



**ELDER ISSUES COMMITTEE/
MAYOR'S INITIATIVE ON HEALTHY AGING AND LIVABILITY**

Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 24, 2026
Microsoft Teams 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.



TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION NEEDED
Members/Attendees	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Triana Abel Encarnacion, Center for Cognitive Neuroscience and Aging 2. Cristina Brito, United Way Miami 3. Elvis Caines, Miami-Dade County – <i>Guest</i> 4. Marla Cocalis, StudentsCare 5. Rob Collins, The Miami Foundation 6. Olivia DeCastro, Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County 7. Jennifer De Gruccio, Parkinson's Foundation 8. Nattaliah Earle, Urban Health Partnerships – <i>Vice-Chair</i> 9. Witson Faustin, Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County 10. Mariangelli “Angie” Fernandez, Miami-Dade State Attorney Office 11. Justin R. Galvan, Miami-Dade County – <i>Guest</i> 12. Mayra Garcia, Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County 13. Alain Gauthier, Banyan Community Health 14. Natalie Gray, Western Atlantic University School of Medicine 15. Natalie Herradon, Jewish Community Services of South Florida 16. Susan O. Holtzman, NAMI Miami 17. Yanet Marino, Jewish Community Services of South Florida 18. Lina Menendez, Epilepsy Alliance Florida 19. Dennise Nicola, PACE/Miami Jewish Health – <i>Chair</i> 20. Anna Oirik, Right at Home Miami Lakes 21. Lili Portmann, Center for Independent Living of South Florida 22. Carmen Ramos-Watson, B/Adaptable 23. Lymari Rivera, Mount Sinai Eldercare PACE 24. Lasonya L. Rodgers, Humana 25. Jarice Rodriguez, Miami-Dade County – <i>Guest Presenter</i> 26. Stacey Silver, Mom’s Meals 27. Lily Suazo, Jewish Community Services of South Florida 28. Carmen Teixeira-Parry, Alliance for Aging, Inc. 	



**ELDER ISSUES COMMITTEE/
MAYOR'S INITIATIVE ON HEALTHY AGING AND LIVABILITY**

Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 24, 2026
Microsoft Teams 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.



	29. Dianna Valenzuela, Public Partnerships 30. Marjorie York, Community Action Agency (via phone call)	
Welcome and Introductions	Vice-Chair, Nattaliah Earle started the meeting at 2:05 p.m. Chair, Dennise Nicola joined the meeting a little later at 2:14 p.m. Everyone was welcomed and general meeting guidelines were provided for the attendees in the chat. Attendee introductions were done during <i>Partner Updates</i> , and virtual attendees were encouraged to put their contact information and any organizational updates/announcements in the chat. The meeting was held virtually via Microsoft Team.	
Review and Approval of Minutes	The minutes from the last meeting on January 27, 2026, were reviewed by the Committee members in attendance. A motion was made to approve the minutes by Marjorie Y. and seconded by Susan H. The minutes were approved unanimously without corrections.	
Previous Action Items(s)	The EIC 2025-2030 Work Plan was reviewed and approved at last month's meeting on 1/27/2026.	
Executive Board (EB) Update	Vice-Chair, Nattaliah E. provided the updates from the last EB meeting held on 2/9/2026, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board last met virtually on February 9, 2026. • Over the last couple of months, the Board has been discussing ideas for the 2025-2030 Consortium Strategic Plan and Executive Board Work Plan. • There was a presentation by Miami Street providing primary care to the unsheltered individuals in our community. 	
Legislative Report	There were no legislative updates available.	



**ELDER ISSUES COMMITTEE/
MAYOR'S INITIATIVE ON HEALTHY AGING AND LIVABILITY**

Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 24, 2026
Microsoft Teams 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.



<p>Presentation: <i>Miami-Dade County Public Transportation Options for Older Adults</i></p>	<p>EIC partner, Jarice D. Rodriguez, Chief Paratransit Operations (STS), Office of Innovation & Mobility Services Department, Miami-Dade County Department of Transportation and Public Works (DTPW), gave a 25-minute presentation, <i>Miami-Dade County Public Transportation Options for Older Adults</i>. The presentation was focused on the following special transportation services offered by Miami-Dade County for disabled and/or older adults: 1) Special Transportation Service (STS), 2) MetroConnect, 3) Golden Passport, and 4) Patriot Passport. With the consent of the presenter, a follow-up email was sent to all EIC members on 2/24/26 after the meeting with the presenter's contact information, presentation slides, and the following STS contacts:</p> <p>Paratransit Operations (STS) Division:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Eligibility Certification: 786-469-5000, paratransit@miamidade.gov Ms. Aleida Fuentes: aleida.fuentes@miamidade.gov • Customer Service: 786-469-5000 Ms. Kenia Garcia: Kenia.Garcia@miamidade.gov • General Inquiries: Ms. Janet Bravo, Janet.Bravo@miamidade.gov • Outreach: Ms. Celia Ramos, Celia.Ramos@miamidade.gov <p>STS General Information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STS Reservations: 305-871-1111 • TTY Users: 1-800-955-8771 or 711 	<p>Action Item(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email your suggestion(s) for future Elder Issues Committee meeting presentations to: DNicola@miamijewishhealth.org, Nattaliah@urbanhp.org, & Mayra.Garcia@flhealth.gov.
<p>Performance Measures in Need of Improvement (Work Plan Review)</p>	<p>Chair, Dennise N. reviewed the 2026 presentations scheduled for EIC monthly meetings March thru October. Susan H. in attendance was able to confirm that NAMI Miami-Dade County could provide a 15-minute presentation for Suicide Prevention Month in September at meeting on 9/29/26.</p>	

	<p>Today's presentation on Miami-Dade County transportation options for older adults will be reported towards work plan activity 1. under <i>Access to Care</i>, p. 1, related to <i>have a minimum of four presentations per year on key health topics for older adults including best practices, model programs, and services for this population and/or their caregivers.</i></p>	
<p>Recognition of Improved Performance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 27 total attendees at virtual monthly meeting on 1/27/2026 • Reviewed and approved 2025-2030 EIC Work Plan at January 2026 meeting • Conducted Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) Analysis for EIC at January 2026 meeting 	
<p>Reminders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next monthly meeting will be virtual on March 31, 2026, at 2 p.m. • 2026 monthly meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In-person meeting on Tues., April 28 at 2PM to be hosted at the Florida PACE Centers in Westchester ○ Virtual meeting on Tues., May 26 at 2PM ○ Virtual meeting on Tues., June 30 at 2PM ○ Virtual meeting on Tues., July 28 at 2PM ○ In-person meeting on Tues., August 25 at 2PM to be hosted at Alliance for Aging in Doral (confirmed by Martine Charles via follow-up email) ○ Virtual meeting on Tues., September 29 at 2PM ○ Virtual meeting on Tues., October 27 at 2PM ○ November and December meetings to be cancelled • Join the Consortium for a Healthier Miami-Dade online at www.healthymiamidade.org/membership, and/or share this invite with others who may be interested in participating. 	<p>Action Item(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Consortium for a Healthier Miami-Dade is a collaboration between the Florida Department of Health and community partners/organizations promoting health in Miami-Dade County; register to become a member for free online: https://www.healthymiamidade.org/membership/.
<p>Partner Updates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenter: Jarice D. Rodriguez, Chief Paratransit Operations (STS), Office of Innovation & Mobility Services Department, Miami-Dade County Department of Transportation and Public Works (DTPW), Jarice.Rodriguez@miamideade.gov. 	<p>Action Item(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EIC members who are subject matter specialists in healthy

**ELDER ISSUES COMMITTEE/
MAYOR'S INITIATIVE ON HEALTHY AGING AND LIVABILITY**

Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 24, 2026
Microsoft Teams 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anna Oirik (new member), owner of Right at Home Miami Lakes serving the senior population; visit website for more information https://www.rightathome.net › miami-lakes. • Olivia DeCastro CCHW, CTTS, Health Services Representative, Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County, Office of Community Health and Planning, olivia.decastro@flhealth.gov, 786-732-8860. • Carmen Ramos-Watson, B/Adaptable, 202-413-8899, carmen@b-adaptable.com. • Jennifer De Gruccio, Parkinson's Foundation Florida Chapter; jdegruccio@parkinson.org. • Lily Suazo, Program Administrator, JCS • Yanet Marino, JCS • Justin Galvan, Miami-Dade County Community Services Department • Lili Portmann, Community Engagement Manager at Center for Independent Living of South Florida, lili@cilsf.org; The Center empowers people with disabilities in Miami-Dade County to live independently. • Cristina Brito, Senior Director, Community Impact, United Way Miami, Britoc@unitedwaymiami.org; also, the Co-Chair of the Consortium for a Healthier Miami-Dade's Executive Board, and the Chair of the Children Issues Committee. • Carmen Teixeira-Parry, Alliance for Aging, VDC Program Coordinator, Teixeirac@allianceforaging.org. • Marla Cocalis, Program Manager, StudentsCare; We train college students to volunteer with senior facilities to do monthly activities and weekly one-on-one visits, 773-573-7328, Marla@students-care.org. • Alain Gauthier, Outreach Coordinator, Banyan Community Health • Angie Fernandez, Community Outreach-PIO, Office of the State Attorney Katherine Fernandez Rundle; fernang@MiamiSAO.com; 305-547-0724; www.miamisao.com. • Natalie Herradon, JCS 	<p>lifestyles and health promoting topics for older adult population are asked to volunteer to submit written article and/or social media postings for 2026 calendar year; please confirm your interest, topic suggestions via email to liaison: Mayra.Garcia@FLHealth.gov.</p> <p><i>Written submissions are due by 15th of month prior to publish month.</i></p>
--	---	--

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Susan Holtzman, Miami-Dade County affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), susan.holtzman@namimiami.org; NAMI Helpline 305-665-2540 (9AM-5PM); programs information go to www.NAMImiami.org. • Dianna "DI" Valenzuela, PPL-Public Partnerships, Community Liaison-State of Florida, Dvalenzuela@pplfirst.com, 786-697-1227; PPL specializes in self-directed care programs, supporting Medicaid long-term care participants stay in their homes and receive support from caregivers. • Witson Faustin, Health Services Representative, Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County, Office of Community Health & Planning, 786-732-8863, Witson.Faustin2@flhealth.gov. • Rob Collins, The Miami Foundation, rcollins@miamifoundation.org. • Stacey Silver, RDN, Manager of Healthcare Partnerships with Mom's Meals; Stacey.Silver@momsmeals.com, 561-512-7761. • Mayra Garcia, Community Liaison for the Elder Issues Committee (EIC)/Senior Community Health Nursing Supervisor, Office of Community Health & Planning, FL Department of Health in Miami-Dade County, Mayra.Garcia@FLHealth.gov. • Natalie Gray, Western Atlantic University School of Medicine, Ngray@WAUSM.education. • Lina Menendez, Community Resource Specialist at Epilepsy Alliance Florida, LMenendez@eafla.org. • Dennise Nicola, Director of Business Development, FL PACE Centers at Miami Jewish Health; DNicola@miamijewishhealth.org, 786-661-564. • Nattaliah Earle, Collective Impact Manager, Urban Health Partnerships (UHP), nattaliah@urbanhp.org, 786-412-0469. 	
Adjournment	Chair, Dennise N. adjourned the meeting at 3:03 p.m..	
Next Meeting	The next Elder Issues Committee meeting will be held virtually on Tuesday, March 31, 2026, 2:00-3:00 p.m. via Microsoft Teams.	