



State of Illinois
Illinois Department on Aging

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

Date: October 18, 2021 (**Approved 01.10.2022**)

Call in: Dial: #1-415-655-0002 Access code: 177 138 8250#, then press # again

WebEx: Please see Outlook invite for Video Option

In Attendance:

OASAC Executive Committee Members:

John Eckert for Paula 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
Mike Koronkowski, UIC College of Pharmacy
David Olsen, Alzheimer's Association Illinois Chapter
Susan Real, East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging
Gustavo Saberbein, Help at Home/Oxford HealthCare

Department Representatives:

Robin Morgan for Kelly Cunningham, Department of Healthcare and Family Services
Lyle VanDeventer, DHS, Division of Rehabilitation Services

Department on Aging staff:

Desirey Ackermann, Sue DeBoer, Selma D'Souza, Sophia Gonzalez, Chelsey Peters, Iris Schweier and Megan Thornton.

Absent:

OASAC Executive Committee Members:

Linda Hubbartt, Senior Services of Effingham City County

Department Representatives:

Megan Spitz, Illinois Housing Development Authority
Betty Stewart for Daniel Levad, Department of Public Health

Introductions & *Call to Order:

John Eckert welcomed everyone to the meeting and shared that Director Basta was unable to make the meeting today and Lora McCurdy is on vacation. We do have other Department staff on the call today. Eckert asked for a motion to start the meeting. Lyle Vandeventer made the motion and David Olsen seconded.

Approval of July 12, 2021 Executive Committee meeting minutes:

John Eckert asked for a motion to review and approve the July 12, 2021 meeting minutes. Gustavo Saberbein made the motion; Sherry Barter-Hamlin seconded. Sherry noted one correction, she is the CEO and the minutes it indicated that she is the COO. The minutes were approved unanimously with this one correction and will be posted on the Department website.

Approve 2022 Meetings Schedules-

Sophia Gonzalez asked for a motion to approve the 2022 Meeting schedule. Sherry Barter-Hamlin made the motion and Paul Bennett seconded. The 2022 Meeting schedule was approved unanimously and will be posted on the website.

Department Updates:

Elderly Waiver Renewal

John Eckert shared that the Elderly Waiver was renewed by CMS for 5 years, effective 10/01/2021. Mike Berkes who has led the Waiver Renewal team along with other Department staff could not be at this meeting today. The Department continues to pull this information together and will be excited to share with the network the revised performance metrics. He thanked the HFS partners for their assistance in getting this timely approval. Robin Morgan from HFS stated that it was a team effort and shared that HFS was able to match the Elderly Waiver language with language that had been used in Person's with a Disability Waiver that had already been renewed. HFS is trying to keep all waiver performance measures closely aligned. Eckert added Pam Winsel, manager of all the State's Waiver took a positive step to convene all waiver managers and their higher-level staff to get together and talk about various issue, to troubleshoot and learn from each other. Paul Bennett asked if there is still a requirement in the DRS Waiver for the EHRS to have a landline or if a mobile phone is acceptable like with the Elderly Waiver. Lyle VanDeventer shared that before it had to be a landline, but now they are working on changing the requirements in Rule.

Enhanced FMAP

The Enhanced FMAP has been partially approved by the Governor's office and HFS, but we are still waiting for final approval from Federal CMS. CMS requested a narrative and some clarifications to move forward. As has been shared in the past, there are 10 spending areas that look at two different areas; immediate stop gap and expanding Waiver services. For the Workforce Retention grants, we are looking at 58 or 60 contracts to get a one-time infusion for up to \$175,000 each. This is a one year \$10.5 million allocation, it is going to look at ways to attract and retain qualifying employees. The Department is looking at two deliverables right now. Sophia Gonzalez shared some examples on what CCUs can use these grants for; including grants to enhance their job posting advertisements, for trainings, getting safety alarms if the CCUs are in dangerous neighborhoods, incentive payments, bonuses, and overtime payments. Eckert shared that in some of parts in Chicago and St. Claire County CCUs have lost Care Coordinators because they did not feel safe. Meghan Thornton added that the Department reached out to several CCUs to get ideas on how the FMAP Workforce Retention grants could be used. Feedback was received from some CCUs and these ideas will be included in the grant language to give CCUs ideas. Funding for assistive technology devices ties with IL Care Connections but we want to expand it beyond the devices and hot spots to include assistive technology devices to increase a person's ADL's and IADL's. These are small ticket devices that will help keep people in the home longer; we have \$10 million allotment for this year and \$30 million for years 2 and 3. However, we must look at sustainability for this one. We have funds to get more involved with Community Re-Integration and Deflection for year 3. There are funds for increases for CCUs; 9 million dollars for FY22 and 10 million dollars for FY23. We

also have funds for a fall detection enhancement to be added to the EHRS service; \$900,000 for FY22 and \$7.2 million for year two. For environmental modifications we have \$1.5 million this year and \$3 million each for year 2 and 3. Funds for ADS community outings is another area, we have \$1 million in year 1 and \$2 million in years 2 and 3. These are offset payments and we would also need to look at sustainability. This would give older adults an opportunity to go to games, stores, and other things and not just go out to an ADS and sit there all day. An ADS Dementia rate will begin in year 3 and this will be \$4.2 million dollars. Intensive Home Services which is a little over \$3 million dollars still needs fleshed out. All of the new and expanded Waiver services will require an amendment and sustainability considerations.

Amy Lulich added that these funds were authorized through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) for HCBS services for states to enhance current services. Eckert stated that the actual spending authority for the funding goes through September 30, 2024, but the 10% enhanced match funding will only be received during the first year. Paul Bennett asked if the enhancements/incentives mentioned for the CCUs will also apply for APS agencies. Eckert replied that these funds do not apply to APS. Bennett shared that he is on a statewide committee for the National Association of Health State Policy and they are looking at caregiving. He asked if there can be an examination of how caregiving waivers could be enhanced in relationship to target caregiving services. Can assessments and other options that are currently available in other states HCBS waivers be enhanced? Lulich indicated she would share the link for providers to share feedback to the MAC Rebalancing committee on waiver services for both older adults and person's with disabilities, the next meeting is in November. The National Caregiver Institute is funding a couple of the AAAs that have indicated that they would like to expand their caregiving services. The Department is also exploring what other states are doing with their Medicaid programs as well.

ARPA Funding

Desiree Ackerman shared that as of October 1st they are waiting for the return of the applications and budgets from the AAA's. There are about \$50 million dollars in ARPA funds to be sent to the AAA's. Under OAS, social isolation, home delivered meals, congregate meals, family caregivers, Ombudsmen and APS. There is additional funding for COVID transportation, vaccination, and boosters.

State Plan Update

Amy Lulich added that she will be doing a longer presentation at the Full OASAC meeting on the FY22-24 State Plan that was approved by ACL in September. The State Plan is moving to implementation and she will be presenting to different Advisory groups and Committees or anyone who needs to know or can have a role and help get feedback. The link to the full approved plan was sent in the chat box.

CCU Vaccination/Outreach Survey

It was noted that Megan Thornton will also be presenting at the Full OASAC meeting on the CCU Vaccination/Outreach survey that provided good information and show the work that the CCUs have been doing. Megan provided a brief overview of the survey results. She shared that the survey was sent out to the CCUs at the end of July and information was received in August. A total of 47 contract responses were received from CCUs. A total of 95,252 older adults were engaged by the CCUs in vaccination outreach and education. About 14,500 older adults were assisted by a CCU in scheduling their first appointment and 9,000 were assisted with their second appointment. A total of 1,000 older adults were assisted by a CCU with transportation needs for their vaccinations and 1,090 homebound older adults were assisted by a CCU to receive a vaccine. The majority of the CCUs that completed the survey reported that they

collaborated with their local health departments. A total of 16 CCUs reported to have helped organize vaccine clinics. Megan also shared some of the vaccination hesitancy reasons shared by the CCUs that included general fear of vaccine, pre-existing health conditions and fear of side effects. Successful strategies were also shared by the CCUs that included encouraging participants to talk to their Primary Care Providers (PCP) among other reasons. CCUs also shared that they engaged in demographic outreach.

Paul Bennett asked if the Department has talked about or is planning to do a similar survey with the homecare agencies to find out what they are hearing regarding vaccine hesitancy. He shared that he found the presentation slides very interesting and it would be interesting to find out if the homecare agencies need help with or getting HCAs vaccinated. Eckert asked HCA providers on the call if they could share what they are doing and if they are tracking this information. Sherry Barter-Hamlin shared that she believes the association is tracking information on how many HCA's are getting vaccinated, but she is not sure that they are tracking hesitancy details. For hesitancy they are just providing education and collaborating with their local health department. Barter-Hamlin stated that she agrees with the slide information that referring to the primary care physician seems to be an excellent way of communicating with people and putting them at ease. She added that they can talk to the association to see what kind of data they have. Amy Lulich shared that the Department is gearing up to do outreach related to booster shots. She added links to the latest information regarding the booster vs. 3rd dose information in the chat box. Lulich shared that the Department has been encouraging providers and sharing information about the 3rd dose and booster shots. Director Basta participated in a townhall with Dr. Ezike and AARP last Thursday via Facebook. This recording can be viewed on the website, but unfortunately you would need you have a Facebook account to view it. The Department's training team is also working on providing information on boosters and will be having a webinar for the entire Aging network that will be scheduled soon. Bennett shared that AgeOptions has a contract with a home care entity to vaccinate people who are confined to their home. This includes the 1st and 2nd dose and currently the Pfizer booster. They will be doing this to make those vaccines available to older adults in Suburban Cook County.

Review/approve Agenda for November 15, 2021 Full OASAC Meeting:

John Eckert asked for a motion to review and approve the November 15th Full OASAC meeting agenda. Amy Brown made the motion and Paul Bennett seconded.

Eckert stated that Topaz Gunderson-Schweska will be providing an update on Molina. Amy Lulich will be talking about the 3-year State Plan on Aging and Megan Thornton will be sharing the vaccination survey PPT. Eckert asked if there were any thoughts, corrections, or additions for the agenda.

Amy Brown shared that there was a lot talk on what can be done with the money coming for staff retention and she believes that people the entire State are looking for guidance; from leaders needing to know what to do about staff retention and what was talked about today is full of relief and possible enhancements. She suggested that what was talked about today should be pointed out in the agenda in some way to show that it is being addressed and make it public. Paul Bennett asked if there is anything that can be done with regards to some of the work that was done a few years ago with Workforce Retention workgroup and to continue that conversation. He shared that the workgroup was going to talk to universities, schools of social work and gerontology regarding what can be done to incentivize students that go into this field and incentivize if they get hired Care Coordinators or workers. Eckert stated that Sandy Pastore was working with a smaller workgroup that was going to look at high school curriculum and colleges. Amy Lulich stated that Joel Rubin from the National Association of Social Workers in Illinois have an older adult shared interest group and this group has talked about workforce

issues in the past and the need for social workers in aging. She also shared that we do have some objectives around this in our State Plan about potential avenues to start exploring this more with institutions of higher learning. Rush Hospital has a robust program that investigates workforce issues too. Bennet stated that we need to keep the professional workforce issues related to hiring and retention on the agenda. Brown added that money helps but she believes that there is a need to broaden the qualification list because it is too narrow and there just are not a lot of people out there that fit it. She feels that agencies will be forced to hire out of compliance to meet numbers and goals.

Eckert asked all members to approve the November agenda; all were in favor; the agenda was approved.

Public Comments, Other Issues, & Announcements:

Kelly Fischer shared that she thinks there is such a profound quietness and sadness in the health industry right now that people are leaving the industry. From frontline workers to administrators, people are tired. She has met many people in healthcare and has learned what they have accomplished. Fischer has thought about how this group can have an influence. Perhaps, simple kindness or words of positivity because people appreciate a word of positivity. Looking at what has been accomplished and telling them that we are going to get through this, but it will take time. She asked if anyone has thought on what we can do. Eckert agreed that this is important and stated that kind words go a long way. Funds will help with staffing issues but how do we help educate people to stay in their roles. We cannot afford to lose anybody, and everybody is tired. Brown shared that compassion from funders goes a long way. She has been working with her Area Agency on Aging on some revisions to their grant and they have helped them with technical assistance. Instead of just putting it on their plate they have been working with them side by side to help them. Administrative staff are out doing home visits and working behind the desk and things like that from funders is helpful. She shared that being on zoom calls and seeing other people in their offices is also helpful. It is difficult to convince staff to go out to home visits with people that are not vaccinated because they refuse to and then come into zoom calls and not see everyone in their offices. Brown stated that we all need to be into this together. Eckert added that there are situations with CCUs and providers where we do have to go to remote and we authorize remote. Our Aging network has done great with the work that has been done. The HCA's continued to go into the homes during the pandemic and kept 100,000 people safe in their homes risking their lives and their family's lives as well. We need to look at incentives and recognize people and let them know that we are in this together. It was noted that some of this has gotten politicized and we get polarized and it is not conducive to try to get through a pandemic. Fischer shared that if we have an opportunity to share feedback to the people in the front lines in a way that would help them get through these moments that would be powerful. We don't know how that would be or who it could be from, but if that meaningful message went out there it would be helpful. Brown challenged everyone to be in the office on our next virtual OASAC meeting. Eckert thanked everyone and asked them to keep doing what they are doing.

Motion to Adjourn:

John Eckert asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mike Koronkowski made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Lyle VanDeventer seconded. The motion to adjourn was approved unanimously at 3:07 p.m.