

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

**MINUTES OF THE HEALTH, HOSPITALS & SOCIAL SERVICES
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON June 18, 2012**

<u>PRESENT</u>	<u>AFFILIATION</u>
Steve Froot	Chair
Michael Heller	Vice Chair
Beverly Fettman	CB8
Sylvia Alexander	CB8
Steven Balicer	CB8
Nils Graham	CB8
Nils Graham	CB8
David Kornblugh	CB8
Emma Rodgers	Bronx Health REACH
Bruce Zarett	Kingsbridge Heights Rehab. & Care Center
Angela Szereszewski	Kingsbridge Heights Rehab. and Care Center
Francine Kornblugh	

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 p.m.

Presentation by Kingsbridge Heights Rehabilitation and Care Center

The chair introduced Bruce Zarett, Administrator of Kingsbridge Heights Rehabilitation and Care Center (“KHRCC”) and Angela Szereszewski, KHRCC Director of Admissions.

Mr. Zarett made a presentation on the services provided by KHRCC and reported that the institution had stabilized since a long labor strike several years ago under a former owner. KHRCC remains under state receivership, the receiver having been appointed by the state health commissioner. According to Mr. Zarett, there is now a good relationship between management and the staff and the union, who work on joint initiatives. They have a 400-bed capacity, with a current census of 380, a gain of 80 since the appointment of the Receiver. Under Mr. Zarett’s tenure, there is a nurse manager for each of the ten units, which include a Spanish-speaking unit and a dementia unit. Physician assignment is now unit-based to improve continuity of care. Mr. Zarett then spoke about their long-term care Lombardi program, which provides services to people living at home. He spoke about the move to managed long term care under the Cuomo administration. A discussion of long term care took place and how it will change under managed care. KHRCC is applying to DOHMH to establish a certified home health agency to provide short term acute care, and requested a letter of support from Bronx Community Board 8.

Ms. Szereszewski stated that the facility provides various levels of care – long term, short term and sub-acute rehabilitation, which is in her view hospital-level quality. Sub-acute

care includes post-surgery, stroke and medical disorders and diseases, tracheotomy, hemodialysis and wound care. Social workers are assigned to patients from day one. The length of stay for short term is up to three months, or longer if required. All forms of insurance are accepted for a very diverse patient population. She also mentioned that a health fair will take place at KHRCC in September, and we will be notified of the date.

Presentation by Bronx Health REACH, Institute of Family Health

The Chair introduced Emma Rodgers and mentioned that Bronx Health REACH had previously presented to the Committee on two occasions about disparities in the way Medicaid patients are treated by academic medical centers. Ms. Rodgers spoke of her past Bronx-based work at the Bronx Smoke-Free Partnership before joining Bronx Health REACH. She distributed a power point presentation explaining the organization's activities in the area of reducing obesity and promoting health. The organization operates many programs, including health centers in NYC and the lower Hudson Valley and a faith-based initiative made up of a collation of 47 churches in the South Bronx. After reviewing obesity statistics in NYC and the Bronx, Ms. Rodgers explained that her organization has been selected by NYC DOHMH as the lead organization in the Bronx to deploy a five-year, \$8 million city-wide community transformation grant from the federal CDC, funded by the Affordable Care Act, to tackle chronic diseases such as stroke, heart disease and diabetes by making healthy living easier and more affordable.

The Bronx has been described as the epicenter of obesity and obesity-related disease: by some measures, over 70% of adults and approximately 50% of the children in the Bronx are overweight. Bronx Health REACH will focus its efforts on tobacco-free living, active living, healthy eating, and healthy and safe physical environments, including funding in response to RFPs in these areas.

Initiatives that are already under way include

- HEA+LTHY Schools NY (funded by NYS DOH 2010-2015): School wellness programs in elementary and middle schools; now focusing exclusively on maximizing physical education & physical activity -- making room for PE classes and opening up gyms for after-school use.
- Healthy Bodega initiative – making local stores healthier.
- Reduce tobacco marketing to youth.
- Parks initiatives to better utilizing NYC parks. There is a program called Girls on the Run to foster running, and walking groups for adults.

Committee members followed the presentation with a variety of questions about program availability and nutrition programs. Ms. Rodgers pointed out that cooking demonstrations seem effective in engaging youth on nutrition issues. She stated that she had been in touch with District Manager Nicole Stent about focusing efforts on neighborhoods in CB 8 that are plagued by chronic illness and obesity, and that Marble Hill and Kingsbridge are possibilities. Bronx Health REACH hopes to replicate and extend successful existing programs in these communities. Mr. Froot stated that PS 7 will be holding a nutrition fair targeted to parents and students in the fall, funded and organized by Sarah Shaikh of Schervier Bon Secours, and suggested that Ms. Rodgers or her staff observe that event.

The minutes of the May 21, 2012 meeting were accepted as submitted.

Chair's Report

- Riverdale Riverfest: VNS will not be able to participate at Riverfest on Sunday, June 24, but Bronx County Dental Association will perform dental screening.
- Spraying against West Nile Virus: Although DOHMH was not able to provide a speaker as initially promised, the Chair referred to a June 11 email he provided to the Committee in which Samuel Friedman of DOHMH explained the current status of those efforts. In brief, the use of spraying is limited to situations in which transmission of the West Nile Virus to human beings appears imminent, primarily the prevalence in an area (based on extensive lab testing) of mosquito species associated with human infection. In contrast, the application of larvicide, by helicopter, to delineated marshy, nonresidential areas of Bronx, Queens and Staten Island was scheduled to proceed in the middle of this month.
- "Services for the Developmentally Challenged" Open House: The Chair requested a volunteer to attend an open house at a new day program adjacent to the Board Office at 5670 Riverdale Avenue, operated by Services for the Developmentally Challenged. This organization also operates group homes, and has preliminarily indicated its interest in siting a home in North Riverdale. Beverly Fettman indicated she would try to attend.
- Affordable Health Care Act ("ACA") Community Forum: The group Northwest Bronx for Change will hold a forum on Saturday, June 30 from 12:30-2:30 pm at the Benjamin Franklin Reform Democratic Club on West 231 Street to discuss the state of the law following the Supreme Court's ruling before the end of the month on the statute's constitutionality.
- NYC Health Insurance Link: NYC has an online resource that promises to assist individuals and small businesses (2-50 employees) in gathering information on health insurance plans from every carrier in NYC, as well as changes in the law resulting from ACA that will take effect between now and 2014. The Chair asked Nils Graham and Joyce Pilsner to test the site as a resource for individuals, and indicated he would ask the Economic Development Committee to test the site for small businesses. <https://a069-webapps7.nyc.gov/healthinslink/home.aspx> .
- Budget Priorities: Per prior discussions, the Chair is considering drafting budget requests for the Committee's consideration for funding of anti-obesity programs by DOE or DOHMH at local schools and community centers. If this appears practical, drafts will circulate shortly via email. In this regard, the Chair circulated an article in the *New York Times* describing the Bronx as the epicenter for the obesity epidemic and highlighting the Mayor's proposal to ban the sale of large sizes of sodas and other sugary drinks. The article can be found at http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/12/nyregion/persistent-obesity-fuels-soda-ban-by-bloomberg.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

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The **next meeting** will take place in conjunction with a public hearing on Monday, October 1, 2012 at 7:30 pm at the Kingsbridge Heights Rehabilitation and Care Center, 3400 Cannon Place (off Giles Place or West 239th Street). There are 10 parking spots available. The public hearing will consider the proposal by Episcopal Social Services/Sheltering Arms to establish and operate a community residence for ten developmentally disabled (mentally retarded) adults at 2749 University Avenue near the intersection with West 195th Street beginning in December 2012.

Prepared by Michael Heller, Vice Chair
Approved by Steven Froot, Chair
Health, Hospitals & Social Services Committee