



Older Adult Services Advisory Committee Services Work Group

Date: June 18, 2007

Attending: Carol Aronson (co-chair), Marianne Brennan, Ann Cooper, Kelly Cunningham, Frank Daigh, , Jill Daigh, Diane Drew, Darcia Ferrari, Mary Geis, Donna Ginther (co-chair), Joyce Gusewelle, Carolyn Guthman, Sherry Hamlin, Julie Hess, Myrtle Klauer, John Lackland, Daniel McCloud, Walt Meyers, Robin Morgan, Margaret Niederer, Mike O'Donnell, Amy Paschedag, Mary Patton, Sally Petrone, Tarry Plattner, Margaret Rudnik, Karen Schainker, and Debbie Weber.

Guests: Sean Horn, Julie Glawe, John Morrison, Mickey Rendok, Bert Weber, Bill Jung, Linda Podeschi, Colleen Bennett, Karen Cripps and Maggie Martino.

Introduction and approval of the May 21, 2007 minutes

- **Development of a Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP) for Illinois:**
 - **Erica Interrante, IDOT**, discussed the HSTP for Illinois and how it was designed to cover rural transportation needs. The HSTP will be comprehensive and will address the needs of older adults. There is a plan for each area. There is a regional transportation committee and meetings are open to the public & provide opportunities for advocacy groups to add input even if they aren't on the transportation board. The State funds coordinators throughout the state to develop the plans. Erica encouraged providers of transportation to make sure they make themselves known to the coordinators so they are not left out of the plan. Erica also discussed the New Freedom funding which provides funding for services that go above and beyond ADA services. Erica stated that if people want input on prioritizing the transportation new initiatives and projects they should get involved in your regional meetings.
 - **Linda Podeschi, IL Public Transportation Association**, reported that 24 counties out of the 102 in Illinois have no public transportation services. As baby boomers require transportation this need will increase. Linda discussed the downstate transportation act and discussed that they were advocating for a 10% increase in operating budget for downstate transportation. She stated there is money to expand programs in the coming years. Mobility issues need to be considered when developing transportation plans.
 - **Bill Jung, Rides Mass Transit**, is a transportation provider that serves 13 counties in rural Illinois. He states that many routes are based on time sensitive and location sensitive. He discussed his program which is available to everyone without requirements or restrictions. It provides door to door and door through door service and is available for schedule route

- transportation and on demand servicing. The buses run until midnight and out of area transportation is available. Bill stated that concentrating resources is key. His project started in 1979 and was changed in 1990 to allow for the rural mass transit areas to start. Rides Mass Transit is a municipal entity. The cost per trip to the agency is \$11-\$12 per one way trip and an average trip is approximately 13-15 miles. Reimbursement from the clients vary on the individual and the program they are enrolled in. Bill reports that the average cost for a person paying out of pocket is about \$2 a one way trip. They offer service outside the district also (St. Louis, Chicago, etc) and can cross county lines. They have 68 vehicles and offer very flexible service schedules. Workers will try to assist clients with rescheduling Dr's appointments etc when no vehicle is available. Rides Mass Transit is getting ready to offer (through the New Freedom funding) a stretcher transportation program in Pope and Hardin counties. Rides Mass Transit offers drivers and an escort program through CCP demonstration project. Workers will go with clients on errands, put away groceries, wait in Dr's offices, go in and get clients and assist them to the vehicles. This is viewed as "assisted transportation".
- **Bert Weber, IDOA**, reports that transportation is a high priority for IDOA. All 13 PSAs fund transportation in some capacity. 3 PSAs (areas 4,5, & 8) fund Assisted transportation projects. Bert discussed state and federal funding and the donated funds initiative program which has 28 service providers. These providers offer demand response, door to door, door through door, and some fixed route schedules. Bert announced that the Department offers free safety training for any provider that offers transportation service to senior.
 - **Mickey Rendok & John Morrison, HFS staff**, Mickey briefly described the HFS Medicaid transportation for seniors. HFS contracted with 1st Transit to coordinate transportation needs for clients. If a person is receiving Medicaid medical programs and needs transportation to a doctor's appointment they can call 1st transit for assistance. Participants must go to the closest appropriate facility. If you chose any other facility (which is the clients choice to do), you will have to find your own transportation. HFS states that they are in need of service providers in many areas. The state reimburses providers. HFS also pays for non-medical emergencies, med cars, service cars, taxis, and private auto reimbursement (just mileage). For more information you can contract Mickey at Mickey.Rednok@illinois.gov. Donna Ginther announced that AARP has announced that it is making transportation a national initiative next year.
- **Specialized Transportation for Older Adults**
 - **Karen Schainker, Senior Services of Central Illinois Senior Center**, indicated that senior center transportation is only partial funded. She stated that unfortunately, funding dictates what the service is instead of the need dictating the services. Her vehicles go into the rural suburbs 1X a week. Suggested donation of \$1.50 /1-way trip for seniors. Karen stated that the CCU is authorizing Flexible Spending money for private rides also.
 - **Tarry Plattner, RSVP**, reported that the RSVP program is available in every state. There are 23 projects in Illinois. It is a program designed to help individuals aged 55+ get involved with volunteering in services in the community. They have over 15,000 volunteers. RSVP is a match service that connects the senior volunteer with agencies that need volunteers. Bloomington/Normal has over 700 volunteers and has provided over 100,000 hour of volunteer work. Volunteers assist with home delivered meals, errands,

- escort services, trainers, and transporting. A challenge for the volunteers are gas prices, assisting with the frail seniors and those with dementia. RSVP does not reimburse for volunteer work but they can reimburse the volunteer for their gas getting to and from an agency. RSVP also offers liability and accident insurance coverage when the volunteer is working at the RSVP agency.
- **Karen Cripps, ADS Association**, reported that it is difficult for the ADSs to fund vehicles and cover their entire service areas. Transportation can limit the number of clients an ADS has due to hours of operation, transportation times and service areas. ADSs are reimbursed at a CCP rate of \$8.30 a one way trip. Karen reports that it costs and ADS an average of \$12 for a one-way trip. The ADS association is looking at increasing rates for services and transportation rates, insurance pooling, equipment grants, education and training of contracted vendors, and participation in the HSTP meetings. Karen stated that arranging transportation for a dementia clients or a medically frail client if very difficult. ADSs are also looking a ways to utilize vans during the times they aren't needed which is usually about 4 hours/day. Dialysis transportation is also a big issue for ADSs. ADS standards state that 45 minutes to an hour is the maximum amount of time a client should be on a bus. A discussion began on the possibility of ADSs using those 4 hours of downtime in the middle of the day to transport clients to congregate meal sites, or to deliver HDMs, or start a shopping program that would take seniors to stores like Aldi's or Walmart on specific days.
 - **Diane Drew, CHELP homemaker agency**, stated that cost is one of the biggest issues for homemakers. It's expensive for homemakers to own and maintain a car. In Chicago, providers are concerned because public transportation is the main mode of transportation and its set to double in cost soon. Insurance and good accessible cars (no trucks or cars that are too low) require high costs to own and maintain and these employees are low paid. Rates of reimbursement for mileage to homemakers vary. The CCP program reimburses for the unit (hour) of service not by mileage. Many times a clients CCP hours of service are being spent on transportation time instead of care. Issues also arise with providers on whether they can take clients to the nearest grocery store (which may not be the cheapest) or the cheapest store which might be farther away. It is also many times difficult to schedule doctor's appointments during the homemaker's set times. It was suggested that homemakers should look at becoming Medicaid providers for transportation.
 - **Joyce Gusewelle & Julie Glawe, Faith and Action**, reported that faith and action groups are volunteer caregiver programs that offer respite, light meals, and light housework. There are currently 33 programs in Illinois. The services are all provided by volunteers and are all faith based. The programs do have geographic boundaries and they serve clients that cannot access normal services. There is no charge for services. Programs have some paid staff. Funding comes from grants and local foundations. Donations can also be made. Fundraising and in-kind donations of space are common. The Piatt program has 300 volunteers, and has received over 1,000 requests for transportation and has driven over 30,000 miles. In Illinois the majority of the programs are senior based. Clients requiring specialized medical care require numerous doctors and numerous trips. This requires a lot of volunteer hours and education of the volunteers. Empowering of the volunteers so they have the knowledge they need to do their jobs is important. Julie's program does an in home assessment and makes the

appropriate referrals if her program isn't the best fit for a client. Liability insurance for the volunteers is available and they offer reimbursement for mileage.

Next Steps:

- The May meeting minutes will be posted on the Department's website. The website address is www.state.il.us/aging/1athome/oasa/oasa.htm.
- Robin will email out the recommendation from last year so members can begin to review them in preparation for next month's meetings.

Meeting Schedule:

This committee meets on the 3rd Monday of the month from 10:30 am – 3:00 pm at the AARP office in Springfield. The next meeting is scheduled for July 16th. Future meeting dates are:

- August 20
- September 17
- October 15
- November 19