

Breakthrough Coalition is a network of service providers and others concerned with senior issues, committed to enhancing the quality of life for older adults within the St. Louis metropolitan area through education, advocacy and networking.



BC NEWS



Helping Seniors Since 1991

www.breakthroughcoalition.org

October 2011

Breakthrough Coalition General Membership 2011 Meetings

- Tuesday, February 1
- Tuesday, April 5
- Tuesday, June 7
- Tuesday, August 2
- Tuesday, October 4
- Tuesday, December 6

General Membership Meetings:
Networking starts at 8:00 am;
Meeting starts at 8:30 at the
[Maryland Heights Centre](#).

Breakthrough Coalition Steering Committee 2011 Meetings

- Tuesday, January 4
- Tuesday, March 1
- Tuesday, May 3
- Tuesday, July 5—8:00am
- Tuesday, September 6
- Tuesday, Nov 1—8:00am

Steering Committee Meetings start at 12:00 p.m. at the Alzheimer's Association, 9374 Olive Blvd., 63132. Phone 314-432-3422.

Breakthrough Coalition 2011 Officers

*President -
Hedva Barenholtz Levy*

*Past President -
Joann Eng-Hellinger*

*V.P. / President Elect -
Stefanie Osiek*

Secretary - Lori Jurgiel

Treasurer - Don Holt

Plans for October Meeting and Membership Survey



Hedva Barenholtz Levy

Our October 4, 2011 meeting promises to be informative with the topic addressing mental health assessment in seniors. Please be aware that this month we once again will offer a **post-meeting educational session**. It will begin at approximately 10:15 a.m. and will offer continuing education for social workers. See details on page two.

At this meeting we also will be voting on revisions to the bylaws. Members who have attended three of the last six general meetings should have received an e-mail in late August with the bylaws and recommended changes for review in advance of the meeting.

Results of the member survey are in. One hundred four members responded (thank you for participating!), thus offering us a good representation of the membership. A couple of responses are notable to share with you at this time. In response to the question about why Breakthrough Coalition is important to you, 33% responded that it is for the professional community and networking opportunities. However, over one-

half of respondents indicated that no one reason stands out; networking, education, and advocacy are all equally of value.

Another question asked about duration of membership in Breakthrough. While 38% of members have been involved 2 years or less, 30% of members have been involved for longer than 7 years. Related to this survey item, the Steering Committee is seeking ways to retain new members in Breakthrough. Plans include increasing our welcome efforts to help new members get acquainted with fellow Breakthrough members and the flow of our organization.

A question about committee involvement also brought forth interesting information. Only 23% of respondents participate regularly on a committee. Thirty percent participate occasionally. However, 22% do not participate on committees at all, and equally surprising was that 17% of respondents indicated they were not aware this was an expectation of Breakthrough. Indeed, per our bylaws, members are encouraged to participate in one of our three committees. Kudos and thank you to those of you who participate! You are the engine that keeps this organization moving forward. For those of you not participating or who didn't know about this expectation, we hope you will consider joining a committee and becoming part of the momentum. The meetings typically last just one hour and they offer a great opportunity to network with a subgroup of Breakthrough members. More importantly, participation is our mechanism to fulfill the goals of Breakthrough by providing an ongoing influx of ideas and volunteers to plan and execute our bi-monthly general meetings.

It is the responsibility of each Breakthrough member – new and old alike – to seek out and get involved in one of the

committees. Here are the next meeting dates for each committee.

* The Advocacy Committee regularly meets on the 3rd Tuesday of odd months. It will meet next on November 15, 2011 at 8:30 a.m. at the Alzheimer's Association. Committee is chaired by Mark Michelson.

* The Education Committee regularly meets on the 4th Thursday of even months. It will meet next on October 27, 2011 at 8:30 a.m. at the Alzheimer's Association. Committee is co-chaired by Tom Meuser and Lila Shepley. Please confirm meeting location with either Tom or Lila for this October meeting.

* The Networking Committee regularly meets on the 1st Thursday of odd months. It will meet next on November 3, 2011 at 9:30 a.m. at Veterans Home Care. Committee is co-chaired by Bonnie Laiderman and Stefanie Osiek.

Finally, the survey asked about interest in a communications/website committee. This met with limited definite interest, with about 9% responding that it would be of interest and 24% responding "maybe." Thus, at this time, the Networking Committee will pursue ideas to explore and expand communications within Breakthrough and use of the website.

Please consider ways to get involved in Breakthrough, through committee involvement, introducing yourself to new members who attend each meeting, sharing your resources, or nominating yourself for an officer position or member at large. ■

News & Needs

February's general meeting is organized by the Advocacy Committee. The guest speaker will be visiting us from Jefferson City and will review and discuss basic advocacy principles. Mark your calendars.

Education committee is looking for an interested individual to co-chair the committee with Lila Shepley in 2012.

Qualified persons should be familiar with the workings of this committee and a member of Breakthrough for at least one year.

Networking committee is exploring ways to better utilize the website and communicate with our membership. Please attend its next meeting in November (see

above and also the website) to share your thoughts and provide input.

Be sure to check out our website: www.breakthroughcoalition.org. Let us know what you think about it by sending an email to Hedva at (hedva@hblpharm.com). ■

Assessing Mental Status in Older Clients: Red Flags, Rules of Thumb & Helpful Tips

Tuesday, October 4, 2011

**Tom Meuser, PhD, Clinical Psychologist
Director, Gerontology Graduate Program**

All professionals that serve the needs of older adults encounter mental status concerns at one time or another. Mental status changes are not just limited to progressive dementia, such as Alzheimer's disease, but have many potential causes and outcomes, some life threatening.

Mental status can also fluctuate, and this can be challenging for the care process. Learning to recognize mental status changes and make a referral for follow-up assessment are important skills. This presentation will outline the basic elements of mental

status evaluation, identify common red flags, and offer suggestions for practice.

Post-Meeting Workshop on Mental Status Screening - 10:15 – 11:15 AM

Dr. Meuser will introduce four common mental status screening tools (MMSE, SLUMS, Short Blessed, AD8), discuss their strengths and limitations, and demonstrate what a valid administration looks like. He will also discuss basic interpretation of scores and how to communicate findings to clients. Video clips will highlight various points. Copies of each tool will be provided to participants. Professional limits and boundaries with respect to use of these tools will also be addressed. One hour of Social Work CE will be offered.

Do I need to RSVP or register for these sessions?

No, the Breakthrough Coalition welcomes new and returning members at all meetings.

There is no cost to participate. Come, bring a friend, and add to your knowledge and professional network!

What is the Breakthrough Coalition?

The Breakthrough Coalition is a network of service providers and others concerned with senior issues, committed to enhancing the quality of life for older adults within the St. Louis metropolitan area through education, advocacy and networking and resource sharing. The BC has over 250 individual and organizational members. Meetings are held six times per year, on the first Tuesday of even months. A steering committee and three standing committees (Education, Advocacy, Networking) guide the organization and its efforts to enhance the care of older adults in our community. ■

BC Committee Information

Steering Committee / Chair – Hedva Barenholtz Levy

For more information contact Hedva Barenholtz Levy at 314-994-9409 or hedva@hblpharm.com

- Provides organizational structure, fiscal responsibility, oversight, management, accountability, adherence to bylaws and governance to Breakthrough Coalition
- Assures annual review of reports & quality assurance measures
- Reviews endorsement of projects, products, and grant opportunities
- Consists of standing committees listed below and convenes ad hoc committees as needed
- Members consist of Breakthrough Coalition officers, committee chairpersons, members at large & representatives from key senior organizations

Education Committee / Co-Chairs – Tom Meuser and Lila Shepley

For more information contact Tom Meuser at 314-516-5421 or Meusert@umsl.edu

- Supports professional development of Breakthrough membership
- Plans, coordinates and supports periodic educational sessions & materials with input from membership and steering committee
- Explores continuing education credit opportunities
- Conducts environmental scans to identify timely and relevant topics for membership education
- Recommends ad hoc committees / issues of focus

Advocacy Committee / Chair – Mark Michelson

For more information contact Mark Michelson at 314-414-1400 or Mark@pscstl.com

- Monitors & tracks legislation / policy issues affecting seniors
- Provides members with tools to advocate for clients
- Provides Breakthrough membership with legislative updates / policy action alerts when appropriate
- Recommends ad hoc committees / issues of focus

Networking Committee / Co-Chairs – Bonnie Laiderman and Stefanie Osiek

For more information contact Bonnie Laiderman at 314-514-2444 or bonnie@veteranshomecare.com

- Supports membership development of organization
- Maintains tools for membership communication such as website, list serve, membership database, newsletter and new member packets
- Identifies strategic partnerships to support purpose of Breakthrough Coalition (i.e. Gateway Grandparents, MAC, Resource Guide, etc.)
- Periodically surveys the membership to improve organizational function
- Planning & coordinating networking events (i.e. Speed Networking)