



DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Promoting and protecting health, well-being, self-sufficiency, and safety of all in Marin County.



**MARIN HIV/AIDS CARE COUNCIL
DRAFT MINUTES
October 13, 2021**

Marin County Health & Wellness Campus

Meeting conducted via Zoom

3:00 – 5:00 pm

Benita McLarin, FACHE
DIRECTOR

Matthew Willis, MD, MPH
PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER

Lisa M. Santora, MD, MPH
DEPUTY PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER

3240 Kerner Boulevard
San Rafael, CA 94901
415 473 4163 T
415 473 6002 F
415 473 3232 TTY
marinhhs.org/public-health

I. Call to Order

CM Wade Flores called the meeting to order at 3:07 pm.

II. Roll Call

Council Members Present at Roll Call: Bobby Moske, Elaine Flores, Wade Flores, Jodie Campbell, Lydia Arellano, Leslie Gallen, Linda Dobra, Esmeralda Garcia, Julie Dowling, Alexey Nizovskikh

Council Members Arriving Late: None.

Council Members Absent: James Frazier

Staff Present: Nga Le (HHS), Julia Dorman (HHS), Cicily Emerson (HHS), Loretta Rogers (HHS)

Public Present: Miko Lagrimas (MCC), Dana Van Gorder (Spahr)

III. Review and approval of Agenda – VOTE

CM Wade Flores noted that due to the presenter's time constraints, the Co-Chair Report, Prevention Program Report and the Division of Public Health Report will be moved to after the presentation. With this revision, he asked members to review and approve the draft agenda. The motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously.

IV. Review and Approval of Minutes – VOTE

a. September 16, 2021 meeting minutes – CM Wade Flores asked members to review the September 16, 2021 meeting minutes. CM Lydia Arellano moved to approve the minutes. CM Esmeralda Garcia seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

V. General Announcements: None

VI. Public Comment:

- a. CM Leslie Gallen reported that Spahr Center has been using Ryan White money to pay for rental assistance. In about a four-month period, approximately \$40,000 was spent last year. Spahr Center has since spent about \$35,000 on this item and is about to spend an additional \$17,000 this year. While Leslie has made a budget adjustment, Spahr Center is now facing difficulty continuing to pay for people's housing costs. The Ryan White money has been completely depleted. The Ryan White program is the funding source of last resort so that people receiving this money have already exhausted other sources. The amount of rent ranges from \$227 to \$1,600 per month. Dana Van Gorder, Leslie and Nga Le will be meeting tomorrow to discuss this issue among others. The purpose will be to determine if there are other sources of funding to cover the shortfall. Leslie does not anticipate that the need will change soon. Dana Van Gorder added that funding for housing comes from two sources: Ryan White and the 340B Drug Program. It is anticipated that Spahr Center will run out of all those funds before the end of the year. Dana and Leslie will keep the Council informed on this matter.
 - i. Dana Van Gorder reported that in April 2021, the Spahr Center started a PrEP program. The purpose was to recruit additional people to be on PrEP, provide additional testing, prescriptions and navigation assistance with their health care providers and other services. There are currently 20 or 22 people in that program. Roughly half of them are uninsured and get their prescriptions through Gilead Access Program. Historically, the Spahr Center has received revenue from Gilead for the pharmaceuticals they provide. Spahr is currently bringing in about \$13,000 per month from the 340B program. Gilead has now informed Spahr that they will now provide pharmaceuticals directly to patients rather than through 340B pharmacies like Spahr. It is estimated that this will cost organizations across the country about \$110 million in lost revenue for their prevention programs. As a result, Spahr Center will be asking their patients if they want to continue receiving pharmaceuticals through Spahr's 340B program or transfer to Marin Community Clinics (MCC). If they stay with Spahr, Spahr will buy health insurance for these patients so that their costs are covered and Spahr retains 340B revenue. It is an issue both for Spahr and MCC.
- b. A new drug, Cabenuva, has been approved. It is an injectable medication, involving two shots per month. It is designed to support people who are having adherence problems as well as those people who do not want drugs delivered to their house or in their house. Spahr Center is setting up a program to educate the public about this new drug and possible provide injections of it at Spahr offices.
- c. Spahr Center has been encouraging their HIV patients to get their COVID-19 booster shots. It is strongly recommended that anyone

with a T-cell count of less than 200 get a booster. People with a T-cell count less than 500 should seriously consider it and discuss same with their physician.

- VII. Oral Health Presentation and Discussion:** Mikoyan Lagrimas, DDS, Senior Associate Dental Director at MCC, gave a PowerPoint presentation on MCC Dental Services and answered questions. His PowerPoint presentation will be sent out to members by Nga Le after the presentation. Dr. Miko shared his screen and reported the following:
- a. He reviewed the MCC Dental Services mission statement and the number of Ryan White patients seen by MCC in the past four fiscal years. He also reported on expanded services, specifically at their 4th Street location where they are adding two additional suites.
 - b. He then discussed which advanced dental services are not performed by MCC Dental Services but are referred out. An example is oral surgery which is referred to an oral surgery who sees patients once a month. MCC follows Medi-Cal guidelines very closely.
 - c. For payment, Medi-Cal Dental is the primary source and will be billed for services. If the service is not covered by Medi-Cal and is within MCC's scope of service, Ryan White will be billed. If the services are not within MCC's scope of service, Ryan White will not pay for it and MCC will make every effort to find reasonable services for the patient.
 - d. CM Leslie Gallen asked why Ryan White would not cover services not provided by MCC. Dr. Miko replied that Ryan White is closely tied to what is provided by MCC but he will investigate and get back to the Council.
 - e. CM Bobby Moske brought up the multiple difficulties he has had getting proper dental treatment. He has received many referrals to UCSF and UOP which have taken Ryan White funds in the past, but San Francisco no longer accepts Ryan White funds from outside their county. So, these referrals have been useless to him because he has had to pay out-of-pocket for these services. Therefore, he wanted to know if MCC has dentists who do extractions and root canals that accept Ryan White (RW) funds. There was a doctor in Novato who did work for RW funds but MCC is not sending him referrals. This issue has been outstanding for two years and needs resolution. This matter was brought to the attention of Racquel months ago and there has been no resolution and no change. Dr. Miko said he will have to investigate this as well. CM Lydia Arellano stated that she used to manage this program for MCC. She confirmed that RW funds are for services provided in the county where the patient resides. However, she had a work-around. She had MCC Accounting make UCSF and UOP providers for MCC. UCSF and UOP would give Lydia a billing advance for how much the service would cost, then MCC Accounting would cut a check using the RW funds. Once the Oral Surgery program was established, there was less need for this work-around. We did the same for the Dr. in

Novato. But, at some point, MCC, fearing that they will run out of funds, decided that they would only cover their own scope of services. The work-around still can be used, however. She has explained this to MCC.

- f.** CM Wade Flores asked how many HIV clients know the scope of services offered before they come to MCC Dental. Dr. Miko replied that it is hard to provide information to the patient about what is covered without having done an exam. That's because the criteria are very extensive. CM Wade Flores reported that he had come to MCC for an extraction and was in the chair waiting for service and never received it because no one had done the paperwork. He then went to an outside dentist who told him that if he had waited for another week to be seen, the infection could have gotten into his blood stream and he could have died. CM Bobby Moske said he had a similar problem. He had to have a root canal done but MCC fought for six months over who was to pay for it. By the time he received service, the tooth had to be extracted because it was too far gone. This issue has been brought up to MCC multiple times and he asked for a date when the Council can expect a resolution of these matters.
- g.** Cicily Emerson stated that the County and MCC are aware of these contracting issues. A lot of the problem stems from how the contracts are structured. It used to be that there was a pool of funds to draw from and then it was switched to a salary model which paid for some people's salaries. What was missed was specialty treatment outside of MCC. The fix for that until new contracts are drawn up was to be the Spahr Center paying out of pharmacy money. Dana Van Gorder confirmed this, paying out of 340B funds. Therefore, there is a payer for now. New contracts will have to be specific about specialty care funding.
- h.** Dr. Miko gave the point of contact for MCC Dental Services: Geidy Gutierrez, Tel: 415-526-8557, located at the 4th Street clinic. She is there Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. He will follow up on the questions and concerns expressed by Council members.
- i.** Dr. Miko also reported that cultural sensitivity training has been taking place. CM Linda Dobra said that HIV sensitivity training by the AIDS Education and Training Center (AETC) is also available for medical and dental professionals.
- j.** There was general discussion, starting with CM Wade Flores stating that the MCC system is broken from the Call Center to the dental chair. The MCC Board knows that the two major problem areas for their service are dental and mental. Several other members expressed their frustration. Cicily Emerson summarized what was accomplished today. CM Lydia Arellano pointed out that there is an organization called Operation Access which provides specialty services to the uninsured and those who simply cannot afford to pay. She is unaware that they cover dental services, but it is something to

explore. Also, MCC has a fund for charity. Nga Le asked Lydia to transfer this information to Geidy Gutierrez.

- VIII. Co-Chair Report:** Both Co-Chairs, CM Wade Flores and CM Elaine Flores, expressed gratitude and satisfaction for having the opportunity to serve as co-chairs for the last two years.
- IX. Prevention Program Report:** CM Linda Dobra reported the following:

 - a. It is still not decided whether or not Hepatitis C testing will be done in the Jail. Work will continue on that.
 - b. Spahr Center has two new employees, assigned to HIV testing. There will be a meeting with the prevention team to see if those two people can be trained. They have so far been training through the San Francisco Department of Public Health.
- X. Division of Public Health Report:** Cicily Emerson reported the following:

 - a. Generally, everything is going well with regard to COVID. Marin is currently in the CDC-defined “Orange” level of transmission which is “substantial.” However, just today, Marin hit the “moderate” level of transmission. If Marin can sustain this level of transmission for three weeks, the masking mandate will be lifted.
 - b. Already 80% of Marin residents are fully vaccinated. Boosters of the Pfizer vaccine are underway at the Northgate Shopping Center clinic. Boosters of the Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines are still under consideration. Approval is anticipated later this week or next week.
 - c. It is anticipated that Pfizer vaccine will be approved for 5 to 11-year-olds later this month. Preparations for mass vaccination are underway.
 - d. New masking guidance will go into effect this Friday, Oct. 15th.
 - e. Marin is number one in terms of vaccination rates and case rates in California. Marin is moving out of the pandemic phase and COVID is now endemic.
- XI. Community Forum Planning:**

 - a. Nga Le reported that the flyer for the Forum has already been sent out. Council members are encouraged to share the flyer with their contacts.
 - b. Cicily Emerson reported that Matt Willis will be speaking at the Forum on behalf of HHS. He will present on COVID and HIV.
 - c. The Forum will be held on Thursday, October 21st, 2021, from 5 to 7:30 pm, at 3240 Kerner Blvd., San Rafael, in Room 109 and 110. The location will be open at 5:00 pm for socializing.
 - d. CM Bobby Moske reminded Council members that the food for the dinner will be supplied by DJ’s Chinese restaurant, 435 Magnolia, Larkspur. The food will be served on platters. There was discussion

as to where it would be served and determined it would be served in the hallway and eaten outside.

- e. CM Bobby Moske presented his draft agenda. There was general discussion. A finalized agenda was determined, and it will be sent out by Nga Le to Council members.

XII. World AIDS Day Planning: This item was moved to the November 3, 2021 agenda. Nga Le reported that other agenda items for this meeting will be housing and budget review.

XIII. Break: None.

XIV. Co-Chair Election: CM Lydia Arellano withdrew her nomination for co-chair. Therefore, the only nominees left were CM Wade Flores and CM Esmeralda Garcia. CM Linda Dobra moved that these two nominees be elected as co-chairs for the coming year. CM Julie Dowling seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

XV. Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 pm

Next Meeting: **Wednesday, November 3, 2021, 3:00 to 5:00 pm**
Location: Virtual