

## **LWVBC Health Care Team Meeting Summaries – August 2017 – February 2018**

**February 27, 2018** – Seven of us met at Nancy’s home. Mary Anna had previously alerted the group that she was stepping down as team leader. Group members affirmed their continuing interest in the many pressing topics related to health care, but no one is able to assume team leadership. Mary Anna shared the document “Issue Team Criteria and Guidelines for Decision-Making and Leadership,” from the team leader retreat in December, as well as information from January program planning. We all concurred that our preference for gathering on weekday mornings is not conducive for new members who are still working. In past years we’ve had specific assignments from LWVCO and have pursued them diligently. No such assignments exist just now, and emphasis is on Making Democracy Work for All.

For now, we will continue informally as a leaderless group, educating ourselves on selected issues. The term “dormant” might be applied to our group as a sanctioned “team.” However, we are not dormant. A next gathering will be March 27 at Mary Anna’s home to view the film “Fix It: Healthcare at the Tipping Point.” (Another showing of “Big Pharma” will occur March 22 at Lafayette library as well.) Geneva expressed interest in learning more about the opioid crisis and willingness to lead a discussion sometime in the coming months. The question of how someone finds help when needed also arose as a topic to pursue, that is, “navigation.”

We will continue to alert each other to information sources and to communicate individually with elected representatives on relevant issues. We will also be willing to help respond to LWV alerts in drafting formal LWVBC responses on current health-related issues, if called upon. Signing off for now, MAD (but not angry).

**November 28, 2017** – Eight of us met at Gwen’s home for discussion and planning. Mary Anna told about attending the Social Policy team’s programs on hunger, a topic that certainly also relates to health. Details for the December 4 showing of “Big Pharma, A Market Failure” were being firmed up, with much help from Nancy, and some members were hoping to bring other guests. We noted advocacy efforts underway regarding the tax legislation pending in the U.S. Senate and touched on future topics for focus, such as the opioid crisis. We exchanged reading recommendations, some of which, admittedly, are depressing! With only the documentary showing in December, our next meeting will be January 23 (subsequently cancelled).

**October 24, 2017** – Seven of us met at Mary Anna’s home to view the documentary “Big Pharma.” Virginia Gebhart, an active volunteer with the Colorado Foundation for Universal Health Care, brought the DVD and offered opening and concluding remarks. Afterward, discussion centered on finding additional groups and venues for showing the film, with the objective of fueling grassroots pressure to change the serious imbalance in drug pricing—a “market failure,” as explained in the film. Several of us are pursuing opportunities for future viewings. Our next meeting will be November 28, 10:00-11:30 at a member’s home.

**August 22, 2017** – Four of us met at Mary Anna’s home to review local and national developments and to consider our individual and collective actions in the coming months. We shared many concerns and reinforced the importance of staying vigilant and active with letters, postcards and phone calls. Much is in flux, but an immediate concern is the political threat to undermine the Affordable Care Act, rather than concentrate on improving it. Thus, a current priority is to advocate for continuing federal funding for ACA support, reinforcing the importance of behavioral health services. National attention to the opioid epidemic may help with the focus, and that topic is one to investigate and possibly offer education and advocacy. As time goes on, we may be able to offer educational programs about whatever the new US/Colorado health care plan situation is. Thinking ahead possibly to spring programming, we viewed the Let’s Talk Colorado Powerpoint presentation, an item offered in the anti-stigma campaign’s Tool Kit. All agreed it is well done. For a public or League program, we could offer supplementary information and perhaps include an expert speaker—all for future consideration. In the shorter term, we’ll pursue an informative opportunity for the team, perhaps a film or visiting expert, to bring us all together. Barring the need for an emergency meeting, our next regularly scheduled meeting will be October 24, 10:00-11:30.