

**BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD No. 8**  
**MINUTES OF THE HEALTH, HOSPITALS AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Held on Monday, December 18, 2017**  
**Christ Church**  
**5030 Henry Hudson Parkway East**  
**Bronx, NY 10471**

**PRESENT**

Omar Murray  
Lisa Daub  
Tao Moran  
Karen Pesce

**AFFILIATION**

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

**GUESTS**

Erica Peralta- Downing  
Zelda Keaton  
Dr. Rita J. Louard  
Tara McMaster  
Mariela Salazar  
Elizabeth Thompson  
Ricky Wong

Department of Health and Human Services  
Special Citizens Futures Unlimited (SCFU)  
Montefiore Health System  
Community Resident  
Montefiore Health System  
Community Resident  
Department of Health and Human Services

**ABSENT**

Steve Froot  
Julia Gomez

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:38 PM. Committee members and Guests signed the attendance sheet on arrival. The Chair welcomed both Committee members and Guests to the meeting and invited all to introduce themselves and affiliation.

The previous Committee Minutes of October 16, 2017 were approved.

**Vote for Minutes Approval**

Yes - 4  
No - 0  
Abs - 0

Dr. Louard explained that Diabetes is a disease that occurs when one's blood glucose are blood sugar levels are too high resulting in the human body not being able to produce enough insulin. If you have diabetes, no matter what type, it means you have too much glucose in your blood, although the causes may differ. Too much glucose can lead to serious health problems. Diabetes is divided into two types – Type 1 and Type 2. People with type 1 diabetes do not produce insulin, and as a result sugar builds up in the blood instead of going into the cells, where it's needed for energy. In Type 1 diabetes, high blood sugar causes symptoms like thirst, hunger, and fatigue and can cause devastating consequences, including damage to the nerves, blood vessels, and internal organs. The same scary complications of diabetes appear in Type 2 as well. The difference is that people with Type 2 diabetes still produce insulin; their bodies just become less sensitive to it over time, which is what causes the complications.

The most common diabetes is type 2 Type 2 diabetes is much more common than Type 1. According to the 2017 National Diabetes Statistics Report, there are 30.3 million people in the United States with diabetes. That's close to 1 in 10 people. Among all these people living with diabetes, 90 to 95 percent have Type 2 diabetes. The percentage of people with diabetes increases with age. Less than 10 percent of the general population has diabetes, but among those 65 and older, the incidence rate reaches a high of 25.2 percent. Only about 0.18 percent of children under the age of 18 had diabetes in 2015.

Men and women get diabetes at roughly the same rate, but incidence rates are higher among certain races and ethnicities. American Indians and Alaskan Natives have the highest prevalence of diabetes among both men and women. The black and Hispanic populations have higher rates of diabetes than non-Hispanic whites. The primary test for both Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes is known as the glycated hemoglobin (A1C) test. An A1C test is a blood test that determines your average blood sugar level for the past two to three months. Your doctor may draw your blood or give you a small finger prick. The higher your blood sugar levels have been over the past few months, the higher your A1C level will be. An A1C level of 6.5 or higher indicates diabetes.

There's no cure for Type 1 diabetes. People with Type 1 diabetes don't produce insulin, so it must be regularly injected into your body. Some people take injections into the soft tissue, such as the stomach, arm, or buttocks, several times per day. Other people use insulin pumps. Insulin pumps supply a steady amount of insulin into the body through a small tube. Type 2 diabetes can be controlled and even reversed with diet and exercise alone, but many people need extra support. If lifestyle changes aren't enough, your doctor may prescribe medications such as metformin that help your body use insulin more effectively.

People with Type 2 diabetes need to focus on healthy eating. Weight loss is often a huge part of Type 2 diabetes treatment plans, so your doctor may recommend a low-calorie meal plan. This could mean reducing your consumption of animal fats, junk food and other sugary foods.

The Chair Thanked Dr. Louard and Ms. Salazar for coming to provide this information. Both Ms. Salazar and Dr. Louard stated they would be willing to come back and make future presentations on other health topics.

Ricky Wong, Director of Community Affairs for the Department of Health and Human Services states that the Health Department is committed to addressing the current rodent (rat) problem that was first reported in July 2017 by Bronx 12 news. The Committee Chair asked why Community Board 8 is not included within the Mayor's \$32 million rat reduction plan. Erica Peralta-Downing, Bronx Borough Coordinator for the Department of Health and Human Services, explained that the districts covered under the Mayor's plan are those with higher rat population rates and the goal of the Mayor is to cut the rat population by 70%. The plan includes adding hundreds of new solar compactor trash bins and replacing all remaining wire waste baskets on parks and street corners with steel cans; exterminating, cleaning out and cementing basements in public-housing buildings; and more frequently picking up trash and removing litter on streets and parks.

Mr. Wong states that residents must do their part to reduce the rat's infestation rate by disposing of their garbage properly. The main causes of rat infestation are food, garbage and abandoned home. Mr. Wong states the City has been using dry ice (frozen carbon dioxide) to kill rats and this method has been successful. The Chair stated in a previous Committee meeting that the Department of Sanitation was willing to have a clean up day within the neighborhoods infested with rats. Both Ms. Downing and Mr. Wong stated they would be willing to take part and to come back to the Committee to address any issue with Health.

Ms. Tara McMaster explained that she is community resident living near a group home located at 5743 Faraday Ave, which is operated by Special Citizens Futures Unlimited (SCFU). Ms., McMaster explained that she and other neighbors have been having problems with the staff at this group home and she tried on numerous occasions to reach out to the administrators at the facility with no response. The issues include loud noise, patients being locked out of the facility and garbage disposal. Ms. McMaster stated that the staff at the facility has recently changed as she had a good relationship with prior staff. Ms. Zelda Keaton, Director of Programs (SCFU), stated that she has never received any complaints regarding such issues and she is going to contact the facility. The Chair asked Ms. Keaton if a Community Advisory Board (CAB) has been established to give the neighbors a platform to voice their concerns on how the group home affects their neighborhood. Ms. Keaton explained no CAB has been established. The Chair advised Ms. Keaton that in light of such complaints from the neighbors, a CAB should be set up, and Miss Keaton agreed. Ms. Keaton and Ms. McMaster both exchanged contact information and agreed to meet and discuss how to resolve the issues. The Chair stated he would check up on both SCFU and the residents to see what progress has been made.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:57PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Omar Murray, Chair  
Health, Hospitals and Social Services Committee