**Massachusetts Commission on Falls Prevention**

**MA Department of Public Health (DPH)**

**Virtual Open Meeting via Microsoft Teams Platform**

**Wednesday, May 25th, 2022, 12–1 p.m.**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Members Attending Remotely:** Bekah Thomas, Annette Peele, Joanne Moore, Helen Magliozzi, Colleen Pierro, Brian Doherty, Jennifer Kaldenberg, Ish Gupta, Melissa Jones, Almas Dossa, and Emily Shea

**Members not in attendance:** Deborah Washington

**Others Attending Remotely:** Timothy Hudd, Massachusetts Pharmacist Association Foundation, Training and Coalitions Coordinator, Department of Public Health (DPH)-Division of Violence and Injury Prevention/Injury Prevention and Control Program (DVIP/IPCP); Max Rasbold-Gabbard, Injury Prevention and Control Policy Coordinator, DPH-DVIP/IPCP; Beth Hume, Unintentional Injury Epidemiologist, DPH-DVIP/IPCP

1. **Welcome (Bekah Thomas, Division of Violence and Injury Prevention, Injury Prevention and Control Program Director, DPH, Chair)**

* Commission Chair Bekah Thomas opened the meeting at 12:03 p.m. by welcoming members and conducting introductions. Following introductions, Max Rasbold-Gabbard reviewed the agenda and reminded members of the statutory guidance of the Commission’s next biennial legislative report. The February 25, 2022 work group minutes and the March 24, 2022 full commission minutes were disseminated to members for review prior to the meeting and were both unanimously approved

1. **Overview of the timeline, process and work conducted (Max Rasbold-Gabbard/All)**

* Max reviewed the progress and timeline of the legislative report. The report is due to the Executive Office of Health and Human Services on September 22, 2022. He explained that over the next few weeks, a draft report would be shared with members of the Commission for review and feedback. After incorporating additional feedback, Max explained that a final draft of the report approved by the Department of Public Health, would be sent out by July/August. Max asked members if they had any questions on the timeline of the report. Hearing none, the Commission moved to the discussion portion of the meeting.

1. **Review and discussion of the second draft report (Max Rasbold-Gabbard/All)**

* Before opening the floor for discussion, Max reviewed the revised report and noted citations and text to support disparities in the data were added. Modifications to the recommendations included the following:
  + Recommendation 1: To support the need for additional funding, the new draft adds detail about local health departments increasing regional and local collaboration to improve the built environment.
  + Recommendation 2: The new draft expands on the role of occupational therapists in assessing fall risk and home safety.
  + Recommendation 3: The new draft clarifies DPH’s role in collaborating with stakeholders to improve the quality of ICD-10 codes for activity related to and location of falls.
* Joanne suggested having the recommendations highlighted in a callout box. Max told the Commission that though the draft report format and final report format will differ, the callout boxes will be incorporated in the final product.
* When asked about the occupational/physical therapist (OT/PT) section of the report, Melissa said she was pleased with the revisions. Max noted that the literature Jen shared in previous weeks was useful. Through research, Max connected with staff at the National Council on Aging and CDC. These contacts helped provide a better understanding of the literature and identify ways to adapt the recommendation to use OT/PT expertise sustainably.
* Referencing the pilot home modification program, Joanne suggested discussing a comparable program to the report. Max noted that the design of the program would be outlined later in the summer and would provide topics areas on what the program would do. The members agreed that identifying the content was more important than solidifying the name.
* After hearing comments from members, Bekah acknowledged that the field of falls prevention is large, and though this report has limitations, they can be explored and addressed in the FY24 report and opened the floor for additional comments and concerns. Hearing none, Bekah told the Commission the next planning meeting for the FY24 report would take place in September 2022. She asked members of the Commission after changes had been made, if they would accept this draft as the final draft. The members voted yes.
* Max mentioned there would be some discussion around the process of the timeline for approval and review process but that the report is in good shape. Bekah shared that once the report is submitted to the DPH approval process, there may be a need for additional reviews from members and their organizations.

1. **Closing Remarks (Bekah Thomas)**

* Bekah and Max thanked the members for their participation in reviewing the report and informed members that Alexandria would be in contact to schedule a meeting for August. Prior to this meeting, members would receive a clean copy of the report for additional review and feedback. All members were reminded of the Open Meeting Law requirements and that if there are any questions or concerns to please directly respond via e-mail to Max Rasbold-Gabbard at [max.rasbold-gabbard@mass.gov](mailto:max.rasbold-gabbard@mass.gov) or Alexandria Papadimoulis at [alexandria.papdimoulis@mass.gov](mailto:alexandria.papdimoulis@mass.gov).

*Meeting concluded at 12:40 P.M.*