

**ARTHRITIS AND RELATED DISEASES  
MINUTES – April 28, 2010**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Calaneet Balas  
Michael Breeden  
Linda Brown-Sutphin  
Allan Gelber  
Renee Hilliard  
Violeta Rus  
Judy Simon  
Violeta Rus

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Jeanne Moyer  
Joan Stine  
Barbara Cuffie

**STAFF**

Jade Leung  
Joyce Dantzler  
David Mann  
Tara Snyder

**WELCOME**

The meeting convened at 4:30.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM May 6, 2009**

The minutes were approved.

**PROGRAM UPDATE (*Jade Leung*)**

Jade discussed the \$50,000 grant from NACDD for the past two years. For the past year the funds have been used for EnhanceFitness instructor training. Two trainings are to be held in May, at Prince Georges' County Community College and at Chesapeake College.

Some YMCA instructors have received the instructor training, but they have not been able to promote the program due to competition from existing programs. The CDC is working to provide funding to local YMCAs to put EF programs in place.

“Walk With Ease” is another CDC-approved evidence-based program for grantees to potentially implement. It is a six-week program led by a trained instructor. Additionally, evidence exists to support the effectiveness of Tai Chi for arthritis, but it is not yet approved by CDC for federal funding.

**APPOINTMENTS:**

We still have several vacant slots in categories of Health Care Industry, Hospital/Health Profession outside Metro area, and patient representative. Members are encouraged to recommend candidates for these slots.

**MEMBER UPDATE**

Renee Hilliard described her work as a pharmaceutical consultant for long-term care facilities. She reviews charts and makes recommendations to physicians regarding patient medications. She brought up the topic of acetaminophen toxicity as a current concern among her client base, due to the dangers of NSAIDS and their effects on renal function. She mentioned that many seniors have difficulty sleeping and like to take Tylenol PM, not realizing that they may be taking other medications with acetaminophen and consuming dangerous levels of the drug. She suggested the possibility of doing a health fair for arthritis patients, or a ‘brown bag’ lunch idea where patients bring their medications for review by a pharmacist.

Judy Simon mentioned that senior centers of local AAOAs would probably be interested in either of those ideas. Joyce Dantzler and Jade commented that the Partnership for a Safer Maryland has an acetaminophen fact sheet that could be used at health fairs and other patient education opportunities. It was mentioned that people often think that if a medication is OTC, it is automatically 'safe.'

David Mann commented that Take Your Medication Safely week in Maryland happens in June. Renee Hilliard said she could look into existing data on overuse of acetaminophen.

**ARTHRITIS FOUNDATION UPDATE** (Calaneet Balas)

Calaneet talked about the reorganization of the AF which has taken place in the past three years. There are now five regions, and all local chapters will be incorporated into the regions. We are in the Mid-Atlantic region, which consists of DE, MD, DC, VA, NC and SC. Barbara Newhouse is our regional CEO. The leadership of each region is made up of representatives from each state. There are four officers under the CEO, and Calaneet is one of the officers for our region.

**ARTHRITIS STATE PLAN**

The group agreed that the next meeting will be a working meeting for the state plan.

**NEXT MEETING**

September, 2010

**MEETING ADJOURNED**

6:00