

# GCLEA 9/19/25 Minutes

## Administrative Items

- Meeting attendance: **Sam Lim, Kim Schofield, Meredith Peterson, Megan Andrews**, and **Rana Bayakly** were present.
- Introduction of new member: Meghan Andrews (**Megan Andrews**) introduced herself as the representative for Dr. Toomey from DPH.
- Previous meeting minutes were approved:
  - Motion to adopt: **Sam Lim**
  - Second: **Kim Schofield**
  - Passed without objections or abstentions

## Public Comments and Announcements

- **Meredith Peterson** shared information on behalf of Teri about two upcoming events:
  - 2025 Lupus Empowerment Conference: October 18th, Saturday at Atlanta Metropolitan College
  - Casino Night of Hope, A Celebration of Purpose: November 14th from 6:30 to 10:30 PM at 42 West Entertainment, Atlanta

## Stakeholder Engagement

- Discussion on improving engagement in meetings:

## Rural Georgia Initiatives

### Telehealth Update

- **Sam Lim** provided an update on the telehealth pilot project with Dougherty County Health Department:
  - Proposal to visit Dougherty County again as part of this year's grant
- **Kim Schofield** suggested combining the visit with a lunch and learn event for support groups
- **Sam Lim** proposed hiring a consultant to help coordinate telehealth initiatives – already budgeted. No objections.

### Patient Navigator Program

- **Sam Lim** mentioned that LFA-GA's patient navigator has had some health challenges
- **Meredith Peterson** will follow up with Teri to get an update on the program
- **Sam Lim** requested that patient navigators be invited to future meetings for direct updates

## Research and Data Analysis

### Epidemiology Project Update

- **Sam Lim** provided an update on the lupus epidemiology project in rural Georgia:
  - Currently abstracting from multiple
  - Focusing on cases from South Georgia (Macon and below)
  - Over 225 individuals identified using the strictest definition of lupus
  - Approximately 300 individuals identified when using a looser definition

### **Cancer and Lupus Research**

- **Rana Bayakly** reported on the data linkage between lupus patients and cancer registry:
  - Data linkage completed up to 2023 cancer incidence file
  - Analysis restricted to Fulton and DeKalb residents for better case ascertainment
  - Preliminary observation may indicate higher rates of women-specific cancers among lupus patients

### **BRFSS Update**

- **Rana Bayakly** discussed BRFSS funding and question costs:

### **Challenges and Proposed Solutions**

#### **Rural Hospital Collaboration**

- **Sam Lim** highlighted difficulties in engaging with some rural hospitals
  - Challenges in accessing the hospital to find lupus cases
  - Hospital staff seem too busy to engage in additional projects
- Proposed solutions:
  - **Kim Schofield** suggested setting up meetings with key hospital staff during the planned visits
  - **Sam Lim** proposed potentially leveraging legislative connections to help open doors

#### **Legislative and Funding Updates**

- **Sam Lim** shared positive news regarding CDC funding:
  - Received notice of award from CDC for the next year of funding

### **Future Planning**

#### **Upcoming Workshop**

- **Sam Lim** mentioned the commitment to organize another workshop
- Suggestions for improvement:
  - Involve Teri in the planning process
  - Consider linking with an LFA event to increase patient participation
  - Explore ways to get more collaborative members involved
  - Can use meeting to update Action Plan

### **Website Development**

- **Kim Schofield** and **Meredith Peterson** provided an update on the website development:

### **State Plan Update**

- **Kim Schofield** noted that the last GCLEA state plan was from 2017 and needs to be updated
- Further discussion on this topic is planned for the next meeting

### **Next Steps and Meeting Closure**

- Next meeting date: October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025