

# Mayor's Council on African American Elders

C/O – Aging and Disability Services, Seattle-King County  
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October 21, 2022

**Members Present** – Dr. Benjamin Abe, Pamela Williams, Paula Williams.

**Members Absent** – Charlotte Antoine, Sheila Mary, Paul Mitchell

**Guest Speakers** – Nathan Yamane, Owner – Heart'n Soul Hospice

**HSD/ADS Staff** – Mary Mitchell, ADS Interim Director, Dinah Stephens, Karen Winston

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## I. Heart'n Soul Hospice

Nathan Yemane is the owner of YBG Healthcare. He grew up in Auburn, graduated from Auburn High School and Green River Community College, and obtained his social work degree from the University of Oklahoma. Nathan is also a licensed independent Clinical Social Worker, and he has worked over 10 years in the hospice industry.

His father died of COVID-19 in 2020. He was a pillar in the south Seattle community. He supported women, people of color, businesses, and a big supporter of raising the minimum wage. Nathan and his family were at his father's bedside throughout his end-of-life journey. Through this experience, Nathan realized that his father's care was clinically competent, but not culturally competent. That is when he started looking more into hospice disparities. Nathan emphasized how hospice provides quality care and dignity through and after death. When hospice services are provided, patients don't die alone and, sometimes, hospice is the only one present. Hospice honors the humanity of every patient.

Last September, Nathan received approval from the WA. Department of Health (DOH) to establish the first Black-owned/Black-governed hospice in King County and Washington state. He thanked MCAAE members and ADS Advisory Council members for submitting a joint letter in 2021 to DOH in support of his proposal.

## History of Hospice

The term "hospice" can be traced back to over 300 years ago and refers to a refuge or shelter for travelers with an illness. Hospice was first used for individuals with terminal illnesses by a physician named Dame Cicely Saunders, who began her work with terminally ill in 1948. She eventually went on to create the first modern hospice—St. Christopher's Hospice—in London, England. Saunders introduced hospice to the U.S. during a visit in 1963 to Yale University. Her lecture during this visit launched the development of hospice care in the United States. In the late 1960s, it was Dr. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross who educated about the concept of terminally ill patients participating in the decisions that affected how they lived during their final days. In 1982, Congress made hospice care a Medicare Hospice Benefit. Today, hospice is included in Part A of Medicare and the hospice philosophy of care is becoming more universal, yet racial disparities exist and are being addressed.

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## Development Plans

Nathan highlighted the next steps for Heart'n Soul.

- Heart'n Soul Hospice will be accessible to anyone in King County, while focusing on the underserved.
- They are working to build on existing relationships with community organizations, clinics, and centers while seeking to develop new partnerships. (Ongoing)
- Heart'n Soul Hospice will continue to meet the criteria set by the DOH Certificate of Need program.
- They are currently working to complete the state Medicare and Medicaid certification (Fall – Spring 2023).
- They hope to hire a registered nurse as Clinical Director as soon as possible and would appreciate help from MCAAE members with spreading the word about the position.
- They are also working to complete their policy and procedures handbook and prepare for state and Medicare certification, once the nurse is hired.
- They will continue outreach and "thank you" visits with supportive community groups and organization within Seattle and King County.
- Heart'n Soul Hospice moved into an office building. **Address:** 15 S. Grady Way, Suite #522, Renton, WA 98057. **Ph:** 206-659-9998, **Email:** [ybghealthcarellc@gmail.com](mailto:ybghealthcarellc@gmail.com)
- Official business opening and begin to serve patients. (Spring 2023)

## **II. ADS Updates**

Mary provided the following updates.

Federal - No significant action in Congress due to midterm elections.

### State

2023 Priorities: We have three main asks for this session.

- **AAA CM funding:** Last session, AAAs received \$24M to achieve parity in funding with the state case management program and reach 75:1 caseloads, but there are issues with the methodology AL TSA uses to determine maintenance levels - the current version will not keep the AAAs whole. We will need to educate legislators about why we're still addressing this issue, but this item will likely be in the Governor's budget.
- **Health Home program:** There will also be a budget request to increase the rate for the Health Home program due to the rising cost of hiring care coordinators and increasing challenges recruiting and retaining workers. Health Homes provide care coordination for people on both Medicaid and Medicare (dual-eligibles) who often have the most expensive chronic health challenges. By reducing hospital, emergency department and nursing home visits, care coordinators saved Medicare \$293 million over the first 7 years of the program from 2013 to 2020. Mary will share more statistics next month, but the fact remains that the return on investment for this program is high and it is well worth the investment.

- **DAC Dementia Resource Catalyst program:** W4A is supporting the DSHS request to expand this program to two additional AAAs (for a total of 4 programs next session). In 2021, DAC received funding to pilot program that creates or expands dementia-capable services at 2 AAA sites
- **Estate Recovery (W4A Supporting):** There might be legislation proposed to remove the requirement that DSHS place a lien on homes of clients living in a medical institution that allows estate and personal funds be ceased when they pass. This could change harmful policies that exacerbate racial disparities and limit ability to build generational wealth - families will be able to pass on the equity in their homes and \$ to living heirs. It would also incentivize low-income individuals accessing the long-term care services they need.

Other issues:

- Housing needs for older adults: The homeless older adult population is growing. Rent is high, while the low-cost apartment stock is low and homeownership costs are high.
- Social Isolation
- Healthcare and affordable medications.
- Digital Equity: Affordable/accessible internet and hardware, digital literacy skills.
- Public health investments/social determinants of health (transportation, housing, food).
- Climate change and impacts on older people.
- WA Cares – education and expansion.

What lies ahead for the 2023 Session

- January 9, 2023 will be the first day of the legislative session. It will be a long session – approximately 105 days and will also be a budget year.
- Overall, the economy is slowing down and the global recession outlook is uncertain. Real estate excise tax revenue down as housing market has slowed down. Sales tax also down. The revenue forecast in December and March will determine budget outcomes.
- Anticipating that we'll see proposed bills drop in the first two weeks of December.
- There is interest in hybrid options this year. House side will move towards more in-person meetings, but advocates will have option to meet in person or virtually. Remote testimony will remain in place. Similarly, advocacy groups are exploring hybrid options for advocacy days.

**III. Seattle Age Friendly Updates**

Age Friendly Seattle manager, Dinah Stephens, provided information on upcoming events.

- **Age-Friendly Housing Forum: Where Will Seattle's Older Adults Live?** Age-Friendly Seattle, King County, AARP Washington, and the Northwest Universal Design Council are collaborating on a forum about current housing challenges experienced by older adults, age-friendly home design, and efforts underway to ensure people have access to housing as they age. The forum is schedule for November 2, 12pm- 4:30 p.m., at Seattle City Hall, Bertha Knight Landes Room, 600 4th Avenue, Seattle. Lunch is included. The event is free.

- The **November Civic Coffee** is scheduled for November 17 and will include a panel discussion on how to better prepare for the upcoming winter months and remain physically active and socially engaged. This will be an in-person event at the Neighborhood House High Point Center, 6400 Sylvan Way SW, Seattle, 98126. This event is open to the public and older adults who live in south Seattle are encouraged to participate! The event will also be provided virtually. Speakers include:
  - Sokha Danh, Community Engagement Specialist, [City of Seattle's Office of Housing](#)
  - Carol Redfield DNP, MN, RN, Adjunct Professor of Nursing, [Seattle Pacific University](#)
  - Martha Peppones, Former Nutrition and Advocacy Director, [Homage Senior Services](#)
  - Mary Pat O'Leary, ADS Sr. Planner, will be the moderator.

**IV. Next MCAAE Meeting** – There will be **no meeting in November**. The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, December 16. The agenda will include a presentation about the new [Tubman Center for Health & Freedom](#).

The meeting adjourned at 3:35 p.m.