



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**

June 5, 2024

Marin County Health & Wellness Campus, Room 110

Meeting conducted via Zoom and in person

3:00 – 5:30 pm

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I. Call to Order

CM Linda Dobra called the meeting to order at 3:04 pm.

II. Roll Call

Council Members Present at Roll Call: Elaine Flores, Linda Dobra, Alexey Nizovskikh, Julie Dowling, Jimi Amos, Julie Case, Bobby Moske, James Frazier, Rosemary Lukholo

Council Members Arriving Late: None

Council Members Absent: Lydia Arellano (excused), Wade Flores (excused)

Staff Present: Nga Le (HHS), Cicily Emerson (HHS), Loretta Rogers (HHS), Lauren Benjamin (HHS), Emily Sims (HHS)

Public Present: Racquel Beltran (MCC), Connie Kadera (MCC)

III. Review and approval of Agenda – VOTE

CM Linda Dobra 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. March 13, 2024, meeting minutes – CM Linda Dobra asked members to review the March 13, 2024, meeting minutes. The motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously.

V. General Announcements:

- a. CM Julie Case shared that the comedian Michael Pritchard enjoyed attending and performing at the Community Forum.
- b. CM Elaine Flores announced Wade Flores's upcoming nuptials and invitation to participate via Zoom.

VI. Public Comment: None.

VII. Oral Health Update: Connie Kadera from Marin Community Clinics (MCC) gave the following report:

- a. The Fourth Street location has opened up. There are more chairs available now. There are a few items still to fill in, but all is looking good. When fully staffed, MCC Dental will be able to see even more patients. This does not achieve MCC's overall goal to treat all qualified residents, but it is a huge step forward.
- b. They are working on getting more staff to handle emergency care.
- c. They are recruiting for another dental assistant. There is a shortage of this skill in California, so MCC Dental is working on their own internal training program.
- d. Racquel Beltran reported that MCC Dental had received several requests for specialty care and those requests are now in motion. They are working to assure all communication with regard to specialists, payments and patients are going through smoothly. There have been a few individuals who paid out-of-pocket for services approved by MCC; MCC is working to get these individuals reimbursed. She asked Council members to contact her if they are aware of any further instances where people need to be reimbursed.
- e. **Questions:** CM Bobby Moske reported a RW patient who in March tried to get an appointment for a dental cleaning and the earliest he could get it was in November. A six-month wait is unacceptable. Connie Kadera encouraged members to contact her when such instances arise. She can help. Patients can use the Ryan White email to ask for help. CM Elaine Flores wondered how widely known the Ryan White email is. She suggested an updated brochure that could be mailed out to Ryan White clients. Connie Kadera reviewed what information the brochure should include. She said that creating this brochure can be done.

VIII. Prevention Program Report: CM Linda Dobra reported the following:

- a. The Primary Health STI Testing Pilot ends on June 30, 2024. The HHS Bilingual Outreach team continues to do field testing both in the Canal for Latino populations and in Marin City (MCCT).
- b. Many of us attended the STD Controller's Meeting in Sacramento last month. Here are some of the highlights:
 - i. Mobile medical units incorporating testing and harm reduction in field.
 - ii. Emergency Departments: Routine Opt-out testing is a goal throughout the state along with working more closely with BRIDGE navigators who do MAT, strengthening connections to support PrEP needs wherever possible in ED's and also to reach hard-to-reach populations.
- c. Ending The Epidemic (ETE) and Syndemic approaches by OA/STD/Harm Reduction Branches. In Marin, we have combined efforts, funding and support braided funding for RFP's as possible. The community could benefit from aspects of all of these different programs regardless of funding streams. CM Bobby Moske asked if MAT Telehealth was still available and utilized by the Syringe Access Team. Unknown. Linda asked him to check with the whole team and see if anyone is using this service for clients. If not, why.

- d. ETE – Strengthen PrEP systems to increase use amongst highest risk individuals. Marin is looking at an enrollment site for PrEP AP and is also supporting use of Color.com/ca-prep telehealth website for eligible individuals to access PrEP easily. This will be the one driving tool in our tool kit to reduce new infections. CM Julie Dowling asked for an explanation of PrEP. A discussion ensued about PrEP and the Council’s understanding. PrEP (Pre-exposure Prophylaxis) is a once-a-day pill or now long-acting injectable antiviral to stop transmission of HIV. Those who are HIV negative can take PrEP to reduce HIV infection. The group as a whole asked for a presentation regarding PrEP and its use. Linda will work with Nga to get a speaker to support knowledge base for those on the Care Council knowing more about PrEP. (Doxy, PEP, etc.)

- IX. Division of Public Health Report:** Cicily Emerson gave the following report:
 - a. She congratulated the Council on the recent Community Forum which was very well done. There was great turnout and participation from the council.
 - b. Matt Willis announced that he is leaving his position as the Public Health Officer. Lisa Santora was chosen as the new Public Health Officer but will stay the Deputy Public Health Officer until the end of September.
 - c. Since the closing of Spahr Center, Public Health has focused on keeping services stabilized. With the Harm Reduction Program we had volunteers keeping services going. We will have the Ryan White and Harm Reduction RFPs to have a September 1 start date.
 - d. The Public Health Department is working on accreditation application.
 - e. She mentioned the concern about funding for the Future of Public Health initiative.
 - f. Working on getting disaster response plans updated.
 - g. CM James Frazier asked who will replace the Spahr Center. Cicily answered that Public Health will RFP the HIV and Harm Reduction/HCV services. CM Elaine Flores asked a question about housing options and homelessness in Marin County. Cicily answered that we will invite the Division of Homelessness and Whole Person Care to come and provide a presentation on services.
- X. Ryan White Services Update and Discussion:** Services have continued at HHS with the case managers and the EFA programs have been running smoothly.
- XI. Client Satisfaction Survey Presentation:** Pooja Mhatre, epidemiologist, did the analysis of the results of the survey. She shared her screen and gave a PowerPoint presentation on the results.
 - a. She reported that Marin County has 255 Ryan White clients, 153 confidential surveys were mailed out and 67 surveys were returned. That’s a response rate of about 44%. Those who returned the survey received a \$20.00 gift card. Surveys could be filled out and returned either by mail or online.

- b. She reviewed the demographics of the responders, by gender, age and race/ethnicity. The majority of the responders were male (73%), white (67%), and over 60 years of age (68%). She noted that there were no transgenders among the responders. This demographic matches that of last year's survey.
- c. She reviewed the service categories, five core services and six support services. She noted that Housing was not included and so not a part of the survey.
- d. She reviewed the scores that each service received from survey respondents. The food card program received the highest satisfaction score and the food pantry and medical transportation services received the lowest. This is more or less consistent with last year's results.
- e. She reviewed those services which had the highest satisfaction scores and those which had the lowest. The highest were food cards, primary medical care, and emergency financial assistance. The lowest were food pantry, oral health care, and mental health care. There were slight differences from last year's results but mainly they were consistent.
- f. She reported the results of the self-report health status questions. The majority (71%) reported their health as good or excellent. 29% reported their health as fair or poor. Last year, the majority reported their health as "fair." This year, 49% reported that their health had improved as least a little bit over the last year. Last year, the majority reported that their health had remained the same. This year, 92% reported that they had seen their provider in the last six months.
- g. Respondents reported that their top five health concerns were (1) depression or anxiety, (2) fatigue, (3) lack of money for daily living, (4) chronic pain, (5) side effects of medications. This matches last year's results.
- h. Respondents were asked to prioritize the Ryan White services. Food cards and emergency financial assistance were ranked highest. Support groups and transportation services were ranked lowest. This ranking is the same as last year's.
- i. Questions: CM Bobby Moske asked if there was a transgender category on the survey for a respondent to choose. Nga replied that there was. She said that in the past there was one respondent who chose that category but this year no respondents chose it. She reviewed the available categories. CM Julie Case asked when the surveys were sent out and when returned. Nga stated that the survey was sent out at the end of February/ early March. She sent out the email version twice. Respondents were given four weeks to return the completed surveys.
- j. Pooja then reviewed the comments made by respondents to detail what their dissatisfaction was with each service category. Common complaints were the fact that no services were provided, negative

staff / client relationships, the need for expanded services, late payments and service quality.

- k. Pooja then reported on respondents likes and dislikes about the services. Among the likes were staff-client relationships, quality of service, and staff training/skills. Among the dislikes were perception of services ending due the Spahr Center closing, management and unwelcome space.
- l. More questions: MC Bobby Moske stated that the LGBTQ+ community needs a space of their own. This is gone now with the closing of the Spahr Center. He urged that efforts be made to provide such a space. CM Elaine Flores stated ... MC Linda Dobra spoke about the aging population, assuring they get the support they need.
- m. Nga Le reviewed the final slides which were passed out in hard copy to the members.

XII. BREAK – None.

XIII. Community Forum Debrief: Nga Le shared her screen and gave a short presentation on the Community Forum Feedback.

- a. She reviewed the responses from the attendees to each of the services. It included their likes and their suggestions for improvement. It also included attendees’ suggestions for new service categories. These included more support groups, better transportation options and legal services.
- b. She then reviewed attendees’ evaluations of the Forum itself. This included what parts of the program they felt were most valuable, suggestions for future topics, what services worked well for them now and their suggestions for improvement. There was general discussion.

XIV. Membership – Application Review – Emily Sims

- a. The council voted unanimously to offer Emily Sims an interview to join the Care Council.

XV. Next Steps – New Business: None.

XVI. Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 pm.

Next Meeting: August 14, 2024, 3:00 to 5:30 pm
Location: 3240 Kerner, Room 110 and via Zoom