



News for HAP Partner Agencies and Friends

Minutes of HAP monthly meeting June 27, 2008

The 19 people attending the meeting were:

Debbie Anderson, Overlake Senior Care, debbie.anderson@overlakehospital.org

Marcia Appleton, Community Services for the Blind and Partially Sighted, mappleton@csbps.com

Nathan Buck, Neighborhood House, nathanb@nhwa.org

John Deagen, Senior Services, JohnD@seniorservices.org

Cynthia Ellison, Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens, Cynthia.ellison@seattle.gov

Mary Fogh, Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program/Solid Ground, maryf@solid-ground.org

Aileen Gagney, American Lung Association, agagney@alaw.org

Linda Henderson, American Lung Association, lhenderson@alaw.org

Robin Knudson, RSVP, RobinK@solid-ground.org

Karen Lewis, CHEF, klewis@chef.org

Mandy LeBlanc, American Heart Association, mandy.leblanc@aha.org

Teresa Moore, Moore Ink. PR (Healthy Aging Partnership), info@4elders.org

Pam Piering, Aging and Disability Services, pam.piering@seattle.gov

Bob Riler, Pierce County Human Services Aging and Long Term Care, briler@co.pierce.wa.us

Sheryl Schwartz, UW Health Promotion Research Center,

sheryls@u.washington.edu

Lani Scheman, Jewish Family Service, lscheman@jfsseattle.org

Linda Wells, King County Department of Community and Human Services, Aging Program, linda.c.wells@kingcounty.gov

[wells@kingcounty.gov](mailto:linda.c.wells@kingcounty.gov)

Christine Westerback, Evergreen Healthcare, cwesterback@evergreenhealthcare.org

Karen Winston, Aging and Disability Services, Karen.winston@seattle.gov

Next meeting: July 22, 2008, 8:30 - 10:00 a.m.

Location: Senior Services, Lillian Rice Center
2208 2nd Ave., Seattle

Special presentations by invited guests

The Partnership invited two nonprofit organizations to join us at the meeting to share information about programs and initiatives to encourage healthy aging and to engage in a dialogue with HAP members about potential partnership opportunities.

Mandy LeBlanc of the American Heart Association introduced the Start program (www.heart.org/start), aimed at getting adults of all ages to begin walking. The program - now being piloted in Seattle and Columbus, Ohio - is geared toward getting people in the workforce to walk during lunch breaks and after work and to encourage companies to start workplace wellness programs. The Team Start program targets weekend walkers. The goal is to get people to do 30 minutes of physical activity most days during the week.

The Heart Association is forming walking groups in King and Snohomish counties and has gotten a good reception from senior groups, including connecting with the Sound Steps program (initiated by HAP) through Seattle Parks and Recreation. An online component allows people to track their activity and their calorie intake, www.heart.org/teamstart. Mandy also mentioned www.startscavengerhunt.org, an event in partnership with King County to get people of all ages out to five different parks and offering Woodland Park Zoo passes as prizes.

HAP partner Sheryl Schwartz told Mandy about the Active Options Web site (www.activeoptions.org), a central listing place searchable by Zip code for all physical activity programs for older adults.

Mandy closed her presentation by saying the American Heart Association would welcome a formal request from HAP to become a partner agency.

Linda Henderson, executive director of the American Lung Association-Washington, gave a brief history of the ALA. The organization began more than 100 years ago with the original mission of eradicating tuberculosis. Its next challenge was fighting one of the biggest health risks ever to face our country, smoking. Today, the ALA focuses on finding treatments and cures for lung disease through research; advocating and educating about clean air; and continuing its focus on smoking cessation (the ALA-Washington reaches more than 30,000 kids each year with the message of not starting to smoke.)

Aileen Gagney, asthma and environmental health program manager for the ALA, talked about the organization's "master home environmentalist" program. Volunteers go through 35 hours of training about environmental/air quality hazards within the home and then go into homes to identify allergy and asthma triggers and tell residents how to alleviate them. The program began in 1992. In 2005, as a result of a joint grant proposal, there was a coordinated outreach effort between ALA, the Healthy Aging Partnership and Senior Services to get more volunteers for the program. The inspections focus on homes with children, pregnant women and elders, but home inspections are available free of charge to anyone living in Seattle.

"Volunteers learn how to see homes in whole new ways," Aileen said. "We talk about formaldehyde, carpet cleaners and all those things that can make us really sick. Volunteers look at all the chemicals in the house, the furnace, the vacuum, etc., and tell people what they can do to make their homes healthier.

"We spend 90 percent of our time inside and elders spend even more than that. Our indoor air can be five times as polluted as our outside air," she emphasized.

Here are some tips that Aileen shared at the meeting:

- Green cleaning methods can be used instead of chemical cleaners. Many grocery stores now stock many green cleaning products including their own store brands.
- "If a cleaner smells good it's bad and if it smells bad it's bad." They all use solvents or petroleum-based chemicals. Orange cleaners, simple green, pine cleaners - if it smells that strong it's not good.
- Baking soda and vinegar work great to clean most things like windows, floors and countertops.
- Clothes-dryer sheets are laden with potentially dangerous chemicals. They are sheets of foam impregnated with petroleum-based chemicals and perfume and phthalates (which are also used to make plastic soft and flexible, like in water bottles). Use liquid fabric softener or white vinegar instead.
- Take your shoes off at the door. Wear indoor shoes and outdoor shoes.
- The National Institutes of Health has a Web site that allows you to examine the ingredients that are in your household products and evaluate them for their impact on your health. <http://householdproducts.nlm.nih.gov/> Aileen says, "If you can't pronounce it, it's not good for you."
- Household/bathroom fans keep the air circulating. To tell if a bathroom fan is working, hold piece of toilet paper up to it and if it sucks it up it's working.
- Before having new carpeting installed, ask the store to unroll the carpeting and leave it to air out for two weeks before they deliver and install it. Buy low-pile carpeting and a very good pad.
- Don't use anti-bacterial soaps and products. "It kills off really weak bacteria so the remaining stronger bacteria gets really strong," Aileen explained.

While the master home environmentalists call people two weeks after the inspections to see whether they have questions or have made changes, no formal follow-up process is in place. The ALA program received all the funding that the city of Seattle allots for indoor air quality and is now starting to build more partnerships.

The discussion turned to ways that HAP can assist ALA in its work to improve indoor air quality for older adults. One idea was to help educate senior-care facilities and licensers about what they can do to make their facilities greener. While ALA does not have a way to "certify" those senior facilities that are doing a good job, HAP could develop a certification process that would begin on the outside with pesticides and then move inside. We could even incorporate inspections for fall and fire risks to embrace other HAP initiatives along with air quality. Other ideas for this potential project:

- "Make it cool to be green."
- Involve master gardeners associations.
- Have levels for the certification like silver, gold and platinum.
- Invite the Washington Association of Housing and Services for the Aging and its for-profit counterpart to be involved.

Other possible partnership or project opportunities might include involving HAP members in advocating for clean air policies and developing a welcome kit of green cleaning products for new residents of public housing (a potential grant opportunity). Linda Wells mentioned that there was a new grant from the Environmental Protection Agency related to Healthy Aging that she would forward to ALA.

The discussion ended with ALA inviting HAP to send them a formal invitation to join.

NOTE: The American Lung Association of Washington is now accepting applications for the Master Home Environmentalist fall volunteer training. Classes are held Sept. 9 - Nov. 11 at ALA's Seattle office. The free 35-hour training meets Tuesdays from 6:30 - 9:00 p.m., and occasional Saturdays. Go to

http://www.alaw.org/air_quality/master_home_environmentalist to learn more.

Announcements (please see the HAPpenings e-newsletter, to be distributed the week of July 7, for more details)

The Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens will hold its annual Old Timers Picnic on Tuesday, Aug. 26, from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. at Woodland Park Zoo. Attendees must register starting July 14 by calling 206-684-4951.

Advisory Councils from the Pierce and King County Area Agencies on Aging hold a legislative forum at Tukwila Community Center on Sept. 17.

HAP partner agencies that would like to have information included in the monthly Passport newsletter from Senior Services should forward information by the 5th of every month to info@seniorservices.org.

Training for PEARLS (Programs to Encourage Active and Rewarding Lives for Seniors) depression intervention counselors will be held Sept. 24-26. Go to <http://depts.washington.edu/pearlspr/> for more info.



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