



Illinois Council on Aging & Older Adult Services Advisory Committee COVID-19/Joint Meeting Minutes

Date: April 24, 2020 9:30 – 11:00 a.m. (Approved June 16, 2020)

Call in: Dial: #1-415-655-0002 Access code: 282 621 047 #, then press # again

IN ATTENDANCE:

OASAC Committee Members

Paula Basta, Director & OASAC Chair

Sherry Barter Hamlin

Paul Bennett

Amy S. Brown

Meghan Carter

Theresa Collins

Dr. Thomas Cornwell

Cindy Cunningham

Topaz Grunderson-Schweska

Lori Hendren

Linda Hubbartt

Susan Hughes

Michael Koronkowski

John Larsen

Patricia Manning

Phyllis Mitzen

David Olsen

Sandra Pastore

Sara Ratcliffe

Susan Real

Jacqueline Rodriguez

Gustavo Saberbein

Teva Shirley

Jason Speaks

Cathy Weightman-Moore

ICoA Committee Members:

Phyllis Mitzen— Chair

Jane Angelis

Christie Goleman

Anthony Frazier

Margaret Huyck

Susan Lawler

Patricia Marton

Mubarak Mirjat

Robert O'Conner

OASAC Ex-Officio Committee Members:

Bonnie Hartman-Walter (for Kelly Cunningham) – Department of Healthcare and Family Services

Gwen Diehl – Department of Veterans Affairs

Mari Money (for Christopher Meister) – Department of Finance

Kelly Richards – State Long Term Care Ombudsman
Megan Spitz – Illinois Housing Development Authority

Department on Aging staff:

Rhonda Armstead, Mike Berkes, Samantha Brill, Becky Dragoo, Mike Dropka, John Eckert, Sophia Gonzalez, Jason Jordan, Amy Lulich, Lora McCurdy, LaRohnda Williams, Lisa Zuurbier

GUESTS:

Dave Wilson

OASAC COMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE:

Bill Bell

Kelly Fischer

Dave Lowitzki

Ancy Zacharia

Debra Bryars – Department of Public Health

Lyle VanDeventer – Department of Human Services

Welcome by Director Basta, Call to Order, Introduce Members & Staff:

Director Paula Basta welcomed everyone to the joint meeting and called the meeting to order. Introductions were made.

**IdoA working on normal responsibilities & significant COVID-19 activities-
Coordination/collaboration w/ Aging Network:**

Director Basta shared that Adult Day Services have been temporarily closed due to COVID-19 but they have continued to work remotely calling seniors to ensure they are doing well and providing home delivered meals. The Department has been sending out both targeted and all-Aging Network guidance to all of our providers and partners since mid-March to help them learn about and adapt to the changes required during COVID-19 pandemic. Lora McCurdy added that it is a team effort between the Department and the Aging Network. She added that federal CMS has allowed the states to amend their HCBS Waivers to address immediate needs related to addressing COVID-19. Specifically, an Appendix K- has been amended and the Department is working with HFS to submit this request. The Department shared that since the ADS sites have closed, In-Home Service hours have increased to provide additional assistance for these CCP participants. One of the amendment requests from the Department to CMS has been to loosen certain requirements for in-home care workers to meet the demand for in-home workers to meet increased needs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Director Basta additionally shared that on Saturday, the Governor's office will be highlighting the Aging Network's work during the 2:30 pm daily press conference. Director Basta stated that a community effect has been clear in trying to send the message to seniors that they are not alone, and we are not working in silos, we are talking more. Director stated images of positive stories have been collected to try to make seniors feel at ease and not be afraid.

Work w/ IEMA/FEMA & Accessing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

Becky Dragoo shared that the Department has a partnership with IEMA for PPE during the Coronavirus Pandemic. The Department has a wonderful partnership with Central Illinois IEMA Headquarters and obtained PPE for in-home providers. Orders have been put in and these orders are being pushed to provide PPE. Dr. Mubarak Mirjat asked a question regarding obtaining PPE in Evergreen Park, there are healthcare providers unable to find masks and PPE. Becky stated that it is difficult to obtain PPE at drug stores and hardware stores. She shared that the CDC has several links on how to make a mask homemade. Becky also suggested contacting the local Department of Public Health. they have a prioritization system for acute care and in-home care providers. Other reliable organizations would be the World Health Organization and the CDC websites. Director Basta suggested contacting the Evergreen Council to see if they are offering any assistance and to contact Sophia Gonzalez, who sent out the meeting invite for further assistance from the Department.

ACL Expansion of HDM/Meals:

Becky Dragoo shared that home delivered meals have been tracked daily and thousands of meals have been going out daily. AAAs track the number of meals going out from the nutrition providers. There have been many volunteers for meal deliveries and volunteers have been monitored on day to day basis to ensure that the needs are being met. Susan Lawler shared that in her neighborhood there has been an outside bookstore for free for seniors. Patricia Manning shared that a group of people in her neighborhood have volunteered to help people over the age of 60 and individuals with disabilities and have been a big help. She shared that two of her personal college friends have reached out to her from very long distances to make sure she was okay.

IDoA Emergency Senior Services grant to CCUs:

Lora McCurdy shared that with these ESS funds the Aging Network can assure that seniors receive meals and emergency senior services. John Eckert added that there have been an amazing amount of individual cases and high-level communication with the CCUs remotely with the Department individual needs. Processes have changed as CCUs are completing remote assessments and choices screens. These processes have been moving smoothly with the hard work and dedication of the CCUs. McCurdy asked how the CCUs are doing with ESS? Amy Brown shared that ESS funds have been fabulous because many seniors do not want to go on a meal program. Brown also shared that she was on a call with Susan Real to talk about ideas on meal deliveries. Mike Berkes stated that the ESS funds that have been sent out have been split between the CCU participants that are older adults and for individuals that are not CCP but have an APS case, including individuals between the ages of 18 and 59 years old. ESS has been the payer of last resort to meet the needs of older adults. Berkes shared that once the first round of financial reporting has been received by the Department then more numbers can be shared. Some of the things that these funds have been used for are assistance with medication, food, wheelchair repairs, and deliveries. It was shared that there is a referral form for CCP, APS, AAAs, and other providers to refer individuals back to CCUs. Linda Hubbartt shared that ESS funds have been a remarkable resource for all the nine counties they provide services in and they have been used in a unique way in each. Hubbartt stated that the responses from the Department have been almost immediately and that the Department has a great system and she feels proud to be a part of this system. Teva Shirley shared that ESS funds have been very, very helpful.

ACL ADRC- IT/Social Isolation grant:

Amy Lulich shared that under the Cares Act there have been 50 million dollars awarded to the States for ADRCs to address Social Isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Department requested an allotment of 1.7 million dollars in their proposal. This proposal includes providing technology devices where needed to align with a Department's priority to reduce Social Isolation. The Department will be working with providers on making referrals for those in need. Lulich shared that the proposal was submitted yesterday, and she will let everyone know when she hears back. Paul Bennett asked who the recipient of these funds would be. Lulich clarified that the Department would be the lead agency and that we will be partnering with DHS- DRS and DDD. She also shared that April 15th was the original due date for grant submission, but it was extended to April 27th.

State Ombudsman Update

Kelly Richards shared that federal guidelines issued on March 13 restricted visitation in Nursing Homes and as of March 16th all face to face visits were ceased and temperature checks were initiated to limit transmissions. Richards also shared that Ombudsmen continue to take complaints and have been reaching out to residents and resident representatives. Guidance has also been shared on questions that should be asked to residents by Ombudsman. Postcards about Ombudsman access during COVID-19 have been sent out to residents. Ombudsmen have also been contacting residents that had a recent case within the last 6 months. In addition, resources have been shared on the monthly memo that is sent out. For example, information on the stimulus checks was shared on the Monday Memo regarding if NH residents will be able to keep these checks. Window visits will start to promote the program and get in contact with residents. For those in need of PPE, the Ombudsman has been in contact with Becky Dragoo and PPE has been signed off to these NH's as quickly as possible. The Ombudsman program has also been tracking the COVID- 19 cases in the program and contacting family members. The State Ombudsman has sent out CARE Act guidance and ACL guidance on what these funds can be used for. Lori Hendren asked what the Department is doing about the non-payment discharges, facilitating communication and tracking cases publicly since tracking is one week behind. Richards confirmed that program tracking is one week behind. She also stated that there are facilities on the list that should not be and

vice-versa because of the one-week lag time, so she cannot guarantee 100% accuracy but will share the list. Richards additionally stated that they are working to facilitate communication between the residents and the families during this pandemic. Residents have been communicating via face time and regular phone calls and the program has been assisting with coordinating a time for these calls. The Ombudsman program has received complaints about some residents that are already in the process on non-payment discharges after their appeal procedure and the program will work with the facilities during this pandemic. Cathy Weightman-Moore added that when restrictions started the program started making calls and asked how the facility staff was working with residents to communicate and for resident activities and they have also checked NF face book pages. Weightman-Moore also stated that some facilities secured IPADs for residents for communication with families and some are asking for emails. All facilities are now required to report COVID-19 cases and there has been a lot of communication with facility staff and with residents. Paul Bennett shared that AgeOptions has been trying to get access to individuals under the Colbert and Williams consent decrees to talk to them. Bennett suggested that AgeOptions needs to have a meeting with their local Ombudsman since they may be trying to talk to the same people. Director Basta agreed and shared that NF's would be the last ones to open-up to outside visitors and the Department needs to look outside the box a how we can support residents. Amy Brown asked if there are any changes to the end of life process to include COVID-19. Richards responded that the guidance from March 13th allows for visitors at the end of life. Weightman-Moore added that it depends on the facility and if there are any problems then the Ombudsman should be contacted. Hendren asked if the Department is pushing out information on the Ombudsman Program. Director Basta shared that the Department's website includes a wealth of information about the program and how to access an Ombudsman. It was also suggested that the Department have a call with AARP to discuss how to get the word out and share the message that "we are here for you and you are not alone".

Other issues/Announcements/Public Comments:

Selma D'Souza, Chief of staff shared that some initial numbers for the Census return rates have been shared and some states are doing better than others; she would like to keep Illinois in the top ten. There have been surveys completed online and there have also been calls to reach out. Some areas of the state are doing better than others. D'Souza thanked Becky Drago for the work with the AAA's have done with outreach and shared that the Census work continues.

Samantha Brill shared that she shared a link to the Governor's 96 COVID-19 testing facilities around the State and noted that this list is updated daily.

Motion to adjourn:

The meeting adjourned at 10:51a.m. Phyllis Mitzen thanked the Department. Director Basta thanked everyone and asked everyone to stay safe.