

Healthy Ulster Council Meeting Notes

239 Golden Hill Office Building, Kingston, NY 12401

May 11, 2017

Present: Stacy Kraft, UCDOH; Vin Martello, UCDOH; Melinda Herzog, CCEUC; Laurie Mozian, HAHV; Susan Lennon, Center for a Tobacco-Free Hudson Valley (NYSDOH Bureau of Tobacco Control); Marge Gagnon, Rosewomen's Care; Katie Sheehan-Lopez, CCEUC; Christina Carranceja, Institute for Family Health; YMCA; Fern Suess, CCEUC; Kathy Nolan, Catskill Mountain River Keeper; Anique D'Angelo, PPMHV; Alexandra Julson, PPMHV; Christine Noble, UCOFA

Melinda Herzog introduced presenter Susan Lennon from the Center for a Tobacco-Free Hudson Valley.

Ms. Lennon works with directors and heads of health organizations to implement policy change, believing in the power of "starting at the top." Seven Hudson Valley counties are served by the center: Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster, and Westchester. Data and information is taken from the *Clinical Practice Guidelines 2008* for treating tobacco use and dependence. The center supports community health centers and mental health facilities with guidance and technical assistance.

Fact: Tobacco is the #1 preventable cause of death in the U.S. **Fact:** 70% of smokers want to quit. **Fact:** There is a larger percentage of smokers in low income populations and within the mental health community. Within the mental health and recovering communities, 41% of patients smoke. **Fact:** There is a 25 year mortality gap between those communities and the general population. The 5 A's are used in the treatment approach: Ask, Advise, Assess, Assist, Arrange. Clinicians and providers make a difference – it's never too late to stop smoking!

Healthy Walk: Meeting attendees took a fifteen minute healthy walk outdoors as their exercise break, in tribute to Healthy Ulster County Week, proclaimed by Ulster County Executive Mike Hein.

Vin Martello, Director of Community Health Relations of UCDOH, gave a presentation and interpretation of the update of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's (RWJF) County Health Rankings, for Ulster County. Vin explained that community health is influenced by several factors: where we live, where we work, the safety of our surroundings, and the strength and connectivity of our families and communities; Vin emphasized that community health is not just what happens in the doctor's office.

With the impressive leap from a ranking of #35 in 2011 to #16 in 2016, Ulster County is the "fastest climb" and has proven that health officials and policy makers have been working very hard. Currently, they are working to add "Vaping" to the *Clean Indoor Air Act*; twenty four municipalities in Ulster County have already done this.

Vin went on to stress to attendees that the Healthy Ulster Council wants to improve membership; "we would like to get business communities and schools involved." Realtors were suggested as potential members; Vin agreed "community health is inextricably linked to economic development."

Kathy Nolan asked if the PowerPoint could be presented to the chamber of commerce. Other suggestions were the board of Education, PTA meetings. All agreed that getting the PowerPoint out to different groups could be part of a strategic plan to increase membership.

Before the meeting closed, Melinda requested that everyone present read the Draft provided of Healthy Ulster Council Commitment of Membership and approve or suggest edits. This could be done via emails.

The meeting adjourned at 4:15pm