

**Contra Costa County Advisory Council on Aging
Elder Abuse Prevention Workgroup Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 27, 2021**

Present: Terri Tobey, Gerald Richards, Jim Donnelly, Jill Kleiner, Marty Aufhauser, Greg Wanket, Margueriette Williams and Sue Meltzer

Guests: Abraham Aviles-Scot, Senior Peer Counseling Team Lead and Spanish Coordinator

Staff: Margueriette Williams (temporarily standing in until secretary takes over)

Announcements –

Greg shared that it was his last day with ACOA. Jim suggested Elder Abuse Info Graphic.

Approval of Agenda/Minutes

- Approval of Today's Agenda – Jim suggested to add Elder Abuse Info Graphic to agenda. Terri approved agenda. Greg and Jim motioned.
- Approval of February Minutes – Everyone approved.

Presentation: Abraham Aviles-Scott, Senior Peer Counseling Team Lead and Spanish Coordinator.

Senior Peer Counseling, provides seniors with a trained volunteer counselor to provide assistance with emotional support and encouragement to those who are experiencing life changes that often accompany aging.

Senior Peer Counseling(SPC) was founded by Evelyn Freeman in Santa Monica, and was referred to as the Santa Monica Model

In the early 1980's the SPC program started at the Cambridge Center in Concord, but then lost funding. SPC approached Supervisor Mark De Saulnier, then who approached Contra Costa County Mental Health.

- Seniors typically use counseling to discover ways to deal with grief, loss, physical limitations, financial issues, mild depression, family relationships, loneliness, isolation, housing situations, anxiety, change in cognitive function, and care giving for a spouse.
- SPC became a part of Contra Costa County Mental Health in 1998.
- SPC provides seniors with trained volunteer counselors.
- SPC has two main parts of the program which include: counseling seniors and recruitment of volunteers (becoming a senior peer counselor). Training takes about 8-10 weeks long.
- Greg asked, " How long does the senior peer counselor need to commit?" Abram stated that the counselor should commit to at least 6 months to a year with 1-2 clients. Abram shared that 7 volunteers were trained last year. The volunteers are trained on various topics and also on how to report elder abuse.

- Due to Covid, all the senior centers are closed and circle of friends is on hold for now. SPC plans to launch circle of friends hopefully early winter. Before Covid, there would be one SPC volunteer at each of the senior centers except Danville. Danville uses Discovery Center instead.
- SPC hosts monthly in-service training with bag lunches due to Covid, which before Covid SPC would host a luncheon.
- 98% of the SPC volunteers are vaccinated so most are still doing home visits.
- Terri asked, "where does the funding come from?" Abraham shared that the funding comes from the county and MHSA.
- There is no longer a Chinese SPC because it was difficult to find one for east, central and west county.
- We thanked Abraham for this invaluable information. The Elder Abuse Prevention workgroup will work with Senior Peer Counseling and refer others to Senior Peer Counseling.
- Margueriette shared the final ACOA and APS Elder Abuse Awareness PowerPoint presentation. The group made suggestions and Margueriette agreed to make the suggested changes.
- Jim suggested an Elder Abuse Info Graphic be put together. Margueriette agreed to work on that.

Terri mentioned that numerous presentations are lined up in the months to come.

Set Topics for next meeting, May 25, 2021: Debra Hanschar from Ombudsman Services of Contra Costa, Alameda and Solano County will present on their program and the team will schedule presentations to facilitate throughout Contra Costa among the senior population.

Public Comment: None

Adjournment: 11:05am