

Date: September 27th, 2023

Time: 10 am - 11:30 am

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82400093280>

Attendance

- Jennifer Claro, *Director of Council on Aging*
- Sue Thomas, *Sustainability Coordinator*
- Alison Christopher, *LICSW for Westford*
- Nicole Laviolette, *Community Wellness Coordinator at Town of Westford*
- Jessica Boulanger, *Transportation Mobility Specialist at NMCOG*
- Don Galya, *Resident with the Health Westford Committee & Safety Committee*
- Rae Dick, *Health Director at Westford Health Department*
- Brittany Nash, *Regional Community Health & Wellness Coordinator at Westford Health Department*
- Joe Mando, *Quality Improvement Consultant at BME Strategies*
- Karen Contador, *Associate Principal at BME Strategies*
- Ariel Slifka, *Public Health Consultant at BME Strategies*
- Siobhan LaFreniere, *Student Intern at Westford Health Department*

Agenda

I. Welcome & Introductions

- A. Rae welcomed and thanked everyone for participating today.
- B. BME gave an overview of today's agenda, the group agreements, and what to expect from this process (see slides).
- C. Participants took turns introducing themselves (see attendance above) and sharing their thoughts on Westford's greatest asset for residents. Ideas included:
 - Community organizations and their commitment to improving community and population health
 - The health department
 - The staff across all the organizations and efforts to gain resident input
 - The school system

II. Mentimeter Word Cloud Poll

A. Participants joined the mentimeter word cloud from their computers or phones and provided 1 to 2 word answers to the following questions:

What comes to mind with the idea of “community health”?

31 responses



What is going well in terms of community health in Westford?

26 responses



useful for everyone here. We base our programming not only on datasets, but what residents want. We reached out to almost 40 partners. The City of Lowell is also undergoing this process.

Comment 1: You'll get more reliable data that way working with stakeholders.

Brittany: If you have any data sets available that we are not aware of, please bring it forward, either Westford-specific or not.

Jennifer: What is the most recent survey you have done?

Rae: Last CHA was done before COVID-19. It was conducted by a group of students. One of the priorities was tick-borne illness. Had about 115 responses. The Health Department generally puts one out every 3-5 years. It helps a lot with our grant writing and we hope it will help you, too.

Question: Is there any environmental health data?

Sue: There is some data about increase in allergens in the region and increasing asthma rates, but nothing very specific about climate change Westford. Trying to get buy-in from the community and educating them about the impacts of their decisions and climate change. Need to be clearer on the linkages between climate change and its local impact in the community.

Nicole: Looking at the qualitative and quantitative piece. Gathering data from people who are not here. I wonder if it would be helpful to send communications to different entities in the school departments, faith based organizations, and the housing authority. We can then branch that into qualitative and quantitative data. I can do that if people would find it helpful, I can do this based on the three topics you have there.

Group agreed.

Rae: Any data sets that people are willing to share would be great. Dr. Chew did reach out from the school saying they could attend future meetings but not this first one. It can be hard to get coverage.

Question: Are there any identifiable ways for knowing who is getting access to the food? Can you identify if there are a lot of families who are food insecure?

Answer: Yes. Lots of people who receive this support tend to be older.

Brittany: It would be helpful to send the sample questions that informed the priorities.

Jessica: We did a survey in the last year about transportation services and I can filter that for the town if that'd be helpful.

Group agreed.

Rae: Any data on seniors?

Jennifer: Yes, finishing the strategic planning process and will share once we have it.

Sue: Does the Town have a way to reach out to young-professionals/single people?

Rae: In the background we've been working on this for almost a year. We wanted to survey different parts of the community, including the businesses. Our original plan was to survey the community again, but the funding wasn't approved by the Town.

Comment: Surveying the schools I think would give us information about younger families.

Comment: A billboard could be useful for this.

Rae: Maybe we can use the Westford Neighbor and include a QR code to answer more questions?

Jessica: I am a resident and I do not have children, so the school survey wouldn't reach me, but I do read the Westford Neighbor. Nextdoor.com is another resource.

Comment: Challenge reaching out to the 21 - 34 year old demographic, those who are not on Facebook, they oftentimes have no idea what's going on in Town.

Shivon: I am 25, I don't know how easy it would be to create a Westford Health Department Instagram, but my friend groups use that.

Question: Do you have a list of questions to reach out to these populations?

Rae: My hope is that the groups can come up with the questions so everyone can get value out of this.

Brittany: Once we ask them there is no going back. Need to be very specific on what we want to find out.

Rae: We can also use the Academic Public Health Corps.

Comment: We need a blurb about who we are trying to reach.

Ariel: Sounds like the general consensus is to start by planning on putting together a few questions for Nicole to send out to the stakeholder list and then maybe create a QR code in the Westford Neighbor. At the next meeting, we'll be taking a look at the survey data of Westford residents which can provide a basis for areas we want to focus on.

IV. Next Steps & Future Planning

A. The partnership will continue meeting on the last Wednesday of the month from at 10 am (aiming towards 1.5 hours) in a hybrid format with options to join via zoom or in-person at the Westford Town Hall Second Floor meeting room.

- October 25th: Identifying Community Priorities

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- November 29th (the Wednesday after Thanksgiving): Reviewing Westford-Specific Data
 - January 24th: Adapting Westford-Specific CHIP

B. Any concerns about this cadence?

- *Group did not express concerns*

V. Reflection Question Discussion or [Google Form Link](#)

A. What went well today?

- Positive conversation

B. What could have gone better today?

- N/A

C. How did everyone feel about using the Mentimeter Word Cloud tools?

- Group was agreeable.
- Appreciated learning what others thought about the questions .

D. Are there any remaining questions?

- *None presented*