



April 25th Advisory Council Small Group Discussion Notes

Subgroup on Policy and Healthy Aging: Discussion focusing on local policy (resolutions, town meetings, etc)

- Discussion of finding or creating a “how-to” for getting age/dementia friendly on town meeting agendas.
 - Does Mass Municipal Association have resources?
- Asking state reps to get involved in local discussions – endorsing the age/dementia friendly concept
- Creating a sample resolution for a city or town
 - Name of town, county or region
 - Local aging demographic data
 - Statewide or national aging/dementia demographic data
 - List of options to address (livability domains, dementia friendly sector guides)
 - Data – using MHAC community profiles
 - Use resolution to display current activity/age-friendliness
 - Give sample to Advisory Council members to get involved in their own town – match up Advisory Council members with existing efforts, if applicable.
- Statewide policy
 - Repetitive education
 - Question of whether to focus on legislation and policies with direct impact on older adults. There are already organizations focused on a range of issues (services, economic security). How do we get legislators and others to see the age-friendly implications in policies that are not directly related to older adults/people with dementia, but to livable communities?
 - Waiting on AARP tool to assess policies for age-friendliness.
 - Tool could be more widely used to shift people’s thinking and attitudes towards older adults.

Subgroup on Creating Champions/Raising Awareness: Refining the age-friendly message

- Creating focus groups to discuss messaging and what words mean to them.
- Look at existing campaigns like “Humans of New York” to personify aging and help change perceptions of aging – using anecdotes.
- Bridges Together is engaging in a campaign to help change attitudes around aging.
- Communities working on age/dementia friendly should be encouraged to explore messaging as well and what it means to them.
- Use surveys to poll community about attitudes on aging.
- MHAC needs to explore its “brand” and how to effectively communicate its mission via social media.

Subgroup on Building Capacity of Communities to take the Age/Dementia Friendly Journey

- Communities report needing
 - Funding

- Ability to network with peers
 - Educational resources, tools, templates, etc.
 - Help with stakeholder outreach
- What questions do you have and what do you need to be successful in getting started (relative to the identified needs above)?
 - What roles are available?
 - What are the expectations?
 - Mission, vision statement for age friendly work?
 - How does AF/DF fit into overall town strategic plan?
 - Why AF/DF? What's the ROI?
 - Timeline? How to start?
 - Consistent messaging to focus on awareness of need-
 - Millennials
- Now, based on your knowledge as MHAC AC members, what advice and resources are available for community champions and leaders?
 - One size does not fit all – neighboring towns a “regional” approach esp on domains like transportation
 - Social media – hashtags, FB community pages
 - How to engage millennials- how does education/outreach have to be constructed to engage them? I.e. 30 minutes, online/virtual, time of day, shorten educational piece and focus more on action steps (someone mentioned many of us come from academic backgrounds and that's didactic)
 - Student groups @universities/colleges
 - YMCAs-largest child care providers
 - Faith based communities
 - BU program-looking to train in community
 - Working with New Bedford
 - Cross training sectors, mental health and aging-awareness re isolation etc.
 - Also clergy pilot-training them on mental health but also to influence policy
 - Train the trainer model to get info out into network-people want to be visited by people from their community, people they know
- Which orgs or unusual suspects are best poised to offer such support beyond MHAC, AARP and AF MA?
 - COAs
 - Village model
 - Senior Whole Health – 65+ Medicaid/Medicare, SLO(?)
 - Faith-based
 - Walk Boston and other single issue orgs- how to unite single-issue orgs doing work that affects AF/DF efforts
 - Mass in Motion
 - Career Centers
 - Employers-
 - Rotary club
 - Vet orgs
- Notes to be discussed on next workgroup conference call