



## Essex County Cancer Coalition Meeting Minutes



*Approved*  
NEW JERSEY  
MEDICAL SCHOOL  
University of Medicine & Dentistry of New Jersey

**Thursday, December 9, 2010, 4:00-6:00 pm**  
**St. Barnabas Medical Center, Human Resources Training Room**  
**95 Old Short Hills Rd., West Orange, NJ 07052**

**Attendees:** Patti Conlin, Zelia DeSouza, Karen Feldman, Michael Festa, Aretha Hill-Forte, Elyce Hirtler, Deborah Johnson, Roy Johnson, Maria Kaplan, David Landry, Dennis Lee, Maggie Lopez, Sean Lucan (speaker), Angela McCabe, Pat Miller, Libby Moore, Atif Nazir, June Reece, Daniel Rosenblum, Arnie Rosenheck, Mary Jo Salerno, Robert Schermer, Eric Simmons, Michele Visco, Stanley Weiss

**Excused:** Catherine Marcial

### **Introductions: Stanley H. Weiss, MD (Principal Investigator & Director)**

Those present briefly introduced themselves. Dr. Weiss pointed out that we sometimes take pictures of our meetings and sometimes post them on our web site, and invited anyone who does not wish to have their picture taken to let us know. One person requested to be excluded in anything disseminated, and a record of this request was made, so that, if necessary, photo editing could be conducted.

There were many newcomers including several from St. Barnabas.

A second round of introductions was made for those who came later, including a newcomer who is a prostate cancer survivor and retired marketing executive and who expressed interest in both the ECCC Advocacy Committee and the northern NJ Prostate Cancer Initiative.

Dr. Weiss thanked Ms. McCabe for St. Barnabas's provision of both meeting space and refreshments.

### **Review and Approval of September 23<sup>rd</sup> Meeting Minutes**

The minutes of the September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2010 meeting were unanimously approved as drafted on a motion by Ms. Reece seconded by Dr. Rosenheck.

## **Agency Updates / ECCC Committees / Announcements**

### **Essex County Cancer Coalition: ECCC Coordinators and Director/PI**

Of NJ's 21 county cancer coalitions, to the best of Dr. Weiss's knowledge only two have so far received their official notices of grant award (NoGA), not including Essex. Mr. Schermer volunteered the information that Morris did receive its NoGA. Dr. Weiss briefly reviewed the history of the ECCC's timely — indeed, early — submission of its renewal application to the NJDHSS, with each revision usually within a day of being informed of its necessity, its receipt of an initial NoGA that was soon rescinded due to cuts in OCCP's budget to all counties, and the state's ultimate announcement that each county would receive only \$42,800 this year. He pointed out that \$42,800 is only 2/3 of the flat annual funding rate for the previous six years of \$65,000/year.

Dr. Weiss also discussed the fact that the CDC informed the NJDHSS last March that it had renewed New Jersey's funding for the Prostate Cancer Initiative (a proposal that was originally written by Dr. Weiss) for a fourth year, with the funds to be split between the ECCC and the Atlantic County coalition as in past years, but that the NJDHSS had to date not allowed us to apply for those funds due to logistical issues within NJDHSS. Indeed, he informed the meeting that just today we received a letter from the NJDHSS informing us that they had created a new mechanism for us to apply for these funds, but that we would not actually be able to receive them until the end of February at the earliest, and maybe March or April, even though we have

fulfilled our obligations under the grant by working continuously on this since the beginning of the fiscal year on July 1, 2010.

Dr. Weiss believes that the second half-year of the ECCC's grant award remains in jeopardy, because he has heard that the state has not yet obligated these funds and he remains concerned that we have not yet received our NoGA. (The Prostate Cancer Initiative funding, however, should not be in danger, because those funds come from the CDC with no NJ state funds involved.)

- **Leadership Council: Stanley H. Weiss, MD & David Landry**

- **Transportation: Dr. Weiss**

The Transportation Committee has been very active, and the Transportation Resource Guide that it has developed has now been translated by CINJ into Spanish, Portuguese, and Creole. It is available on our web site in all of these languages, in both color and black & white versions, so that anyone in the world can download a copy in any of these languages. Furthermore, we also created and posted versions on our web site with space for a given institution (such as a hospital) that wishes to further distribute it to add its own logo. Changes and additional resources for inclusion in subsequent revisions, as needed, are welcome.

- **Development: Dr. Weiss**

In light of the threats to continued ECCC funding from the state, Dr. Weiss is deeply concerned about the inactivity of the Development Committee, and he asked that ECCC members volunteer to reconstitute this committee. In addition to raising funds for Essex County alone, he called attention to the possibility of collaborating with other counties — e.g. Morris, which was represented by Mr. Schermer — to develop resources for multi-county endeavors, especially because all counties are likely to be in the same boat in upcoming years. Mr. Schermer was supportive of this concept. No one specifically volunteered during the course of the meeting to work actively on this committee.

- **Advocacy: Dr. Weiss**

The Advocacy Subcommittee has to date existed mainly in name, since proactive work has not been a critical local need in past years. The co-chairs to date have been our two representatives on the statewide *Ad Hoc* committee, Mr. Bullock and Dr. Rosenheck. In that role, they have attended the statewide *Ad Hoc* Advocacy Committee meetings, and kept the ECCC and its leadership apprised of events. This past year, however, the statewide *Ad Hoc* Advocacy Committee urged individual county coalitions to form or reinvigorate their county committees. Indeed, the activities of the statewide committee, in collaboration with the American Cancer Society, were critical in documenting to the state government the value of the coalitions and thus in maintaining coalition funding. Within a mere day and a half after the ACS issued an appeal to its advocacy mailing list in NJ, thousands of responses in support of comprehensive cancer control reached Trenton, and by mid-day of the next day, Governor Christie changed his action and instructed the Treasury secretary to obligate release of at least some of those funds.

Mr. Bullock has asked to be relieved of his co-chairmanship of the ECCC Advocacy Subcommittee, both because he has too many other responsibilities and because as a resident of Pennsylvania, he deems it inappropriate for him to lead a local advocacy committee in New Jersey.

Furthermore, persons with state appointments, including UMDNJ faculty, are not ideal as advocacy leaders, because of potential conflicts. It is therefore critical to have other ECCC members take leadership.

The ACS has advocacy "ambassadors" in each federal Congressional district, of which there are four districts that include parts of Essex County. Each might be a collaborator on our subcommittee.

Dr. Rosenheck advised the coalition that because he is so active in advocacy on other issues for UMDNJ and New Jersey Dental School in particular, he cannot lead the coalition's local advocacy efforts, although he has spoken and will continue to speak on cancer issues. Mr. Landry made a point of introducing Sr. Maggie Lopez, who coordinates northern NJ advocacy efforts for the ACS. She related how important it is for county coalitions to have strong advocacy subcommittees and she offered to provide support to the ECCC for this purpose. Dr. Weiss pointed out that the committee needs both people who have knowledge of the issues and people who are unencumbered by restrictions on service due to government employment. Dr. Rosenheck pointed out that the two legislative committees that it is critical to work with are the Senate and Assembly Health Committees, chaired respectively by Loretta Weinberg and Herb Conaway, both of whom are approachable and are friends of our efforts. Sr. Lopez is available to train volunteers to do advocacy work, jointly with Ms. Reece. Ms. Reece plans to discuss with Dr. Rosenheck and Mr. Bullock issues related to re-formulation of this ECCC subcommittee.

### **Presentation:**

**“The Food Environment and Cancer-Promoting Diets: Nutritional Risk Between and Within Urban Neighborhoods”**  
by Sean C. Lucan MD, MPH, MS, Assistant Professor of the  
Albert Einstein College of Medicine/Montefiore Medical Center

**Action item:** Contents of this presentation will be posted on the ECCC web site. SEE details there. The presentation was well received. It factually elucidated nutritional issues with respect to health, disease prevention, and limitations in urban regions.

### **Agency Updates / ECCC Committees / Announcements (continued)**

- Mr. Schermer announced that the six-county oral cancer prevention and screening initiative is continuing this year, with provision for treatment as needed up to and including surgery and radiation, courtesy of Dr. Ephros at St. Joseph's Hospital in Paterson.
- **ECCC Education and Outreach:**  
*Tobacco Subcommittee:* Dennis Lee  
Mr. Lee continues to offer smoking cessation treatments. He will be creating a flyer to publicize their availability, but in the mean time he offered attendees his business card.
- **Update on “The NJ Prostate Cancer Initiative” in Essex County:** Deborah Johnson  
Details about recent activities were shared with the Coalition.
- Mr. Landry called attendees' attention to the new version of the ECCC's brochure, featuring in particular its revised mission statement. He thanked Ms. Greene and Ms. McCabe for their efforts in drafting this.

### **UMDNJ/UH-S.A.V.E. Community Coalition, CEED Program Coordinator— Catherine Marcial**

Ms. Marcial was unable at the last minute to attend this meeting, and was hence unavailable to offer an update on the UMDNJ/UH-S.A.V.E. program.

**“In the Pink” Community Coalition, CEED Program Coordinator—Aretha Hill-Forte**

Ms. Hill-Forte was unable to stay to offer her presentation, but she left a written report with the ECCC leadership team.

**Meeting Evaluation Form**

The usual Grins & Gripes evaluation form was included in the packets of material distributed to all attendees. Attendees were reminded to complete it, and these were collected.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 6 PM.

**Next Coalition Meeting:** The next coalition meeting will be in early March 2010; the date and location are to be announced. The ECCC Leadership Council will help further advise on topics of interest for presentation.

**Summary of Major Handouts Given Out at the Meeting:**

1. Meeting agenda.
2. (Draft) minutes of the September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2010 Coalition meeting.
3. ECCC brochure with mission statement
4. ECCC Transportation Resources Brochure (in English, Spanish, Portuguese and Creole).
5. Grins & Gripes