

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2018

# MALNUTRITION CONNECTION

Providing Malnutrition Awareness and Advocacy Information to Share

On February 13, Massachusetts held its kick-off meeting for their Malnutrition Prevention Commission. The Commission will study the impact of malnutrition on Massachusetts seniors across care settings and investigate effective strategies for reducing malnutrition. The Massachusetts Malnutrition Commission was formed following the passage and signing into law of S.2147.

“There was a lot of enthusiasm and commitment at our first meeting,” said Shirley Chao, PhD RD LDN FAND, Director of Nutrition, Executive Office of Elder Affairs. “Collectively, as a commission, we will be on the cutting-edge of policy and will study the effects of malnutrition on older adults, ways to reduce malnutrition, and look closely at the impact on health care quality indicators, costs and outcomes.”

Alice Bonner, Massachusetts’ Secretary of Executive Office of Elder Affairs, welcomed the members of the Commission and discussed the timely need for awareness and action around malnutrition in the Commonwealth. Several presentations took place throughout the day, which touched on strategies for maximizing the dissemination of proven, effective malnutrition prevention intervention models.

Robert Blancato, National Coordinator of Defeat Malnutrition Today, presented an overview of the National Blueprint: Achieving Quality Malnutrition Care for Older Adults. Older Adults Nutrition Needs and the Continuum of Care was presented by Holly Greuling, RDN, National Nutritionist at Administration on Aging. Holly’s presentation included how to identify malnutrition in older adults, an overview of OAA nutrition programs and how these programs impact food insecurity and malnutrition. Malnutrition Quality Improvement Initiative was presented by Jeanne Blankenship, MS RDN, Vice President, Policy Initiatives and Advocacy, Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Jeanne discussed the importance of malnutrition care after hospital discharge as well the difficulty in providing nutrition care because many seniors do not have a Medicare advantage plan. ASPEN’s Kris M. Mogensen, MS, RD-AP, LDN, CNSC discussed effective malnutrition initiatives, the importance of advancing the science, and also reinforced the benefit of the Commission becoming an active participant in Malnutrition Awareness Week™.

Shirley Chao discussed the Elderly Nutrition Program survey results, which indicated that community dwelling seniors remain in the community for many years and rely heavily on the meals program because they have limited food resources. She emphasized the importance of the Commission, and how they must work to find better strategies to close those gaps.

The Massachusetts Malnutrition Commission will be made up of two workgroups – data collection and public awareness. The Public Awareness workgroup is focused on two goals: (1) identify evidence-based strategies that raise public awareness of older adult malnutrition and (2) evaluate strategies used by community nutrition programs. The Data Collection workgroup will (1) consider strategies to improve data collection and analysis to identify malnutrition risk and (2) assess the risk and measure the incidence of malnutrition occurring in various settings across the continuum of care and the impact of care transitions.

Members will meet four times during 2018. A final report will be submitted to Governor Baker by December 2018.



**Front (L-R):** Kris M. Mogensen (Brigham & Women’s Hosp.), Dalia Cohen (Hebrew Senior Life), Mary Giannetti (Haywood Healthcare), Pamela Hunt (MCOA), Rebecca Davidson (DAR) **Middle:** Milaina J. Mainieri (Minuteman Senior Services), Myclette Theodule (Somerville Cambridge Elder Services), Elizabeth Poirier (rep), Diana M. Hoek (DPH), Linnea L. Hagberg (SeniorCare), Margery Gann (ETHOS) **Back:** Helen Rasmussen (Tufts USDA HNRC), Amy Sheeley (EOEA), Brittany Mangini (DTA), Tara Hammes (Boston Elderly Commission), Shirley Chao (EOEA co-chair), Carole Malone (EOEA co-chair) **Not in the picture:** Alice Bonner (EOEA Secretary Corey Testa (MA House Joint Committee Elder Affairs)

## Sample Social Media Content:



- #MalnutritionPreventionCommission meetings are underway in MA! We will end this preventable disease in our state!
- Looking forward to more from the #MalnutritionPreventionCommission in MA! Working to end #malnutrition through effective policies!

To download a free State Malnutrition Advocacy Toolkit visit: <http://bit.ly/state-toolkit>

To download State Legislative Infographic visit: <http://bit.ly/state-infographic>