

SUMMARY OF WMM4A MONTHLY MEETING – SEPT. 12, 2018

NOTE: Just confirmed that our Single Payer non-binding ballot question will appear as Question #4 on the ballot in all six districts (with the exception of the town of Northfield, #5).

UPCOMING EVENTS (includes some added after 9.12.18):

Weekends, ongoing – Canvass for Medicare for All and Question 1 (Safe Patient Limits) in Holyoke. Contact Chris Martin for details: craymartin90@gmail.com

Monday, Sept. 24th - “Medicare for All: A Forum for Health Care Professionals” at the Bangs Center, 70 Boltwood Walk, Amherst, 7:00-9:00 p.m. Launch event for Health Care Professionals for Single Payer, a new group affiliated with WMM4A. Contact Melanie Lewis: melaniewlewis@gmail.com

Wednesday, Sept. 26th – Film showing of “Escape Fire: The Fight to Rescue American Health Care” and Q&A with Jon Weissman, Deborah Levenson, and Dr. Jeff Korff. Hosted by Resistance Films at Forbes Library, 20 West Street, Northampton, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Oct. 3rd - Meeting of new group in South Hadley/Granby to promote the Single Payer ballot question and advance M4A. Meet in the boardroom of South Hadley Public Library, 2 Canal Street, 6:00 p.m. Contact Stephanie Strand: strandfamily01075sh@gmail.com.

Wednesday, Oct. 3rd – Mass. Medical Society conference and live webinar on “Universal Health Care,” 8:45 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Information at Massmed.org. Contact Chris Flory: christ_flory@yahoo.com

Wednesday, Oct. 10th – Next Monthly Meeting of WMM4A, 20 Hampton Ave., 6:30 -8:00 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 13th - “Fix It” showing and conversation with Prof. Gerald Friedman at Easthampton Senior Center, 19 Union Street, 3:00 -5:00 p.m. Contact Sara Weinberger: spw128@comcast.net.

Monday, Oct. 22nd - “Fix It” showing and conversation with Dr. Chris Flory, Dr. Peter Siersma, and Beth Eisenberg. Chesterfield Grange / Council on Aging Building, 400 Main Road, Chesterfield, 7:00 p.m. Contact Larry Cervelli: ridgetoprabler@outlook.com

Discussion about “Phase One” of our election outreach campaign:

In the months leading up to the Sept. 4th primary vote, WMM4A was active in promoting Single Payer as a top issue in the election. Some of the actions we took:

- Visibility teams at many candidate forums - distributed literature, talked with people attending, submitted questions about Single Payer. Canvassing began in Holyoke.
- Many individual and group contacts with candidates to advocate for Single Payer
- Holyoke hub met with Aaron Vega, incumbent representative who ran in an uncontested race.
- Conducted Candidates Single Payer Survey. Almost all of the candidates in Hampshire and Franklin Counties responded along with a few from Berkshire and Hampden counties. Attracted good media coverage and more than 1,200 visits to our website page where the survey results were posted.
- Provided resources for candidates to increase their knowledge about and advocacy for SP.
- Two WMM4A outreach training sessions were attended by more than forty people, including some candidates for office

Who did we reach and what was the impact in general of Single Payer activism on the primary?

- Overall higher turnout in this election with many competitive races, so probably reaching new voters.
- We talked to a lot of people who liked the idea of SP, but didn't know much about it. Our outreach helped to make the issue more concrete and "real."
- Media coverage of the candidates and the forums almost always included mention of Single Payer and sometimes focused on SP as a priority issue. WMM4A was mentioned in several articles.
- Traffic on our website increased, with a particularly strong response to blog postings and the survey results.
- After the general election on Nov. 6, we expect the Western Mass. legislative delegation to be stronger on SP than it was before. Almost all of the successful candidates in Franklin and Hampshire counties agreed to help initiate and participate in a SP Legislative Caucus when elected.
- A few lessons learned: the ground is fertile for the work we are doing; a lot of people are not at home on Saturdays; a helpful opening line: "How do you feel about your health insurance?"

Discussion of "Phase Two" – promoting the Single Payer Ballot Question on Nov. 6th ballot

Purpose of running the ballot question:

1. Continue building and strengthening the movement for Medicare for All in Massachusetts: engage more people in this conversation; interest more people in the issue and becoming involved with it; build WMM4A and our hubs; continue educating the public, legislators, and the media about Single Payer; continue our own learning about how to be effective advocates and organizers.

2. Win the ballot questions: demonstrate strength of support for Single Payer in these districts; help support allies among legislators to advance SP legislation; push legislators who are sitting on the fence.

Some tactics we'll be using:

- Canvassing door to door. This is already happening in Holyoke. Other hubs may consider canvassing, too. WMM4A will support with training and literature. Contact Deborah: levendeb2@gmail.com
- Outreach and literature at public events, tabling, etc.
- Lawn signs, buttons, etc. – Steering Committee will discuss budget available
- Phone banking may be available for our BQ in connection with work on the “People’s Agenda” – three binding questions on Safe Patient Limits, overturning Citizens United, and upholding Transgender Rights. Contact Jon Weissman: jon@gogtt.net
- A reminder that WMM4A has endorsed the nurses’ Ballot Question #1 – Safe Patient Limits. We encourage including information and literature about BQ1 when you do outreach.

Discussion about logo for WMM4A:

Developing a logo for WMM4A is an opportunity for us to strengthen our identity as an organization and to convey who we are through a graphic representation. We began this process by discussing what qualities and principles about WMM4A are most important. Although no formal consensus was taken, there seemed to be general agreement about these:

- Inclusion, “everybody in, nobody out”, ... for ALL
- Equity, human rights
- Good health, life, vitality, hope
- People, people together
- Unity
- Western Mass.

We also agreed that the logo should include our name – Western Mass. Medicare for All, with emphasis on Medicare for All, and that the logo should be simple/ straightforward. Several suggestions were made about possible images to include, and colors. The next step will be for the Steering Committee to work with Chris Martin on a few sketches that respond to these ideas, and then bring these back to the monthly meeting.

NEXT WMM4A MEETING: Wed. October 10th