

Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Commission (ADRD) Brain Health Work Group

Thursday, July 17, 2025
12:00 pm - 1:30 pm

Electronic Meeting

Draft Meeting Minutes

Members Present:

Michael Watson, *Chair*
Dan Bluestein
Rachel Coney- Bowles
Patricia Heyn
Kelley Kinder

Joyce Nessbaum
Guy Mayer

Staff:

George Worthington, DARS
Heather Kidd, DARS

Welcome & Introductions

Michael Watson began the meeting at 12:04pm, welcomed members, and invited members to introduce themselves.

Michael Watson, Chair

Adopt Agenda

Action Item: Adopt Agenda

Mr. Watson moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Rachel Coney- Bowles seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Michael Watson

Review and Approve April 17, 2025, Meeting

The minutes were adopted as presented.

Michael Watson

Public Comment

No public comments were received.

Michael Watson

Discussion: Work Group Activities

Social Media Toolkit: George Worthington shared a draft social media toolkit that supports Objective 6.3 of the Dementia State Plan by promoting brain health messages across Virginia. The toolkit is based on the Brain Health Flyers (see next item) and connects six brain health domains (exercise, health care, learning, nutrition, head protection, and social connection) explicitly to existing Older Americans Act and other programs provided by Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs). The toolkit includes easy-to-share messages and infographics to help promote brain health and related AAA programs. One member noted that the Chronic Disease Self-Management Education should not be included on the exercise flyer as it does not explicitly support exercising. Members

George Worthington,
Heather Kidd
Rachel Coney- Bowles

were supportive of this effort and felt that the toolkit would be helpful for AAAs.

Completed Brain Health Flyers: Mr. Worthington shared the updated brain health flyers, which can be co-branded by Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs). The group discussed adapting them for broader use as well.

Dementia Mini-Summit 9/9/2025: Mr. Worthington shared details about an upcoming event, the State of the Brain: Dementia & Alzheimer's in Virginia Summit, to be hosted by the ADRD Commission in Richmond. The summit will include three parts: State of the state, What Virginia can do better, and Where to next. Invitations will go out to state legislators, Senate and House finance staff, DARS members, policy teams, and ADRD Work Group members among other stakeholders. Additional details will be shared with the group as they become available.

HFC Universe: Staff introduced HFC Universe, engaging micro-learning videos aimed at teaching youth about brain health. Staff plan to link the videos on the Dementia Capable Virginia (DCV) website. The group also discussed expanding brain health education to students via the education department or alternatives such as libraries and universities programs. Members watched one of the microlearning videos and discussed how to leverage these in Virginia.

Next Strategies:

- Mr. Worthington stated that the dashboard highlighting progress on the Implementation Plan is now on the DCV website and will be updated quarterly.
- The group discussed next strategies: reaching underserved groups and promoting education efforts to connect chronic disease and brain health.
- Ms. Coney-Bowles shared Healthy Brain Virginia (HBV) plans to expand Community Health Workers (CHW) dementia training for national use and Continuing Education Credit. She also shared that HBV is working with the state Ombudsman program to offer Virtual Dementia training for staff in lower-rated facilities.

Discussion: Supporting the Healthy Brain Initiative

Ms. Coney-Bowles outlined focus areas for the Brain Health Work Group in Year 3 of Healthy Brain Virginia:

- Coalition Engagement: Recruit diverse members, improve onboarding, and track representation.

Rachel Coney- Bowles

- Education: Support events/trainings and share culturally tailored ADRD resources.
- Community Linkages: Strengthen partnerships to integrate referrals and education.
- Data: Identify gaps in high-burden populations and guide outreach with data.
- Policy & Sustainability: Promote dementia-informed policy and long-term care reforms.
- Visibility: Boost public engagement through campaigns and statewide events.

New Business:

No New Business was discussed.

Michael Watson

Next Meeting:

Thursday, October 16, 12:00pm-1:30pm

Michael Watson

Meeting Adjournment

Mr. Watson thanked members for their input and adjourned the meeting at 1:26pm.

Michael Watson