :

- Clean up. Garbage and clutter give rats a place to hide.
- Rats eat your garbage, so store all garbage in hard plastic rat-resistant containers with tight fitting lids. Provide enough trash containers for all of the occupants of your property. Any exposed garbage will attract rats.
- Keep landscaped areas around your property free of tall weeds and trim shrubs that are close to the ground.
- Check for cracks or holes in the foundation of your building, sidewalk and under doors and repair them by filling and sealing them.
- On the street or in a park, put your litter in a can and do not feed birds or other wildlife.

Miss Martha Morales states she is the Coordinator of the Department of Health Rat information Portal (Rate Portal) which Provides the information on:

- Rat inspection Records
- Tips on preventing rat infestations
- Instructions for responding to an order from the Health department for a failed inspection
- Tips for finding a license Pest Control Professional

Morales explains that the department has a free Rat infestation prevention training course to residents and the community which is called the Rat Academy. DOHMH Reps states they would be willing to do this training in collaboration with CB8 all is needed is a space that can hold 20 or more people. The Committee Chair states he will be willing to do this training session and will work with DOHMH after the winter season to conduct this training session. The DOHMH Reps thanks for Committee for inviting them and states more information concerning rats infestation is located at www.nyc.gov/rats .

Gabrielle Milner of Montefiore Hospital explains that the Bronx Oncology Living Daily (BOLD) is outpatient wellness and support program that are available to anyone that is affected by cancer which can be patients, family members and caregivers. Milner states 1 in 8 women will develop cancer and 1 in 833 has cancer in the Bronx.

The Bronx has a higher rate of late stage cancer because of many barriers. Black men tend to have a higher rate of cancer. early signs of cancer in men include the following:

- Changes in bowel habits.
- Urination difficulties.
- Weight loss.
- Testicular changes.
- Breast lumps.
- Skin and mouth sores.
- Persistent cough.

- Stomach pain and nausea.

The BOLD Program includes the Following:

- Bronx Oncology Living Daily / BOLD Living

This program offers a monthly schedule of wellness workshops that are designed to empower, nurture and connect those affected by cancer. Topics include fitness, nutrition, drum circles, crochet, creative arts, Reiki healing, and more.

- Psychosocial Oncology Counseling

Free one-on-one counseling and support groups for cancer patients, survivors, family members, and those in bereavement from a cancer-related loss. Services are provided by counseling interns who speak English and Spanish.

- Mind-Body Support Group

This support group offers a safe place for patients in advanced treatment to share their thoughts and feelings, learn how to cope with daily challenges, and connect with others who may be going through the same things.

- Yoga-Based Cancer Rehabilitation Study

Yoga classes are offered weekly to patients with breast, lung or colorectal cancer, as part of a research study for people with cancer who are eligible.

- BOLD Buddies

Volunteers in this program are available to provide companionship and support to isolated cancer patients at medical appointments or by telephone.

For more information about BOLD Cancer Support program please visit

<https://www.einstein.yu.edu/centers/cancer/support>

Jean-Pierre Kamwa begins by stating he is a NYC Cares representative that with NYC Health and Hospitals. NYC cares is a health care access program that guarantees low-cost and no-cost services offered by NYC Health + Hospitals to New Yorkers who do not qualify for or cannot afford health insurance based on federal guidelines. This program is the nation's largest and most comprehensive initiative to guarantee health care for New Yorkers, regardless of immigration status or ability to pay.

With NYC Care, you can:

- Get a unique membership card to access health care at NYC Health + Hospitals patient care locations across the city
- Choose your own primary care provider
- Receive preventive care like vaccinations, routine screenings and mammograms to stay healthy
- Get mental health support and substance abuse services
- Get your first appointment in two weeks or less
- Talk to customer service representatives who speak your language and can help you day or night
- Get access to low-cost prescription medications day or night
- Get support from a primary care team that also includes nurses, medical assistants, social workers, pharmacists, and nutritionists
- Afford quality health care. There are no membership fees, monthly fees, or premiums. Your cost to receive health care is based on your family size and income

NYC Cares provides the following services:

- Primary and Preventive Care

- Specialty Care:
 - a. Heart care (Cardiology)
 - b. Arthritis and joint care (Rheumatology)
 - c. Bone care (Orthopedics)
 - d. Foot care (Podiatry)
 - e. Weight Loss (Bariatrics)
 - f. Stomach Pain (Gastroenterology)
 - g. Surgery
 - h. Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT)
 - i. Psychiatry
- Behavioral Health and Substance Use
- Women's Health
- Affordable Medications
- Eye and Dental Care
- Emergency Services

Eligibility for NYC Cares:

- You must have been living in New York City for six months or longer
- Must not qualify for any health insurance plan available in New York State
- Not be able to afford health insurance based on government guidelines

The Committee Chair thanks all Committee members and guests coming to the meeting. Meeting is adjourned at 9:21pm.

Recorded and Submitted by:
Omar Murray
Chair,
Health, Hospitals and Social Services Committee