

## Summary - WMM4A Monthly Meeting, May 9, 2018

**A Special Note:** One year ago on May 10, 2017 about a dozen people met in the MNA conference room on King Street to launch a regional activist network to achieve Medicare for All in Mass. and the nation. **One year later, we are going strong!** About 30 people regularly attend WMM4A monthly meetings, including representatives from half a dozen local “hubs” and new hubs in formation. This past year we’ve hosted numerous educational events including panels, Q&As, and movie showings, passed resolutions in support of Single Payer at town meetings and at Northampton City Council, lobbied our legislators, and are now well on our way to getting an advisory question on the ballot in six different legislative districts! We’ve come a long way in just one year!

### Local updates and upcoming events:

**Tuesday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 7:00 p.m. – “Prospects for Single Payer Health Care”** - a conversation with Rep. John Scibak and Deborah Levenson, WMM4A co-convenor. Hosted by the Odyssey Bookshop, 9 College Street, South Hadley. Contact Jon: [jon@gogtt.net](mailto:jon@gogtt.net)

**Saturday, May 26<sup>th</sup>, 1:00-4:00 p.m. – Community Forum about Single Payer Healthcare**, with a focus on the Greater Springfield area. Co-hosted by WMM4A, Springfield LWV, and Jobs with Justice, the program includes a panel with Sen. Eldridge, Jerry Friedman, Shanique Spalding, and other community members discussing problems and inequities of the current healthcare system and how Medicare for All can help. Location: Rebecca M. Johnson school, 55 Catherine St., Springfield. Contact: Deborah or Jon – [info@wmMedicareforall.org](mailto:info@wmMedicareforall.org)

Beth Eisenberg and George Coling are in the process of organizing a **new Hilltown Hub**. For more info or to get involved, contact Beth - [jubilada@icloud.com](mailto:jubilada@icloud.com) or George - [george.coling@gmail.com](mailto:george.coling@gmail.com)

### State and National Updates and Events:

**Sunday May 20<sup>th</sup> - New England Medicare for All event in Manchester, NH** – Part of a major new organizing effort by National Nurses United in seven key areas across the nation to advance Medicare for All by 2020. Location for the NH event is 669 Union Street in Manchester, NH. For carpooling from western Mass. contact Claire: [chuttlinger@comcast.net](mailto:chuttlinger@comcast.net)

Barbara Pearson will attend the **Health Care Caucus at the national League of Women Voters meeting** in Chicago at the end of June. She and others will advocate for the League to make Medicare for All a priority issue. The caucus is selling Medicare for All T-shirts as a fundraiser. Contact Barbara: [bzpearson@gmail.com](mailto:bzpearson@gmail.com)

**Legislative update:** May 16th is the last date for Medicare for All (and other) bills to be reported out of the Health Care Financing Committee. It is expected that the bills will not proceed any further this legislative session. Meanwhile, the House may finish drafting a health

care cost containment bill and if so, it is likely that Rep. Jennifer Benson will add her Benchmark Bill as an amendment – similar to what happened in the Senate last fall. Rep. Jeffrey Roy of Franklin, Mass. is now the co-chair of the HCF committee, replacing Peter Kocot.

**Recommended email subscriptions:** Following up on a suggestion to share info about good sources of news and information about Medicare for All, here are some sign-up links:

“Quote of the Day” – articles with comment by Don McCanne, M.D. who helped found Physicians for a National Health Program: <https://pairlist2.pair.net/mailman/listinfo/quote-of-the-day?q=qotd>

News and action updates from Healthcare Now! - a major national Single Payer organization, headquartered in Boston: <https://www.healthcare-now.org/sign-up/>

And for excellent news round-ups in general about healthcare issues, consider subscribing to Kaiser Health News: <https://khn.org/email-signup/>

### **Discussion about Ballot Questions**

Hubs reported good progress collecting signatures in Franklin County, Northampton, Amherst, Easthampton and Holyoke. Looks like we are well on our way to having our Single Payer question on the ballot in six western Mass. legislative districts in November! We expect the question to be on the ballot in several districts in the eastern part of the state, too, where Mass-Care is coordinating the effort.

We also had a brief discussion about next steps -- raising awareness and support among voters to pass the question in November. This will be a major agenda item at our next monthly meeting on June 13<sup>th</sup>. The Steering Committee will bring some ideas to help guide that discussion about a public education campaign.

**Next Meeting: Wed. June 13 at 6:00 p.m.**