

Massachusetts Advisory Council on Alzheimer's Disease and All Other Dementias

Meeting Minutes

May 7, 2024

3:00-5:00 pm

Date of meeting: Tuesday, May 7, 2024

Start time: 3:05 pm

End time: 5:00 pm

Location: Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

Members participating remotely		Vote 1*	Vote 2
1	Secretary Elizabeth Chen – Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA) (<i>chair</i>)	X	X
2	Susan Antkowiak – Alzheimer's Association - MA/NH Chapter	X	X
3	Hugo Aparicio – Boston University School of Medicine	X	X
4	Andrew Budson – VA Boston Healthcare System	-	-
5	Jatin Dave – Chief Medical Officer, MassHealth	-	-
6	Brent Forester – McLean Hospital, Mass General Brigham	X	X
7	Patricia Jehlen – Mass. Senate	-	-
8	Rhiana Kohl – Caregiver	-	X
9	Barbara Meehan – Alzheimer's Advocate/Former Caregiver	X	X
10	Hector Montesino – Alzheimer's Advocate	-	X
11	Linda Pellegrini – UMass Memorial Medical Center	X	-
12	Christine Ritchie – Department of Public Health (DPH)	X	-
13	Heather Sawitsky – Fox Hill Village Homeowners Corp.	-	-
14	Thomas Stanley – Mass. House of Representatives	X	X
15	James Wessler – Alzheimer's Association	X	X
16	Vacant – Caregiver	-	-

* (X) Voted in favor; (O) Opposed; (A) Abstained from vote; (-) Absent from meeting or during vote

Proceedings

Secretary Chen called the meeting to order at 3:05 pm. She welcomed members and reminded members that the Council is subject to the Open Meeting Law, noting that all votes taken during the meeting would be conducted via roll call.

As part of her opening remarks, Secretary Chen stressed the importance of hearing from multiple people and organizations within our state's dementia care and support ecosystem. She explained that while the

Council and its workgroups have heard from those living with ADRD and their caregivers, a topic not explored in depth has been the financial barriers that negatively impact the overall health and wellbeing of people affected by dementia. She asked that Council members offer suggestions about adjacent groups the Council might hear from regarding the financial impact on individuals and families living with ADRD.

Vote 1 to approve the 2/6/2024 minutes: Members voted to approve the minutes from the Council's previous meeting on February 6, 2024. Ms. Meehan introduced the motion, which was seconded by Mr. Wessler and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

Mr. Montesino joined the meeting at 3:15 pm.

Secretary Chen welcomed a panel of current and former dementia caregivers to discuss the financial barriers they have faced as part of caregiving for family members with dementia. The caregivers – Irene Heller, Sonja Dahlberg, Kate Albrecht, and Jan Peterson – highlighted a number of topics, including the high cost of memory care facilities for people living with dementia, the costs of hiring private day-time home health aides, and the cumulative costs of traveling to visit their family members at their residences. The panelists also expressed the need for similar navigator programs like EOE's Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone (SHINE) Program, as well as additional state-funded day-programming for people living with dementia.

Secretary Chen welcomed Jennifer Maynard, Executive Director of the MassPACE Association, and Dr. Jerry Gurwitz, Professor of Primary Care Medicine at UMass Chan Medical School and UMass Memorial Medical Center, to speak about the financial barriers to dementia care and support in primary care settings. In her presentation, Ms. Maynard provided an overview of PACE (Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly), which is a national Medicare program and Medicaid state option that gives community-based care and services to people 55 or older who otherwise would need a nursing home level of care. She outlined PACE's model of care, which includes interdisciplinary teams providing program participants with comprehensive care. These services average out to a cost of approximately \$5,000 per month per participant. In his presentation, Dr. Gurwitz outlined the specific challenges primary care providers faces caring for patients with dementia. For additional details, refer to the meeting presentation on the Council's [Meeting Materials webpage](#).

At 4:30 pm, Dr. Ritchie left the meeting.

Dr. Daniel Press, Chief of Cognitive Neurology Unit of Beth Israel Deaconess and Associate Professor of Neurology at Harvard Medical School presented on new therapies for Alzheimer's treatment. In his presentation, Dr. Press emphasized that while current therapies slow progression partially and have a host of challenges to their administration, there is optimism among ADRD researchers that effective treatments are within reach. For additional details, refer to the meeting presentation on the Council's [Meeting Materials webpage](#).

Vote 2 to adjourn the meeting: Secretary Chen requested motions to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Forester introduced the motion, which was seconded by Ms. Antkowiak and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm.

Meeting Materials

1. Draft 2/6/2024 meeting minutes
2. Council meeting presentation