***Dukes County Health Council***

<https://www.dchcmv.com/>

***Meeting Minutes***

*Thursday, November 15, 2018*

West Tisbury Public Safety Building

7:30 AM **Meeting called to order** by Lena Prisco. Lena officially welcomed Lila Fischer and Bernadette Thomas as new Health Council members.

7:35 Health Council Members **approved the Minutes of October 18, 2019 meeting.**

7:40 **Substance Use Disorder Coalition Update**--Fr. Chip Seadale and Victor Capoccia.

Fr. Chip Seadale chairs the Substance Use Disorder Coalition of Martha's Vineyard. The Coalition's mission is: Its mission is: *“to engage, advocate, inform, and bring awareness to substance use disorder through education, prevention, enforcement, treatment, and recovery to build a healthy, safe, and substance abuse free community."* Chip noted that the Coalition consists of a wide variety of groups and citizens with an interest in addressing the problem of substance use disorders on the Island. It is open to all who are interested in the problem and spans groups which include recovery counselors, healthcare professionals, clergy and police.

Chip summarized the successes of the Coalition so far:

* Establishment of agreements for services to assure access for Vineyard residents to treatment services off-island. These agreements include collaboration among multiple entities including MV Hospital, MV Community Services, Gosnold Treatment Centers, and others. To date, access to these programs has helped 280 Vineyard residents get needed care.
* Employment of recovery coaches by MV Community Services and MV Hospital.
* Employment of Primary Care physicians by Hospital who have an interest in substance use disorders.
* Formation of a "Learning to Cope" chapter on Island the (with the assistance of Christine Todd)
* Dukes County funding to employ a substance use disorder outreach worker
* The opening of an urgent intervention center by MV Community Services. This center has the ability to provide pharmacologic therapy for both opioid and alcohol related disorders
* The publication of a Substance Use Disorder Resource Guide for the community
* The creation of a website <https://www.mvaddictionhelp.com/>
* The creation of a Facebook page <https://m.facebook.com/MVSUDC/>

Victor Capoccia then reported on the work of the Coalition's Public Health Prevention Committee. Victor noted that the Committee started its work with the "simple idea" of "How to make not using drugs attractive to young people." Committee members researched existing program in a number of communities. These consultations included work with the Public Good Project among others. (<https://publicgoodprojects.org/health-communication-system>) Based on this work, the Committee has designed a public health campaign aimed at establishing a new cultural standard for substance use on the Vineyard. Simply stated it is to "be responsible in the use of drugs and alcohol." For the young, that translates to "no use." For adults the message is "no harm to self, to family or to community." The Committee envisions are multi-year campaign. Dr. Charlie Silberstein described the approach in a recent MV Times article <https://www.mvtimes.com/2018/10/17/mind-public-health-campaign-vineyard/>

Health Council members asked a number of questions. These included:

* *Why not organize as a non-profit?* Victor replied that the Coalition did not feel that this was necessary at this point. The Coalition had the capability to address issues that required non-profit status through already existing non-profit status of Coalition members. Additionally, the Coalition was sensitive to the already large number of non-profits on the Vineyard.
* *Is the work of the Coalition coordinated with the work of the Youth Task Force?* Mike Joyce noted the very active participation of the Youth Task Force in the Coalition. Victor reported that the Public Health Prevention Campaign has been designed to be complementary to the work of the Youth Task Force.

Health Council members added observations to the discussion. These included a comment by Paddy Moore that the Campaign should consider the role modeling that older adults play in setting the community's cultural norms for substance use. Dan Pesch urged that the Campaign employ a "grassroots approach" toward engaging community members rather than relying on more conventional marketing techniques.

Victor and Chip concluded the discussion by inviting all interested Health Council members to participate in Coalition activities. The Coalition meets on the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 8:30 AM in the Conference Room of the Island Wide Youth Collaborative on the MV Community Services campus. The Public Health Prevention Committee meets biweekly at 12:45 pm in the South Conference Room of MV Hospital.

8:30 **Town Financing Concerns for Social Programs**--Leslie Clapp

Leslie began by summarizing the discussion of the last Health Council meeting. She reminded Health Council members that the Towns' Boards of Selectman have voiced concerns to Island social agencies about a trajectory of increasing request for support. Oak Bluffs and Vineyard Haven have been particularly outspoken in their desire to be sure that services are not duplicated among agencies. At last spring's Oak Bluff Town Meeting a Select Board-approved proposal to "pool" requests by social agencies into a single warrant item provoked considerable discussion before it was defeated by a vote of Oak Bluffs residents. The social programs that are the focus of concern largely effect the Island's older population.

Council members from Oak Bluffs noted that the concerns from the Oak Bluffs Selectmen tie closely to a perceived unfairness to OB residents in the current formula that allocates the financial responsibility among the towns for island-wide programs. The formula is based on a mix of town property values and population and is commonly referred to as "the fifty-fifty formula." The details of the calculation of the "fifty-fifty formula" are not well understood by many. Health Council members noted that other allocation formulas were also in use in addition to the fifty-fifty allocation--further confusing the issue.

Health Council members posed the question of what role the Health Council should play in the current discussion. Some members urged that the Health Council play an oversight role in any warrant requests by a social service agency related to health. Others urged caution and felt that an oversight role for the Health Council was beyond its capabilities and mission. Consensus emerged that the Health Council should be apprised of health related warrants prior to town meetings. Additionally, Health Council members voiced a strong opinion that they should more fully understand the "fifty-fifty formula" and other methods of allocating financial responsibility among the towns. Council members urged that County Administrator Martina Thornton be asked to brief the Health Council on the formulas at a future meeting.

8:50 **Other Items**

* **Windemere Nursing Home Rumors**--Susan Sanford related rumors she had heard that the Windemere Nursing Home was closing. These were addressed by Bernadette Thomas. Bernadette state that these rumors were not true. MV Hospital is currently reviewing the clinical model employed by Windermere Nursing Home. The model is dated and no longer appeals to potential residents. Additionally, the nursing home loses substantial money every year. The Hospital consequently is exploring other ways to meet the long term care needs of Vineyard residents in more desirable and sustainable ways. One of these ideas is to replace Windemere with a "Greenhouse" long term care model. The Greenhouse model uses smaller facilities with private rooms and innovative approaches in support staffing. This model has achieved high levels of resident satisfaction and financial sustainability in other communities.
* **Introduction of Kevin Irwin**--Kevin Irwin is the new Director of Community Relations at MV Hospital. He brings a wealth of experience in organizing communities to meet their health needs. Kevin's responsibilities include the coordination of the Hospital's upcoming tri-annual community needs assessment.

9:00 Meeting Adjourned.