

Meeting Notes

Tues., Nov. 14, 2017

4:30 p.m. – 5:45 p.m.

**Members Present:** Marian Anderson, Ali Caley, Donna Roberge, Linda O’Leary, Temple Lentz, Pat Janik, and Chuck Frayer

**Members Absent:** Marjorie Ledell and Amy Gross

**1. Welcome and Call to Order:**

Marian Anderson opened the meeting. This is National Caregivers Month.

**Approval of Agenda:** The agenda was unanimously approved by the commission.

**Approval of Oct. 17, 2017 meeting minutes:** The Oct. 17th meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

**2. Area Agency on Aging & Disabilities of Southwest Washington (AADSWA) update:** No report.

**3. Public Health Advisory Committee Update:** No report.

**4. Presentation- Complementary Alternative Medicine:** Dr. Jaymie Mackler, naturopathic physician and licensed acupuncturist, will speak about how complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) approaches can help with common concerns of the aging population, such as lower back pain, arthritis, menopause, andropause, memory decline and digestive ailments.

**What is complementary and alternative medicine (CAM)?**

“A group of diverse medical and healthcare systems, practices, and products that are not presently considered to be part of conventional medicine” NCCAM (National Center for Complementary and Alternative medicine) in 2004.

In the 2007 National Health Interview Survey (NHIS), approximately 38 percent of adults reported using complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) in the previous 12 months.

- 83 million adults spent \$33.9 billion out-of-pocket on CAM
- CAM costs are 11.2% of total out-of-pocket expenditures on health care

Conventional Medicine is: medical doctors, mainstream medicine, pharmaceuticals, surgery

Complementary Medicine is: if a **non-mainstream practice** is used **together** with conventional medicine.

Alternative Medicine: If a **non-mainstream practice** is used **in place of** conventional medicine.

Integrative medicine: Bringing conventional and complementary approaches together in a coordinated way.

Ten most common complementary health approaches among adults in 2012, listed in order of popularity:

Natural products, deep breathing, yoga, tai chi or Qi Gong, chiropractic or osteopathic manipulation, massage, special diets, homeopathy, progressive relaxation, guided imagery

**What are common CAM practices:**

- Biologically based approaches: diets, herbs, vitamins
- Energy therapies: Reiki, magnets, Qigong
- Alternative Medical Systems: homeopathy, naturopathy, Ayurveda
- Mind-body interventions: yoga, spirituality, relaxation
- Manipulative and body-based therapies: massage, chiropractic, osteopathy

Many patients stop using conventional medicine and only use one CAM practice. This can be detrimental. When looking at CAM therapies, it's important to go to a practitioner who can evaluate the best approach for each patient. The medical evaluation by a trained medical practitioner is critical. It is not as simple as just substituting one medical approach or practice with another.

Over 53% of people aged 50 and over use CAM (AARP).

Nearly 88% of older Americans were reported to be using CAM (Health and Retirement Study, 2005).

**Benefits of CAM:**

- Pain Relief
- More effective
- Improves quality of life
- Less side effects / Safer
- Natural
- Consistent with beliefs/ philosophical orientation
- Slowing effects of dementia: Acupuncture, ginkgo, omega 3 fatty acids, B12 folic acid, estrogen, gut-brain relationship
- GERD (gastro-esophageal reflux disease) treatment:
  - Diet
  - Lifestyle: deep breathing before eating. Stop eating 2-3 hours before bed
  - To heal tissue: DGL and demulcent herbs, glutamine
  - To aid digestion: bitter herbs, digestive enzymes, betaine HCl
  - Identify other causes: hernia, sphincter changes, food allergies, SIBO

With less pain, more mobility, and less side effects, people will be able to stay in their homes longer.

**Types of CAM providers:**

**Licensed practitioners**

- Naturopathic Physicians
- Licensed Acupuncturists
- Chiropractors
- Massage therapists
- Osteopathic physicians

**Other CAM Providers:**

- Life coaches
- Hypnotherapists
- Herbalists
- Lay homeopaths
- And many more.....

**What is a Naturopathic Physicians (ND)?**

- Graduates of 4 year medical programs, post undergraduate degree
- Pass national board exams
- Can be Primary Care providers in WA or complementary care
- Study nutrition and supplements in depth as well as pharmacological interactions
- Licensed and boarded
- [www.aanp.org](http://www.aanp.org)

Many insurance plans cover this, but Medicare does not cover naturopathic care. Many patients over the age of 65 have to pay out of pocket for naturopathic care.

**What is an Acupuncturist (EAMP, MSOM, Mac or Lac)?**

- EAMP – In WA their license is called EAMP (East Asian Medicine Practitioner) some still use title L.Ac. For licensed acupuncturist
- NCCAOM – National Certification
- Many have master’s level degrees or higher
- Modalities used: Acupuncture, Chinese herbal remedies, Tui Na or Shiatsu (types of massage / body work), Chinese dietetics (nutritional consultation)

Many insurance plans cover this, but some only for pain codes.

**What can you do to stay healthy?**

**Diet is Key:** Get more than 5 servings of fruits and vegetables per day!

- The mainstay for any holistic health philosophy is healthy food.
- This is something all people should be able to access whether or not they go to a doctor.
- Polyphenols bioactive compounds in different color fruits and veggies.
- Decrease risk of cardio vascular disease, stroke and cancer.
- Natural, little to no side effects, tailored to individual tastes.
- Naturopathic physicians or nutritionists can help tailor this based on patient’s health history.

**Keep Moving:**

- Improves immune function
- Improves Cardiac and respiratory function
- Protects against bone loss and increases bone density
- Improves GI function

**Questions from the COA members with speaker’s responses:**

**Are you aware of any Clark County resources that seniors can access?** There is an acupuncture clinic in downtown Vancouver that treats several patients in one room at a lower cost. There is an acupuncturist in my practice who offers a similar practice once a week.

**Generally speaking, should acupuncture be painful?** There may be tingling or aching, but it should typically not feel like a sharp needle causing pain. We use very thin gauged disposable needles.

**What is the success rate in acupuncture helping to stop smoking?** I don't have the stats on this. But six weeks of acupuncture plus other treatments can increase the success rate for smoking cessation.

**How to answer the question when massage therapists ask what you want?** There are many different types of massage, such as relaxation, deep tissue massage. It depends on what the patient is going in for and what their health background is.

**Does insurance cover CAM?** Most insurance does cover CAM, but Medicare does not. Naturopathic physicians in the state of WA can be primary care physicians. But different insurance providers have different programs and different levels of coverage.

**Which insurance companies have better CAM policies?** Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Cigna, Moda, Lifewise, Kaiser all have some CAM coverage or require a referral program to a CAM practitioner.

**What is an osteopath doctor?** Osteopath doctors (DO) traditionally did manipulative therapies similar to what chiropractors do today. Osteopath doctors are considered more mainstream today and are treated just like MDs.

**What is andropause?** It's like menopause, but for men. It's the decreasing of the testosterone hormone for men. It can be treated with diet, exercise, acupuncture and testosterone therapy.

**Do you ever use acupuncture on pets?** I do not because I am not licensed to do that. Some veterinarians are licensed to use acupuncture on animals.

#### **Questions/Comments from the audience with speaker's responses:**

**Sheba is an organization that helps people with the Medicare journey. Alternative treatments do improve quality of life. Is there anything happening in the state of Washington to help seniors have better access to CAM?** That is a great question and I do not have the answer to that right now. But if you give me your contact info, I will look into it.

#### **What are the licensing requirements each year for naturopathic doctors and acupuncturists?**

Naturopathic licenses are state licenses and require 24 hours per year and suicide prevention credit. Acupuncture licenses don't have state level continuing education requirements, but there are national requirements.

**Can you speak about CAM treatment for treatment?** There is some research about the effect of viruses, bacteria, environmental molds that can cause dementia. By decreasing the load of these organisms or detoxing the body can have a positive effect on memory. There are some CAM practitioners that test for this and treat this.

**How much time do you usually spend with each patient? A lot of older patients don't spend enough time with each doctor per visit?** I spend 1-1.5 hours with each patient. There are intricacies of each patient's life and it takes time, working with them to find out what will be most beneficial and doable for them.

#### **5. New Business:**

This is National Caregivers Month.

Christina Marneris from AAADSWA gave a brief overview of the new Medicaid Transformation Project in the state of WA and introduced a new program for caregivers called Medicaid Alternative

Care (respite care, education about resources, access to supplies and equipment). AADSWA also recently updated the resources section on their website.

6. **COA's 2017 Annual Report:** COA members went through the findings and recommendations in its draft annual report. The findings and recommendations are based on the different speaker topics that have been covered throughout the year. Donna made a motion to approve the findings and recommendations. The motion was seconded by Pat. COA members voted unanimously to approve the findings and recommendations.

7. **Public Comment:**

- SHIBA is available to help people navigate the Medicare system. This service is free. We have an office where people can come by or call us and speak with an advisor, who is a retired professional who is volunteering. We are always looking for volunteers who are willing to be trained to help others.
- I was at the Healthy Living Collaborative meeting today. I encourage you to submit the COA's annual report to this group as they can help advocate on behalf of your recommendations.
- I am a representative of the Marshall and Firstenberg Community Centers. I would like to echo Dr. Mackler's recommendation to stay active. Our Community Center offers lots of opportunities to help senior people stay active and exercise and keep social.
- We have the Veterans Assistance Fund. They are open M-F, 9-5. It is an option to help veterans navigate the VA system. We help homeless and low income veterans with a broad range of items and services, such as clothing, interview practice, etc. A small portion of property tax helps fund the Veterans Assistance Fund.

Meeting adjourned at 5:45 pm

***The Clark County Commission on Aging provides leadership and creates community engagement in addressing the needs and opportunities of aging.***