

## SUMMARY – WMM4A GENERAL ASSEMBLY – NOV. 13, 2019

### LOCAL UPDATES:

**Easthampton Hub** – gave a progress report on the City Council resolution. **UPDATE:** The Resolution was approved by the Rules Committee and then passed unanimously by the Council on 12/18 with one abstention due to conflict of interest.

**Mass. Nurses Assn.** – Patty H reported on the Medicare for All trainings held recently in all five MNA districts across the state. Turnout was higher in eastern part of the state; publicity not strong overall. Patty co-lead three of the trainings, including some new materials geared toward labor folks that she helped develop. She said the nurses were enthusiastic and engaged, with good questions. Many questions about the financing, especially how coverage would compare with current MNA contracts.

**WM Area Labor Federation** – Several WMM4A folks have helped launch the Health Care Committee of the new ALF. (The ALF consolidates the former Labor Councils of Hampshire, Hampden, Franklin, and Berkshire Counties.) **UPDATE:** First meeting was held Dec. 12. There was strong interest in Medicare for All among those present. The committee will be working on a strategic plan at its next meeting. If you are a union member and would like to get involved with this committee, please contact Jon and Deborah: [info@wmMedicareforall.org](mailto:info@wmMedicareforall.org).

**Northampton Hub** reported a good turnout Oct. 22 for its second program at the Northampton Senior Center. They showed the 11-minute video narrated by Ed Weisbart, M.D. available on the Fix It website: [www.fixithealthcare.com](http://www.fixithealthcare.com). There were pros and cons to using this short video instead of the full Fix It movie – more time for discussion, but more questions about how Single Payer works because the short video doesn't explain it as fully.

**Springfield Hub** reported that one of its participants, Victor Davila, won his bid for the Springfield City Council in Ward 6. Jesse Lederman, also a strong SP supporter, won his bid for reelection as an at-large member of the Council. Lederman is the chair of the Health and Human Services Committee. The Council has 13 members, including 5 at-large. The Springfield Hub is considering a municipal M4A resolution in the new year.

**WMM4A tabled** at recent M4A town halls hosted by Mayor Alex Morse as part of his campaign for U.S. Rep. We tabled and talked with interested folks at town halls in N. Adams and Holyoke; FCCPR's task force tabled at the forum in Ashfield.

### STATE UPDATES:

**Pharma bills** - Discussed bills recently submitted by Gov. Baker and the Mass. Senate to address skyrocketing drug costs; responses by advocacy groups like the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization. Single Payer organizations have not yet weighed in publicly on this hot issue and perhaps we should.

**Mass. M4A Legislative Caucus** – Deborah (for WMM4A) and Jon (for Mass-Care) continue to participate on monthly calls with the leadership of the Caucus (Sens. Eldridge and Comerford,

Reps. Sabadosa and Gouveia) to discuss and coordinate advocacy efforts. Working Groups have been launched on these topics: SP / Public Health; SP / Municipal budgets; and SP / Hospital reimbursement. Deborah is working with Rep. Sabadosa's office to develop a slideshow about SP versus Public Option that will be used to educate legislators as well as the general public. **UPDATE:** We'll preview a rough draft of the slideshow at the Jan. 8<sup>th</sup> GA to get your feedback!

### **NATIONAL UPDATES:**

Briefly discussed a new bill from California Congressman Ro Khanna: "**State-Based Universal Health Care Act.**" The bill "creates a waiver that a state or group of states can apply for that would provide them with the federal funding and regulatory flexibility necessary to set up state or regional universal health care systems." Such legislation would be a huge help to Mass. and other states organizing for Single Payer legislation in our own states as a path to achieving a national system.

### **WMM4A MATTERS:**

The WMM4A Steering Committee reported back on its recent retreat. The main topic of discussion was the SC's proposal to do more work on a regional basis, rather than just hub-based. One focus would be outreach to specific constituencies, such as Faith-based groups and expanding our work with Providers. Hubs would continue to meet, especially for work that is specific to their legislative district. But hubs that have already passed a ballot question and municipal resolution in their area may not meet as often. Instead, they would encourage their members to get involved with the new constituency-based work and to support hub projects in Hampden County. The SC will continue to flesh out these ideas and present further information at a future GA.

**Next Meeting: Wed. Dec. 11. UPDATE: December GA cancelled. Next GA will be Wed. Jan. 8<sup>th</sup> in Holyoke at the Computing Center.**