



State of Illinois  
Illinois Department on Aging

**Older Adult Services Advisory Committee  
Executive Committee Meeting**

Date: January 10, 2022 **(Approved on April 11, 2022)**

Call in: Dial: #1-415-655-0002 Access code: 2461 007 7985#, then press # again

WebEx: Please see Outlook invite for Video Option

**In Attendance:**

OASAC Executive Committee Members:

Paula A. Basta, Director, Department on Aging  
Sherry Barter-Hamlin, The Voyage Senior Living  
Paul Bennett, Citizen member over the age of 60  
Amy Brown, CRIS Healthy Aging Center  
Kelly Fischer, Pathway to Living  
Topaz Gunderson-Schweska, Molina Managed Care  
Linda Hubbartt, Senior Services of Effingham City County  
Mike Koronkowski, UIC College of Pharmacy  
David Olsen, Alzheimer's Association Illinois Chapter  
Susan Real, East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging  
Gustavo Saberbein, Family Caregiver

Department Representatives:

Sheila A. Baker, Department of Public Health  
Kelly Cunningham, Department of Healthcare and Family Services  
Megan Spitz, Illinois Housing Development Authority  
Lyle VanDeventer, DHS, Division of Rehabilitation Services

Department on Aging staff:

Selma D'Souza, John Eckert, Sophia Gonzalez, Amy Lulich, Chelsey Peters, Iris Schweier and Beth Skeeters

Guests: Robin Morgan and Pamela Winsel (HFS)

Introductions & \*Call to Order:

John Eckert welcomed everyone to the meeting and shared that Director Basta will be joining late and Lora McCurdy will not be joining the call today. Eckert asked for a motion to start the meeting. David Olsen made the motion and Lyle Vandeventer seconded.

Approval of October 18, 2021, Executive Committee meeting minutes:

Eckert asked for a motion to review and approve the October 18, 2021, meeting minutes. David Olsen made the motion; Lyle Vandeventer seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously with no corrections or additions and will be posted on the Department website.

### Discuss Workforce Retention:

An open discussion on workforce retention ensued. It has been reported that CCUs need Care Coordinators, and we know that there is a shortage of employees across all industries, it is not unique to social services. There is an inter-state departmental workgroup meeting looking at this issue and what we need to do as a statewide perspective. The Department is trying to get out the CCU Workforce Retention Grants that will give each CCU contract up to \$175,000 to try to look at ways to help them to recruit and train additional staff and keep caseloads down. John Eckert asked for feedback on what needs to be done with the workforce workgroup. Paul Bennett suggested revising and reenergizing that workforce workgroup. He shared that the Health and Human Services workforce will be having an advocacy event on this issue on January 21<sup>st</sup> with many agencies and organizations sponsoring the event. The National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP) is doing something to incentivize people to go into gerontology and social work. Bennett added that this is an across-the-board issue and there is a need to keep this on our OASAC agenda. Amy Lulich shared that the NASHP is doing some work to identify individuals to get involved with in gerontology and they have an IL older adult group that has been talking about the need for social workers within aging and enrollment for schools in social work decreasing. Lulich does not know the status of the group. Amy Brown stated that we need to keep this at the top of the agenda because the work cannot be done if we do not have frontline staff. Sherry Barter-Hamlin agreed and stated that we also outreach in each community. Perhaps talking to high school leaders and planners, maybe they didn't think of gerontology, but they are thinking of some type of human service. Eckert will send something out to all members to solicit workgroup members and will need someone to lead since all Department staff are stretched at this time.

### Discuss OASAC 2022 Priorities:

John Eckert shared that all 2021 OASAC Priorities have been completed and asked everyone to look at that list again and discuss if those are the priorities we want to follow for 2022 calendar year. He asked if anyone had anything to add or detract for this calendar year. The Medicaid Subcommittee is making sure that all people eligible for Medicaid apply. The subcommittee members have met the need for the subcommittee, but this group will continue to meet since another 18 months are required. This past year OASAC had a Managed Care presentation, and we have heard that they continue to grow. Kelly Cunningham shared that there are over 3 million MCO members. The total enrollment in Medicaid has increased during the Public Health Emergency period. Eckert shared that the development of the Department's Aging Cares information technology reporting system continues to make good progress. Mike Berkes added that the timeline has been extended and they are bringing everyone back to speed. The developers on contract have been reset and additional program individuals and developers have been brought onboard. The Department has been testing some components of the system and Phase 1 should be completed by the end of calendar year 2022.

Amy Lulich shared that additional funding was received for FY22 for the IL Care Connections grant and this will be for CCP participants. She asked everyone to publicize this information to their organizations and to people that work with older adults. Lulich added that the Department is doing some exciting things in terms of partnering with the UIC Rep program which is an evidence-based wellness recovery action program. On the preventive health program, we are working with the Alumni Pathways to Help program at AgeOptions. Bennett shared that he is supportive on continuing the IL Care Connections grant and is wondering if it needs to be reframed in any way. For example, making this one strategy to address Social Isolation. Lulich stated that the purpose of IL Care Connections is to address Social Isolation and Loneliness among older adults and persons with disabilities.

One of our priorities is providing updates regarding remote work and hybrid, the CCUs are now getting back into the older adult's homes. The Department has encouraged them to get back out as much as possible, we know that they have staff shortages, and this is something we must keep watching. Mike Berkes shared that the network is moving, but we still have the Appendix K in place to be used if the numbers rise again. The ARPA funds are being used to help seniors and across other age groups and there are other federal dollars coming that can be used to help serve communities. We also want to continue to update on the Colbert and Williams consent decrees, there have been some emphasis on diversions, community transition initiatives and incentivizing. Kelly Cunningham added that the community transition initiative is something that they have had in place for a little over one year as part of their contract with MCOs. They are contemplating some significant changes to that initiative as they have been charged to that and have a larger responsibility with the consent decree compliance. She added that with respect to the transitions, they are working on some contract language changes and amendments to tighten up that transition initiative and establish penalties for non-compliance. Bennett asked if there is an update on the current assessment tool and DON because there was legislation introduced under the general assembly related to the DON score. Cunningham stated that she has not seen anything new outside of the normal of trying to look at LTC eligibility assessment and ways to replace the determination of need. Someone mentioned that the new legislation is SB2420.

Eckert stated that another priority is Healthy Aging and Prevention, we can maybe look at the Social Isolation piece or a subset of that. Susan Hughes always pushes this topic. The Department continues having the quality webinars, we had one in which Mike Koronkowski discussed best practices for Healthy Aging Prevention and we will continue planning future quality webinars. The Department welcomes new topics and feedback. Kimberly Flesch is helping with expanding the data collected by the Department and we are working with other State agencies on the best way to use this data. Eckert stated that the Dementia Friendly Communities are expanding and asked Amy Brown to share how these are going in her area. Amy shared that the Age Friendly Community in Champaign Urbana is happening in a big way, and the University is involved. In that area they are in the middle of prioritizing goals, and it is extending to include Social Isolation. The one in Vermilion County is still trying to establish a Dementia Friendly Community, it was established and had been put on hold to focus on vaccinations. Theresa Collins will be presenting during the next Full OASAC meeting, as we continue trying to learn our members organization initiatives. Eckert will flesh out these priorities and circulate to all OASAC members to review prior to formal approval at the upcoming full OASAC meeting.

#### Department Updates:

##### *CCP Enhanced FMAP Incentive*

Mike Berkes reminded everyone that the FMAP dollars is the 10% match back from federal CMS and Aging had created a spending plan for just under \$100MIL. The Department worked with HFS to submit the Aging Spending Plan. There are 10 spending areas under this plan that include rate increases, Workforce retention grants and adding Assistive Technology into the waiver. We have been given the green light for 8 out of the 10 spending areas. The two spending areas that have not been approved are Assistive Technology and Environmental Modification as CMS has questions on these two areas. The Department is working to get staff to move these grants. Each CCU can request up to \$175,000 per contract and this money can be used for hiring and retaining CCU staff.

Rate increase went into effect on January 1, 2022, for in-home, ADS, and Demonstration Program providers. We have rate increases coming for the CCU's with these FMAP funds. We will also be looking at new waiver services and enhancements as we work with the HFS group to do the required formal waiver amendment. The Department will be moving the money first and then circulating back around to see through all the priorities and start writing and working with HFS.

Chelsey Peterson shared that the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant applications went out to the AAAs on October 1<sup>st</sup> and the AAAs are requested an extension. The Department has received all 13 AAA's application (narratives and budgets) and eleven have been approved. Fiscal is currently routing these grants for signatures. ARPA grants are to be used to expand and enhance different programs including Title III services, nutrition, congregate dining, and home delivered meals. Susan Real added that these funds are also being used to support the State Plan on Aging focus on expanding vaccinations and booster access. Nutrition integrity is also part of this focus, providing a second meal for older adults and reducing Social Isolation. Paul Bennett asked about the NASHP committee that is working with the AAAs that Amy Lulich spoke to earlier and asked if they are committing on expanding caregiver assessments. Lulich shared that they are still waiting for finalization from two areas, and she will try to share this information as soon as they have everything together.

Amy Lulich shared that the Department has a COVID section on the website and it continues to be updated as new information is received. There is also a weekly resource activity email that is sent to the network with updates every Friday. These updates include information on testing sites and hours. We also have information from the IDPH adopting the CDC guidelines on Isolation. If anyone does not receive this information and wishes to, please let us know. The Department is also working with sister agencies and HFS on inter-organizational outreach on getting Medicaid enrollees vaccinated. HFS is working on getting a number of Medicaid enrollees that are vaccinated and cross referencing with IDPH. There is a CCU pilot with 4 CCUs (the top vaccinated zip codes) where we asked the CCUs to do outreach to these older adults and help with vaccinations. They will also be asking these older adults why they have not been vaccinated. This is a targeted outreach, and we hope to have a quick turnaround. Eckert added that there may be vaccination fatigue. Our Director has continued to remind us that this is not going away. We need to educate and convince by using different approaches and we cannot give up. We need to make sure we get all our seniors vaccinated.

John Eckert shared that AT&T is going to be discontinuing its 3G and converting its network to a 4G at a minimum. The Department has been working with all the EHRS providers to discuss how they will be swapping all EHRS devices for the 30,000 individuals receiving this service under the Aging waiver. EHRS providers have also been working with the MCO's and the Department has been trying to assist. In a few days a list of specific older adults will be provided of those that they have not been able to reach. EHRS providers will also be coordinating with CCUs to swap these devices. The Department gave the EHRS providers permission to mail the new units to the homes. In the next couple of weeks, we will be working with both CCUs and EHRS providers. Paul Bennett asked if the EHRS units are tied to mobile phones and if they need a certain number of Gs for the service to work. Eckert clarified that the device is for homes and for cell phones, this change is effective February 1<sup>st</sup>. Berkes added that they are 4G devices and we are getting close to where we need to be nationwide.

Mike Berkes shared that this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year for the Emergency Senior Services (ESS) grants that were started during the Public Health Emergency (PHE) in March 2020. These funds went

out to the CCUs as gap filling funds. The spending has been under \$1MIL each quarter. There have been times when MCO participants have also been helped with these funds. For 2022/2023 we are not supplanting any program with ESS, but we are providing funds on the Aging Waiver side and meeting unmet needs. The ESS funds have helped individual and mass type purchases for hygiene masks, ethnic meals in or out of the City of Chicago among other needs. The CCUs have made ESS a success and we thank you for that.

Review/approve Agenda for February 14, 2022, Full OASAC Meeting:

John Eckert asked for a motion to review and approve the February 14<sup>th</sup> Full OASAC agenda. There were no additions or corrections. David Olsen made the motion and Lyle Vandeventer seconded. The agenda was approved.

Public Comments, Other Issues & Announcements:

None.

Motion to Adjourn:

John Eckert asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Linda Hubbartt made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Gustavo Saberbein seconded. The motion to adjourn was approved unanimously at 3:00 p.m.