

Mayor's Council on African American Elders

C/O – Aging and Disability Services, Seattle-King County
Mailing Address: PO Box 34215, Seattle WA 98124-4215
Office Address: Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 5th Ave, 51st Floor
(206)684-0706 * TTY (206)684-0274 * FAX (206)684-0689
Website: www.seattle.gov/MCAAE

August 20, 2021

Members Present – Paul Mitchell, Paula Williams

Members Absent – Dr. Benjamin Abe, Interim Chair, Charlotte Antoine, Dr. Brenda Jackson, Claudette Thomas, Sheila Mary, Pamela Williams

Guest – Nathan Yemane, Owner, Y.B.G. Healthcare

ADS Staff – Karen Winston, Mary Mitchell, ADS Interim Director

I. Hospice and End of Life Services for BIPOC Populations

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 Masters in Social Work from the University of Oklahoma. Nathan is also a licensed independent Clinical Social Worker. He has worked 10 years in the hospice industry. He started his career as a hospice social worker before being promoted to healthcare workforce development. Nathan has been involved in outreach coordination and supported his father, Yemane Gebremicael, with grant writing efforts for Horn of Africa, a nonprofit organization in south Seattle.

His father, who died of COVID-19 in 2020, was a pillar in the south Seattle community. He supported women, people of color, businesses, and a big supporter of raising the minimum wage to \$15hr. Nathan and his family was alongside of his father 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.

Hospice Overview

- Hospice was first authorized as a Medicare benefit in 1982, and provides in-home pain management, comfort, and quality of life to patients with a prognosis of less than six months.
- Treatment is provided in private residences, assisted living facilities, nursing home, etc.
- The hospice multidisciplinary team includes a doctor, nurse, nurse aides, chaplains, social workers, and family members.
- Hospice was created to promote value-based care by reducing hospitalization and rehospitalization rates for the terminally ill.
- In 2020, the National Hospice & Palliative Care Organization reported that a little more than 8% of those utilizing hospice services in the U.S. are Black.
- Hospice does not always mean death. It can also include palliative care and stabilization. Many patients go in and out of hospice overtime.

Co-sponsored by:



City of Seattle



King County

The Problem

- The Medicare population will increase from 54 million (today) to over 80 million by the year 2030, but research shows that the hospice workforce will be ill-equipped to handle the increase.
- King County's current population is 2.25 million, but only nine hospice organizations.
- Only 36.7% of hospice eligible Black Americans utilized hospice, compared to 50% of White Americans. The state of minority participation is due to lack of trust and scarce education. Disenrollment in hospice is highest among Black Americans.
- Lack of cultural competence (clinical, structural, and organizational).
- Lack of Black or minority-owned hospice services.
- Lack of Black representation in hospital administration.
 - The Urban Institute report indicated that 47% of all hospital governing boards in the U.S. have zero racial or ethnic minorities.
 - Nationally, Blacks make up only 4% of hospital leadership, according to the New England Journal of Medicine.
 - In the U.S. only 3.6% of medical school faculty are Black, according to the New England Journal of Medicine.
 - A 2015 survey from the American Hospital Association found that 91% of all hospital CEOs in the U.S. were White.
- Mortality rates are highest among Black Americans for three of the most common hospice diagnosis--cancer, heart disease, and lung disease. Since this is the case, the need is great for more access and participation among Blacks utilizing hospice care.

Nathan's Solution & Request

- Start a Black-owned hospice in King County by building on existing footprints.
- Provide culturally and clinically competent services.
- Provide education and improve hospice access for Blacks in King County while serving the general population.
- Obtain Hospice Certificate of Need approval from the Washington State Health Department.
- Approval will require a convincing application and written community support.
 - Nathan requested a letter or a petition to be signed by public officials and community leaders in King County, to be included with his application. He is planning to submit his application in December 2021.
 - Nathan indicated that he has already received support letters from King County Councilman Zahilay Girmay, Dr. Ben Danielson, and the Mary Mahoney Professional Nurses Association, Pastor Robert Jefferies from New Hope Baptist Church.

Questions & Comments

- What is your contact information? I would like you to talk to the Breakfast Group.

Nathan Yemane MSW, LCSW, LICSW, Owner

Y.B.G. Healthcare

2730 S. Andover St., Seattle, WA 98108

Email: ybghealthcarellc@gmail.com; Phone: 206-659-9998

- I think we are aware that hospice services exist, but it is something that we take for granted and don't really think about from a cultural perspective. What you have presented was very well thought-out and is definitely a need in our community.

Nathan is gathering support from the community and requested a letter of support from the MCAAE. Mary offered to research whether or not a letter of support can come from both the MCAAE and the ADS Advisory Council. Karen agreed to follow-up.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for **Friday, September 17, 2021.**