

## Summary of WMM4A Monthly Meeting – January 10, 2018

About 25 people attended the meeting, with several others RSVP'ing they were "under the weather." 'Tis the season. . .

### LOCAL UPDATES:

The new Pioneer Valley chapter of Democratic Socialists of America (PVDSA) held a very successful event on Jan. 6<sup>th</sup> with a **presentation by Tim Faust** on the national movement for Medicare for All. About 60 people came out for this event on a frigid afternoon! Nancy T of WMM4A presented information about the campaign in Mass. and both she and Faust responded to questions after Tim's lecture.

The **PVDSA Healthcare Working Group** will be meeting at 4:00 p.m. on Jan. 20<sup>th</sup> in Easthampton to discuss their action agenda, possibly forming a hub for organizing in Holyoke. Contact: Chris Martin - [craymartin90@gmail.com](mailto:craymartin90@gmail.com)

The **Easthampton Hub plans a showing of Fix-It** on Saturday, Jan. 13<sup>th</sup> at Eastworks, with Q&A afterwards with Deborah. UPDATE: Great turnout of more than 50 people on Saturday and a lively Q&A. The event was recorded by Easthampton Media; a link will be available shortly. Contact for Easthampton hub: Sara Weinberger - [spw128@comcast.net](mailto:spw128@comcast.net)

Activists in Springfield have begun meeting to discuss **organizing for Medicare for All in Hampden County**. Initial plans include a meeting with Sen. Eldridge and a larger educational event in the spring.

WMM4A is a co-sponsor of the **Women's March in Northampton on Saturday, January 20<sup>th</sup>**. Join us at 10:45 a.m. at Sheldon Field for the 11:00 march and rally at City Hall. WMM4A will also have a table at the Activist Fair, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. at the Unitarian Church. Here's the Facebook link for the event - [www.facebook.com/events/200256233873115/](https://www.facebook.com/events/200256233873115/) and here's the link if you would like to volunteer - <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeYh9ocfDhRCU8zQyA8BzWC4nzz7GwMMvZhtTeo1YB1mTZmKA/viewform>

"Can we really do it in one state?" "How much will it cost?" "What happened in Vermont?" WMM4A will host a **"Conversation with Jerry" on Thursday, Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup>**. This will be a chance for WMM4A folks to ask Prof. Jerry Friedman, our local national expert on Medicare for All, anything you want to know about the economics of single payer! The purpose of this event is to help folks feel more confident to talk with friends and the general public about Medicare for All, respond to frequently-asked questions, and so forth. Location TBD. Info: Deborah – [levendeb2@gmail.com](mailto:levendeb2@gmail.com)

WMM4A is also organizing an event with Jerry in early February for hub leaders and members of the delegation that have been meeting with Rep. Kocot. They will be digging deeper into some details of the legislation, the benchmark study, etc.

Discussed the possibility of hubs coordinating **non-binding ballot questions about Medicare for All** in their districts for the 2018 ballot. The statewide Single Payer Strategy Forum is encouraging local groups to run these questions to increase visibility and public education, and to bring this issue to the doorstep of our state elected officials. For a state rep district, only 200 signatures are needed to get it on the ballot; a senatorial district requires 1200. Hub leaders interested in discussing this further, please contact Deborah – [levendeb2@gmail.com](mailto:levendeb2@gmail.com)

## **STATEWIDE:**

**Safe Staffing Ballot Initiative** – Continued the discussion started at last month's meeting concerning the Mass. Nurses' Association request for WMM4A to endorse their statewide ballot initiative to set safe hospital nurse-to-patient staffing ratios by law. Last month, a member of the American Nurses Association asked to present information about the ANA's alternative approach, for staffing levels to be set by a hospital committee comprised mostly of staff nurses. At the last meeting, the question was also raised about whether the issue of hospital staffing was relevant for WMM4A to consider at all.

WMM4A's steering committee proposed a two-part discussion, which the group approved. First Jon W explained why he and Deborah, as WMM4A's co-conveners, had accepted the MNA's request to present and why we thought it was relevant for the group to consider. Jon also gave some background about the MNA and ANA. The group had a thoughtful discussion about the connection between quality of care issues, like safe staffing, and Medicare for All. People shared different perspectives and eventually reached consensus to consider the resolution. The ANA nurse, unfortunately, was sick and unable to attend, but did send a handout which we duplicated and gave to everyone. The MNA representative then gave a brief presentation and also passed around some literature. After further discussion, the group reached a consensus for WMM4A to endorse the MNA's ballot initiative.

**Single Payer Strategy Forum (SPSF) report** – SPSF met again on Jan. 6<sup>th</sup> to develop a multi-year plan for winning Medicare for All in Mass. by building a strong grassroots movement. The ongoing work of WMM4A with active hubs in different towns and counties is one model for the kind of organizing SPSF would like to see happening across the state. SPSF plans to convene a Leadership Summit of representatives from major organizations to discuss a three-year strategy. The plan also calls for a large statewide convention and regional conferences with a focus on training, especially training in organizing skills. SPSF will also be encouraging local groups to run non-binding ballot questions, and will monitor and participate in legislative developments, such as revising the Medicare for All legislation before it is submitted in 2019.

**Statehouse news** – The legislature is just getting back to work after the holiday break, so we had no updates this month. The House will likely be discussing their version of a health care cost-containment bill soon, along with an amendment to study the cost of single payer – similar to the amendment attached to the Senate's version of the bill.

**NEXT WMM4A MEETING – Wednesday, Feb. 7<sup>th</sup>**