**GENERAL MEMBER MEETING  
9.14.21 via WebEx**

**Topic:** “IGNORING IT IS NOT AN OPTION: Mental Illness & Addiction among the Elderly Are a Growing Problem but One Worth Tackling”

**Guest Speaker:** Shevel Mavins, MS, Addiction-Prevention, LLC

**PRESENT.** Laura Cockman, Allison Crossman, Nancy Warren, Tadra Martin, Pam Palmer, John Maron, Stephanie Bias, Laura Schlabach, Autumn Cox, Aimee Kepler, Althea Taylor Jones, Amy Shelton, Annetta Brown, April Black, Billie Council, Brittany Hughes, Carolyn Pennington, Connie Morse, Elizabeth Kressman, Heather Burkhardt, Janelle Lewis, Jennifer Stuart, Kate Steger, Kristen Jackson, Leo Bohland, Lisa Jones, Lori Simpson, Ragan Ham, Rosalyn Pettyford, Shana Barnes, Stacy Ferrell, Tammy Chaney, Teresa Gardner, Vickie Alston

**CALL TO ORDER**. Our meeting was called to order by Laura Cockman, Chair.

This meeting was hosted via WebEx, scheduled by Kevin Robertson and Allison Crossman. We are thankful for them scheduling and hosting this virtual meeting and posting the meeting agenda for us.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES.** The minutes from the general meeting held July 21, 2021 were presented for approval. A motion to approve was made by John Maron and seconded by Nancy Warren. With no further discussion the motion carried.

**TREASURER’S REPORT.** Pam Palmer presented the treasurer’s report:  
$18,900.85 - Current balance   
$3,000 – Reserve  
$405 – Total membership dues received  
$459.40 – Total bills paid  
$15,846.45 – Total balance at this time

John Maron motioned to approve the Treasurer’s Report and Tadra Martin seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion passed to approve the Treasurer’s Report.

**TODAY’S GUEST SPEAKER.** Tadra introduced today’s speaker, Shevel Mavins, the founder of Addiction-Prevention, LLC, where she provides training on substance use, mental health, and wellness. Also, she works as a social worker in Adult Services for the Department of Social Services, where she investigates cases of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of older adults. The next 20 years of her career she worked as an addiction clinician and other behavioral health therapist. With her experience working in a dually diagnosed inpatient and outpatient treatment program, which lead her to work as a New York State Certified Education and Training Provider. She worked as a Family and Adolescent therapist in the Upstate New York school district. She also has experience working with the Federal Parole system, New York State Parole system, and the local criminal court for the prisoner re-entry programs. She earned her bachelor’s degree in psychology from Le Monye College, attended Syracuse University’s dual graduate program in Rehabilitation Counseling and School Counseling, and earned her master’s degree in counseling with specialization in addiction and mental health disorders from Capella University. Before moving to North Carolina, she started her career working as a therapist in a hospital in Upstate New York.

*Impact of Mental Health in Older Adults:*

* Aging, understanding mental health and substance use disorders are important areas of focus for older adults
* In 2025, one in five adults will be 65 and older in North Carolina
* Mental health disorder/Substance Use Disorder is a double stigma for older adults, mental health disorders diagnosed later in life and at higher rates, and many believe mental health conditions are just a “natural part of the aging process”, however, that is not true.
* Everyone goes through transitions and copes with aging differently. A few common major transitions include retirement, relocation, bereavement, health conditions and other life events.
* Depression and anxiety are the most common mental illnesses in older adults, frequently co-occur together, and may even show similar symptoms
* Diagnosable disorders affect a person’s thinking, emotional state, and behavior
* Anxiety disorders are more severe, last longer, and can interfere with daily activities and relationships
* Drug Addiction, also called Substance Use Disorder (SUD) is a disease that affects a person’s brain and behavior that leads to an inability to control the use of a legal or illegal drug or medication
* Drugs are chemicals that work in the brain by tapping into the brain’s communication system and interfering with the way nerve cells normally send, receive, and process information
* People age 65 and older make up 12% of the US population, but account for 34% of all prescription medication use and 30% of all over-the-counter medication
* Risk factors for depression, anxiety and SUD for older adults include perceived poor health, progressive/disabling sensory loss, history of recurrent falls, cognitive impairment or dementia, dissatisfaction with social network
* SUD is an invisible problem and can easily go un-noticed by family members and medical providers
* How can we help? Let the person know you are concerned and willing to help, discuss your observations, ask the questions without dread, avoid expressing negative judgement, appear confident, and contact a professional for additional assistance (Primary Care Physician, Addiction/Mental Health Counselor, Geriatric Social Worker).

For additional questions – contact *Shevel Mavins, MS, Addiction-Prevention, LLC at* [*addictionpreventions@gmail.com*](mailto:addictionpreventions@gmail.com) *or website at* [*https://addiction-prevention.org/*](https://addiction-prevention.org/)

**EDUCATION COMMITTEE UPDATES.** Tadra reported the education committee is proposing we do a one-day hybrid conference. The executive committee will discuss more at the next meeting. We are seeking ideas for speakers and topics for our November meeting.

**ADVOCACY COMMITTEE UPDATES.** Nancy shared that that American Rescue Act will be implemented over the next two fiscal years. Adult Protective Services in NC will receive a significant amount. In addition, the Elder Justice Reauthorization and Modernization Act (on website) will offer funding to support local APS functions and grant programs, long term care ombudsman grants and training, supporting linkages to legal services and medical legal partnerships, and to address social isolation. John shared kudos to Nancy for a hand in creating the Elder Abuse and Exploitation Resource Manual.

**AWARENESS COMMITTEE UPDATES.** John Maron & Stephanie Bias - Ongoing activities doing presentations throughout the state. Open enrollment begins October 15th for SHIIP.

**COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE UPDATES.** Allison shared to keep an eye on the website for updates. We are working to be more present on social media to please like and share us on social media.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted by  
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Laura Schlabach, Secretary