



State of Illinois  
Illinois Department on Aging

## Older Adult Services Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

**Date: February 14, 2022 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. (Approved May 16, 2022)**

Call in: Dial: #1-415-655-0002 Access code: 2454 939 8680#, then press # again

WebEx: Please see Outlook invite for Video Option

### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

#### **OASAC Committee Members**

Director Paula A. Basta – Department on Aging  
Sherry Barter Hamlin – The Voyage Senior Living  
Paul Bennett – Citizen over the age of 60  
Meghan Carter – Legal Council for Health Justice  
Theresa Collins – Senior Services Plus Inc.  
Tracey Colagrossi - Association of Illinois Senior Centers  
Suzanne Courtheoux – Legal Aid Chicago  
Topaz Gunderson-Schweska – Molina Healthcare of Illinois  
Lori Hendren – AARP Illinois  
Kathy Honeywell – North Shore Senior Center  
Linda Hubbartt – Effingham City-County Committee on Aging  
Michael Koronkowski – UIC College of Pharmacy  
John Larson– Cantata Adult Life Services  
Sara Jean Lindholm– Citizen over the age of 60  
Dave Lowitzki – SEIU HealthCare – Illinois and Indiana  
Sharon Manning – Family Caregiver  
June McKoy - Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine  
David Olsen – Alzheimer Association Illinois Chapter  
Kimberly Palermo – Illinois Healthcare Association  
Sara Ratcliffe – Illinois HomeCare and Hospice Council  
Susan Real – East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging  
Walter Rosenberg – Rush University Medical Center  
Gustavo Saberbein – Family Caregiver  
Ancy Zacharia – Home Care Physicians

#### **Ex-officio Committee Members:**

Gwen Diehl – Department of Veterans Affairs  
Sheila Baker – Department of Public Health  
Kelly Cunningham – Department of Healthcare and Family Services  
Mari Money (for Christopher B. Meister) — Illinois Finance Authority  
Kelly Richards – State Long Term Care Ombudsman  
Megan Spitz – Illinois Housing Development Authority  
Lyle VanDeventer – Department of Human Services

**Department on Aging staff:**

Desirey Ackermann, Mike Berkes, Sarah Carlson, Joe Danner, Selma D'Souza, John Eckert, Sophia Gonzalez, Amy Lulich, Lora McCurdy, Theresa McKeon, Lee Moriarty, Katherine Ostrowski, Chelsy Peters, Michael Sartorius, Iris Schweier, Beth Skeeters, LaRhonda Williams and Lisa Zuurbier

**GUESTS:**

Lynne Bergero, Bailey Huffman, Brycie Kochuyt, Robin Morgan

**NOT IN ATTENDANCE:****OASAC Committee Members**

Cindy Cunningham – Illinois Adult Day Services Association

Susan Hughes – UIC Community Health Sciences School of Public Health

Jason Speaks – Leading Age IL

Jacqueline Rodriguez – SEIU HealthCare – Illinois and Indiana

**Welcome, Introductions, and welcome new member:**

John Eckert welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that Director Basta will be joining the meeting later. Names appearing on WebEx were called and all other callers were asked to identify themselves. Our newest member Tracey Colagrossi was introduced. Tracey shared that she is honored to be here and is looking forward to contributing. Tracey is the Senior Center manager for the Village of Arlington Heights in the Northwest Suburbs and the President of the Association of Illinois Senior Centers. Eckert shared that Amy Brown resigned from the committee as a nutrition representative, she started a new position today with IDoA as Division Manager the Division of Advocacy and Prevention (APS & BEAM unit). Lora McCurdy added that the Department is very excited to have her at Aging, she has over 20 years of experience directing CRIS Healthy Aging. Amy Brown starts with IDoA on Wednesday.

**Call to Order:**

John Eckert asked for a motion to call the meeting to order. Gustavo Saberbein made the motion and Mike Koronkowski seconded. All members voted in favor.

**Approve minutes from the Full OASAC meeting on November 15, 2021:**

Eckert asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the November 15, 2021 meeting. Sherry Barter -Hamlin made the motion and Susan Real seconded. No additions or corrections were noted. The minutes were approved unanimously by members and will be posted to the Department website.

**Review and Approve 2022 OASAC Priorities**

Eckert shared that the next thing on the agenda is to review and approve the 2022 OASAC Priorities, these mirror what we followed last year, and these were discussed in detail during the Executive meeting last month. It was agreed that the advisory group would continue to talk about the workforce stabilization and revive the work that had been completed by the workgroup. He shared that the OASAC CCU Medicaid Enrollment Oversight Enrolment Committee has met the legislation goals but will continue to meet as required and updates will be provided. The group will also continue to get updates regarding Managed Care and the impact on rebalancing. Mike Berkes will continue to report on the FMAP incentive priority areas. We will continue to identify areas research and best practices for the Quality Webinars and look at prevention. Updates will continue to be provided regarding remote work and hybrid models. We will continue to identify and track new and existing federal initiatives. We will continue to have Colbert & Williams consent decrees updates on implementation plan activities. The Department will continue to use data to drive programmatic decisions and improve outcomes. We will continue to keep people apprised on the Dementia-Friendly communities. This group will also continue to learn about OASAC Members and their organizations. It was noted that these priorities are not ranked in order of priority. Mike Koronkowski made the motion to approve the 2022 Priorities and Gustavo Saberbein seconded. All members were in favor.

### **Senior Services Plus Inc. Presentation**

Theresa Collins shared that it is an honor to share information about Senior Services Plus, Inc. Theresa is the CEO of Senior Services Plus, Inc. (SSP). She added that in this role and for this committee she is representing the Illinois Association of Community Care Program Homecare providers. SSP is a 49-year-old non-for-profit organization in PSA 8 and headquartered in Alton and they serve seven counties in this area of the State. Their mission is to provide opportunities and resources to individuals as they age, and their vision is everyone ages successfully by providing services. SSP was established by three area residents who saw a need to provide services and supports to family members and friends at their church and they began with two core services. At this time the agency has really grown as can be seen on the programs and services slide. These are ambition driven programs that employ over 550 people. The AmeriCorps Foster Grandparent Program is a program that allows seniors 55 years and over to volunteer, earn a stipend, and be there as a mentor model friend for youth. Individuals are assigned to the local school district or daycare where they provide one to one attention. The Information and Assistance program helps individuals access local State and federal benefits (energy assistance, food stamps, benefit access, Medicare/Medicaid counseling etc.). One of their largest programs is the In-home Care Services which includes the CCP and through a private contract they work the Veterans Administration and the DRS. Several pictures were shared during the presentation. Collins shared that SSP began a quality assurance program with in-home care clients to ensure that the services being provided were appropriate. This quality assurance program has been expanded to all SSP programs. Another program provided by SSP is Ombudsman, staff go out to LTC facilities to provide advocacy. During COVID Ombudsman staff conducted window visits. The Meals on Wheels Program is a core service that provides congregate dinners and home delivered meals. COVID really impacted the meal services, there was in significant increase in need. Other programs provided by SSP include the Handyman, Lawn Care and Heating and Cooling Services and the SSP Wellness Center. **(PPT attached)**

### **Discuss Workforce Retention**

John Eckert shared that the OASAC Executive members had a very robust discussion on the issue of workforce recruitment and retention and how this is occurring across all areas; CCUs, home care, ADS, AAAs, and all human service areas. There is an inter-agency workgroup that has been meeting regularly to talk about ideas on what other agencies are doing to recruit and retain staff. We have also been working with Sandy Pastore in trying to develop a high school gerontology educational curriculum to get people thinking about working in the Aging field. We have also talked about reviving the workforce retention workgroup. He asked anyone that is interested in joining this workgroup to let us know and opened the floor for discussion. Paul Bennett shared that he was part of this workgroup before and would like to continue. Paul also noted that he teaches at Northeastern IL University and in his Gerontology class he has 6 students this year. In the past when he has taught this class he has had up to 16 students, so this highlights the issue of a persons not going into this field. Eckert shared that he understands that people are busy, and the Department can continue to provide updates on the grant and other work we are doing related. If people are interested this workgroup can reconvene, an email can be circulated once we have names of those interested and we can ask who wants to take the lead.

### **OASAC Medicaid Enrollment Subcommittee**

Eckert shared that the Medicaid Enrollment Subcommittee met last week and will continue to meet the legislation's requirements even though the goals have been met. When the tracking started there were 109,000 individuals getting waiver services, now it has increased to 124,000 and it continues to grow. The enrollment trend shows that we are trying to get as many eligible individuals enrolled to get federal match. From February 2020 we had 16.9% and in January 2022 it has increased to 76% and this percentage keeps on going higher and once we return to FTF that will help. Lora McCurdy added that the Department also provided a rate increase for the initial assessment and required that the CCUs input verification into a data base at the Department. We tried to emphasize the importance of submitting applications. She thanked the CCUs for pushing these and making sure that people apply for Medicaid.

### **Department Updates:**

#### **Legislative Update (State and Federal activities)**

Katherine Ostrowski shared that the Department has two legislative initiatives that we are moving forward this year. SB4024 is an initiative for LTC Ombudsman which removes a label that may be

misleading from the consumer choice website. This initiative was moved by Senator K. Villa and was passed out of the committee last week and moving to the floor and then hopefully to the house. The other initiative is HB4572 moved by Representative Katy Steward which reintroduces two initiatives from last year that had to do with reporting suspicious death and expanding mandated reporters to insurance adjusters and investment advisors. This initiative will be heard in the committee on Wednesday at 8am and we are hoping for a smooth committee. Ostrowski shared that they have also been working on a lot of different sponsors this year. They have worked with Equality Illinois on some of their initiatives. The team has also been in contact with the Alzheimer's Association Illinois Chapter on a few of their bills as well. Susan Real shared that the Illinois Association on Area Agencies on Aging are in the process of providing testimony and support the Department's budget during the House Appropriations. Ostrowski added that the Department will be presenting the budget at the House Appropriations Humans Services Committee. Mike Berkes added that the Department has been working with the Alzheimer's Illinois Chapter and David Olsen specific to training and bill language. There is a good strong idea out there to have all contracted entities and those who work with them sit for a 2-hour Alzheimer's/Dementia training annually.

#### Budget/Fiscal

Theresa McKeon shared that Emily Howerton, the supervisor will be speaking to the budget and fiscal activities. Howerton shared that the Governor introduced the FY23 budget earlier this month and she believes that worked out well for the Department. We had an increase of about \$98MIL over the FY22 budget. There was an increase to home delivered meals so that we can continue supporting all the seniors on the program. There was an increase for the Community Care Program and our case management for Care Coordination use to accommodate the enhanced plan. There was a new line item for \$4MIL dollars for caregiver support.

#### CCP Enhanced FMAP

Mike Berkes shared that the Federal Medicaid Assistance Percentage (FMAP) is the federal match percentage that comes back to the State. All states are getting an additional 10% on the matching coming back from federal CMS. When this money comes back to us it is a sizable amount-- about \$100MIL that we run through our spending plan. Some areas were tied to rate increases, workforce retention grants going to the CCUs, some new services and expansions to some of our core services. Workforce Retention grants are currently being developed in the Amplifund system, which is out grant portal. The intent is to provide over \$200K to each of our 59 CCU contracts for the purpose of hiring new staff, sustaining current staff, and marketing jobs, etc. Berkes also noted we had great movement this year in January 2022, we provided rate increases for in-home, ADS providers and that included a transportation rate. We also accelerated the January 2022 rate to November 2021. All spending plan submissions have been approved. Our colleagues at HFS have helped us pull this together and submit to CMS. Berkes noted that last week we were waiting on some final approvals specific to our assistive technology service which we will be developing and writing for an amendment in CY23. Also looking at environmental modifications and minor home repairs. Also, the enhancement of the Emergency Home Response System with falls detection and adding a GPS. The Department has a lot going on and we have been working through the workforce challenges with the growing Aging population. As a waiver manager, Berkes noted he is very excited about the opportunity that these federal dollars create, as it relates to new services. We are planning as hard and fast as we can. The Department clarified that these enhancements would run through March 2024, but the new services that the Department plans to add will remain under the waiver permanently. The Department plans to get OASAC feedback in a future meeting on assistive technology, home modifications, and fall detection that will require a waiver amendment. Paul Bennet asked about the possibility of extending the FMAP workforce retention grants to APS. The FMAP dollars use for things that the workforce workgroup found would be helpful enhancing hiring, retention, and scholarships. The possibility of enhancing the waiver to include Caregiver Services/Respite. Berkes asked APS staff to chime in on ARPA funding for APS. He added that the FMAP spending plan is not final, quarterly updates are being submitted to HFS to be sent to CMS. Lora McCurdy shared that ARPA funds provided \$3MIL to the APS workforce. Theresa McKeon confirmed that \$3MIL will be provided to APS providers to help them, these grants are being worked on. McCurdy stated that we will ask Amy Brown and Dana Wilkerson to provide an update during the next meeting.

### ARPA Funding Update

Desirey Ackerman shared that ARPA funding is starting to go out to the AAAs to go out to the community. They do have some AAA's that need to send in budgets. This funding is being used for respite, information and assistance, congregate meals, home delivered meals, caregiver, and APS money that Amy and Dana can speak to. Lora McCurdy shared that it would be helpful to hear from the AAAs in a future meeting as to their plans with ARPA funds, Susan and Marla did a nice presentation for their legislators. Susan Real agreed to share this information during a future meeting. Paul Bennett shared that he is interested in how many AAAs put TCare into their ARPA funding plans. Amy Lulich shared that PSA 04, 05, 02, added TCare but a more detailed update can be provided in a future meeting.

### Ongoing Vaccination Outreach Activities

Amy Lulich shared that last week the Governor will be ending the mask mandate for indoors, except for certain locations like healthcare facilities. The press release was sent out last week that the indoor mask mandate statewide ends on February 28th. More information can be found on the IDPH website. Everyone was encouraged to follow these updates via constant contact and our weekly newsletter updates. We are waiting to receive data back about the vaccination and booster uptake from the targeted zip codes being referenced across registries.

### EHRS 3G to 4G Conversion Update

John Eckert shared that the EHRS units that we provide to 30,000 participants under CCP is undergoing a conversion from 3G to 4G with AT&T at the end of this month. Anyone that has this type of unit and does not get swapped, will no longer work. The Department has been working without EHRS providers for the past 12-14 months to try to get a list of participants that have not received the new units. Each of the CCU contracts will be receiving a list of participants that have not been converted and will be asked to do outreach. These units were sent out and the EHRS providers have tried to contact them with no luck. We are hoping that the CCUs can obtain names and contacts of how to best to reach these participants. Mike Berkes added that if anyone is confused about these device swaps they should be calling the Senior Helpline. Berkes has spoken to the community via a local channel to get this news out. We need to make sure that all these participants are swapped.

### Emergency Senior Services (ESS) Updates

Mike Berkes reminded everyone that ESS grant gap filling funds went out to CCUs in March 2020 and in 2021 and were very successful. We are currently halfway 2022 and we continue to spend about half million dollars every quarter. ESS FY23 funds will open soon. The data that is being pulled from ESS have helped us with our spending planning. Eckert added that ESS is available not only under CCP but also for 18-59-year-olds with APS CASES and individuals under MCO's on a case-by-case basis.

### **Public Comments, Other Issues & Announcements:**

Meghan Spitz announced that the Illinois Housing Development Authority has allocated a lot of their emergency funding. They have had 2 rounds of IL rental payment programs, the 2<sup>nd</sup> round closed at the end of the CY, applications are still being processed and funds being dispersed. The IL Homeowner Assistance Fund that came from ARPA was \$387MIL to provide emergency assistance to Illinois homeowners and they anticipate this program will open in Spring 2022. They will also be receiving a special allocation of home funds, which are dispersed by HUD called the home investment partnership program. This round of home funds is unique, transitional housing in non-congregate shelters has been added.

### **Motion to Adjourn**

John Eckert asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting; Sara Jean Lindholm made a motion and Paul Bennett seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 2:37 p.m.