

**COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8 BRONX
MINUTES OF THE HEALTH, HOSPITALS & SOCIAL SERVICES
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON OCTOBER 17th, 2011
AT ST. STEPHEN'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Steve Froot, Committee Chair	CB 8
Michael Heller, Committee Vice Chair	CB 8
Sylvia Alexander	CB 8
Robert Fanuzzi	CB 8
Beverly Fettman	CB 8
Philip Friedman	CB 8
Madeline Ginsburg	CB 8
Nils Graham	CB 8
Lamont Parker	CB 8
Karen Pesce	CB 8
Julie Reyes	CB 8
Xaxia Sanchez	CB 8
Georgia Santiago	CB 8
Dana Levin	
Rev. Nathaniel Dixon	Pastor, St. Stephen's United Methodist Church
Bernice McFarline	Bronx Health Reach
Alyssa Aguilera	Bronx Lawyers for the Public Interest
Hardeep Singh	Bronx Health Reach

The meeting commenced at 7:40 pm

Chair's Report: Mr. Froot first thanked Rev. Nathaniel Dixon, and Saint Stephen's Church for sponsoring the evening's meeting. He announced that the minutes of the prior meeting had been emailed. The minutes were unanimously adopted. He discussed various 'housekeeping' matters including the upcoming meeting schedule. He went on to mention the PS51 Bronx New School contamination issue per a Daily News article. Though not in CB 8, we should follow up on it. DOE may have committed to a health registry.

The chair also reviewed the summary of the capital request as it was discussed at the BP's borough consultation. The FDNY responded to the CB's request for an additional restocking station located at a site in Van Cortlandt Park. The response essentially stated that the request requires further review in the light of current fiscal restraints, but the review will continue during the fiscal year.

For the next item he circulated was the executive summary of the Bon Secours Health study, which includes recommendations for distribution of healthier food at local markets. Mr. Froot also circulated a news release regarding the fast-tracking of Social Security Disability (SSD) applications for specified disorders. He spoke about a request by board member Robert Press to see if the PS 24 annex had an environmental assessment. Sylvia Alexander will follow up.

Bronx Health Reach presentation: Bernice McFarland followed up on an earlier presentation to the committee about "health equity" legislation, introduced by State Senator Rivera and Assemblyman Nelson Castro. The essential issue is the claim of medicaid patients being steered by hospitals (private academic medical centers, not Health and Hospitals Corporation hospitals) to their clinic system, as opposed to doctor faculty practice plans for private patients. In the presentation made by Alyssa Aguilera of Bronx Lawyers for the Public Interest (Bronx LPI), it was claimed that this system is discriminatory as clinics deliver inferior care through resident physicians on rotations, leading to a lack of continuity of care and access to specialties. A discussion took place as to the accuracy of her claims within the overall context of funding issues being faced by large teaching hospitals, and that the state Medicaid Redesign Team is

working on the issue. Madeline Ginsburg and Michael Heller expressed concerns and some disagreements with aspects of her presentation, including how residency programs work and hospitals are financed. The status of the legislation is within committee on both the senate and assembly side. There is no role for the committee in the process.

Asthma Study: An NIH ARRA-sponsored study is being performed at Jacobi Medical Center. A presentation was made by researchers Jeffrey Gordon and Emily Goodman. The study is being conducted in conjunction with Columbia and is looking to enroll 150 adult and pediatric patients divided into intervention and control groups. The goal of the study is to look into how allergies in the home affect Asthma – dust, mold, rodents, etc. How does the introduction of control medication affect the reaction to indoor environments? Participants receive nine clinical and home visits. The intervention group includes home cleaning and education on how to remove allergens. Ms. Goodman spoke about other benefits and how the study works, including free medications, monetary compensation, free clinical visits and personalized care. ER visits are accounted for in the study. Asthmatics that are allergic to two or more allergens qualify and can be referred from any source, receiving an intake baseline examination. Enrollment will take place through June 2012. The study was discussed in further detail as board member questions were raised. Mr. Froot mentioned methods by which the CB can distribute information about the study to the public, including the news media. A discussion also took place as to why the Bronx and urban areas experience high levels of Asthma. Mr. Heller also mentioned the difficulty of getting people to participate in clinical trials and advocated that people participate in researchmatch.org.

West Nile Spraying: Mr. Froot said a question was raised at a board meeting about spraying. He described what is generally done during the mosquito season, and how spraying is performed strategically and with care. The 2011 season has ended.

New Business:

Health Screening: Mr. Froot spoke about information being gathered with respect to the availability of potential health screening providers at public events. Visiting Nurse Service (VNS) is available on a scheduled basis, and Promesa will be conducting diabetes screening at the Riverdale Arts Festival on 256 Street. Lamont Parker developed a matrix of organizations that might be available for future events. There was some discussion of the CB sponsoring a health fair. Assignments were handed out for board members to contact specific organizations: for example, Montefiore and St. Barnabas – Mike Heller and brain tumor foundation – Lamont Parker for Brain Tumor Foundation? Discussion took place of some other possible providers. Mr. Froot also mentioned that some screening providers have the ability to bill insured for services, which could encourage participation.

Take Care NY: sponsored by the NYC Health Department, it is signing up New Yorkers as partners with the city. There are methods the CB could serve as partners. To be discussed at the next meeting.

The next committee meeting will be held November 21 at the board office, 7:30 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 9 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Heller, Vice Chair
Health, Hospitals & Social Services Committee