

Northeast Michigan Regional Council on Aging
Annual Meeting
Monday, January 24, 2022 at 1:00 pm
Virtual Zoom Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Chair D. Fay at 1:01 pm

Roll Call

Darlene Huff, Cyndi Sabin, Roberta Matelski, Lorelei King, Carol Wilder, Cindy Fleming, Terry Dutcher, Julie Kendrick, David Burdine, Eileen Howell, John Paulus, Connie Messina, Mitzi Downs, Dennis Fay,

Excused: Jerry Broad, Tammy Emig Unexcused: Mike Maturen,

Guests: Emil Bellenbaum, Lacey Charboneau, Chuck Corwin, Dave Bisgrove

AAA Staff: Laurie Sauer, Yvette Smigelski, Kelly Robinette, Kitty Glomski, Connie McQuarrie and Brooke Mainville

Quorum - Yes

Approval of Agenda – A motion was made by T. Dutcher with support from C. Wilder to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes – A motion was made by T. Dutcher with support from C. Wilder to approve the minutes of 11-22-2021. Motion carried.

Nominating Committee Report

Reappointments – C. Sabin reported Roberta Matelski has been reappointed as the Delegate for Cheboygan County. Dennis Fay has been reappointed as the Member-at-Large for Presque Isle County and Eileen Howell has been reappointed as Member-at-Large for Ogemaw County. A motion was made by T. Dutcher with support from C. Messina to approve the vacancies. Motion carried. C. Sabin also reported vacancies continue in Alcona, Arenac, Cheboygan, Montmorency, Otsego, Region 9 Directors, and there is no representation for either position for Roscommon County.

Annual Meeting Schedule – A copy of the proposed annual schedule was distributed previously. A motion was made by T. Dutcher with support from C. Messina to accept the 2022 meeting schedule as presented. Motion carried.

Election of officers – A motion was made by T. Dutcher with support from M. Downs to close the meeting and open it up for the election of officers. Motion carried.

Chairperson – C. Sabin reported T. Dutcher is interested in the position of Chair and current Chair, D. Fay, has expressed interest in stepping into the Vice Chair position. C. Sabin called three times for further nominations from the floor. There being no further nominations or expressed interest, she asked the Council for a motion to accept the nomination by

acclamation. A motion was made by C. Messina with support from C. Wilder to accept the appointment of T. Dutcher as Chair. All ayes, no opposed. Motion carried.

Vice Chairperson – Dennis Fay has agreed to run as Vice Chair. C. Sabin called three times for further nominations from the floor. There being no further nominations she asked for a motion to accept the nomination of Dennis Fay as Vice Chair by acclamation of the Council. A motion was made by C. Messina with support from T. Dutcher to accept the nomination. All ayes, no opposed. Motion carried.

A motion was made by C. Sabin with support from C. Wilder to close the election of officers and open the meeting. All ayes, no opposed. Motion carried. The meeting was turned over to Vice Chair Dennis Fay for the remainder of the meeting at the request of Chair T. Dutcher.

Appointment of a Nominating Committee for 2022 – Current members are: Cyndi Sabin, Carol Wilder and Connie Messina. There being no further interest expressed by the Council members, a motion was made by D. Fay with support from T. Dutcher to accept the appointment of the 2022 Nominating Committee. Motion carried. C. Sabin agreed to act as Chair of the committee.

Appointment of a By-Law Review Committee for 2022 – The current members of the By-Law Review Committee are Dave Burdine, Cyndi Sabin, Carol Wilder and Dennis Fay. There being no further interested members, a motion was made by T. Dutcher with support from C. Messina to reappoint the current By-Law Review Committee for another year. Motion carried.

Speaker – Dave Bisgrove – Legal Services of Northern Michigan

Dave reported he is one of four attorneys at Legal Services of Northern Michigan that serve Region 9. He wants to talk on some issues he calls maturing revocable living trusts and touch a bit on deeds as it relates to those trusts. Deeds alone could be the topic for another meeting. In 2021 everyone was dealing with Covid and not getting out as much. At Legal Services they handled calls and visits dealing with people 60 and older who wanted to talk about estate plans, real estate issues, domestic violence, and senior divorces. Interestingly, we did not see senior debt collection issues with old repos, credit cards, medical bills, etc. The dept is typically sold to debt buyers as a portfolio for .03 to .16 cents on the dollar. Those debt buyers then claim to own the dept and file suit against our clients to try to recover same. Forget the fact that our clients may only have social security, or live in subsidized housing, they don't own an expensive vehicle, etc. They file the suits more or less robotically. His guess is the decline in senior debt collection issues is due to some new fair debt collection practices that took effect in December. The portfolio buyers are working to digest those and figure out how they want to proceed with collections if at all. Their office also received a lot of calls about estate planning and the first thing is they want to do a deed to avoid probate. There are pitfalls of having this as a stand-alone goal. He talked to this group on past occasions about the pitfalls of using all kinds of deeds as a substitute for probate.

Maturing, Irrevocable Living Trusts – For about 23 years there has been a busy business for a group he calls "Trust Salesmen". These people come to community centers and senior centers, church groups, etc. to sell attendees a revocable living trust. These are not individual attorneys consulting with a client on their needs and future planning, they are salespeople selling a one size fits all packaged trust. One size fits all is not good. One of their long-term

itches was “it will help you qualify for Medicaid in the event your husband or wife had to go into a nursing home on a long-term basis”. The pitch was you could put your house in the irrevocable living trust and hide it. DHHS could not get an estate recovery lien on it or count it against qualifying you for Medicaid. Unfortunately, the salespeople did not tell people that in Michigan, your home is not a countable asset when applying for Medicaid for long term care. Last year the value of your house could be worth up to \$603,000. What is wrong with putting your house in an irrevocable living trust is that you are conveying ownership of the property to a separate legal entity (the trust). DHS looks at it that way so now the value of the house is countable and can disqualify or put a barrier to Medicaid eligibility. There are some exceedingly rare circumstances where it would be advisable to do that to boost the value of other assets. It is very individualized and not thought of for a trust. So here we are, ten to twenty years later and people are in those situations. What happens now if your house is in a trust and you need to apply for Medicaid? The house can be taken out of the trust but, that is never done on a planning basis. When that happens, it is typically when there is an emergency because dad had a stroke, etc. so now try to find an attorney to revise the trust, record the deed, and redo the Medicaid application. So now it barred them from Medicaid for about a month, depending how fast the attorney can act which now costs the client attorney fees and in the meantime they are accruing a nursing home bill at the private pay amount. The nursing home rate in Michigan last year was approximately \$9,560 per month. So, all of this cost was incurred to solve a problem they did not have to begin with. Trusts can be useful but it’s an individual thing. Another pitch used was for tax savings; inheritance, estate, etc. For the last several years the estate tax threshold has been well over \$11 million before you pay taxes. These trusts would not have done anything to help with taxes.

What happens when the trust itself fails – The salesperson trusts are valid and perfectly legal. They can be used as a trust and used to do some of the things the trust itself says but not all the things the salesperson said it would do. Failed trusts were typically sold as a package deal that included an irrevocable living trust, a pour over will that says anything left over I give to my trust, and a general durable power of attorney. If the main goal was to protect the house from being counted, the package never included a certificate or affidavit of trust existence to record at the Register of Deeds in the county the house is located. It does not render the trust or deed invalid, but it makes it unusable in certain ways until it is recorded. The deed conveys interest in the home to the trust. The most common way the trust fails is that the deed is unrecorded by the client. If the owner died, DHS has estate recovery on the probate estate of the survivor. If faced with a situation where Medicaid was not an issue, the heirs face a dilemma. The dilemma now is, do we not record the deed and not offer the will for probate, which is common. They can do an informal probate, sell the house, and divide the proceeds equally. Another approach is to probate the pour over will. This is an option in cases where equally dividing the assets simply will not work well for one or more of the heirs. For example, it could disqualify someone on SSI (Supplemental Security Income) or affect someone who has child support issues. Now we must probate the house to the trust and follow what the trust says to do with it. Now the whole purpose of the trust to avoid probate has failed. This happens often enough where trusts that were sold 10 or 20 years ago start to mature. It no longer serves the current needs of the client. Having your own estate planned for your needs is much better than a one size fits all document that may not be beneficial 10 or 20 years from now. Discussion followed.

C. Wilder – We had an irrevocable trust done with a lawyer a few years ago in Roscommon County because it is a second marriage with children on both sides. We have since moved from Roscommon to Crawford County. Do we need to record the trust in Grayling? Dave – No, the trust is okay in Roscommon County. If you have acquired any real estate in Crawford County, it would be a good idea to either record the trust or the certificate of trust existence, but there is nothing wrong with the trust. C. Wilder – When we bought our house in Grayling we were told not to put it in the trust. Should we keep it out? Dave – That depends on what your goals are now, how do you want to see the trust disposed of after both of you are gone, after one of you are gone? What happens if one of you becomes disabled? Did you want to later think about a reverse mortgage? These are all questions to consider and what your lawyer would want to know about to give you an answer.

C. Sabin – Do you recommend registering a will at the County Clerk’s Office? Dave – No I do not unless maybe if you were an active-duty service man going into a combat theatre. The service that the probate courts all over Michigan used to offer wasn’t a registration at all but keeping your will in a fireproof vault. After a death when someone petitions to open the estate, the court is required to look in their vault first to see if there is a will. These days they charge upwards of \$60 for that service. You can purchase your own fire box to keep at home.

C. Sabin – Here is the problem we ran into when my dad passed away and he had the will. I was the executor and all three of us kids were aware of what was to be done. His second wife burned the will, so we had no record of anything. They were married 10 months and she and her family got everything. Dave – So if you had any expectation that something like that might happen then yes, registering it would be wise. C. Sabin – All we had was a preliminary will they made out before they went to their lawyer. The court was not willing to accept that document and the judge ruled in their favor even though they were only married for 10 months. So, I encourage my relatives to register their wills at the county office so nobody can question it. You cannot predict what people will do. Dave – This is a circumstance where registering it would have been useful.

Director’s Report

Just so you are all aware, Legal Services of Northern Michigan is one of our grantees as part of our annual implementation plan and they have been for several years. They provide a great service. Their phone number is always at the bottom of the agenda. Terry Dutcher currently represents us on their board.

Staff Updates – We celebrated a milestone anniversary recently for one of our staff. Patty Rings, our Director of Business and Financial Resources for the Aging Division has been with NEMCSA for 45 years. She does a fantastic job for us and plans to retire this summer. We also lost one of our social workers from the West Branch office, Sarah Parrot, for another job opportunity. Gina Bey, AAA Associate Director is leaving on February 4th. She has been with us almost 12 years and has done a fabulous job. Gina is going back to school. We are currently interviewing for her position as well as the Financial Services Analyst under Yvette. Those jobs are posted on the website. We have two new social workers starting next week, Stephanie Prow in Gaylord and Heather Morris in West Branch. We are happy to welcome them. Recruitment has been difficult.

The Caring Place – The adult day center at District Health Department #4 in Alpena, The Caring Place, recently closed their doors due to lack of staffing and participation. Other adult day centers in our region are still up and running and doing well. A new one is being developed in Alcona.

MMAP Navigator Award – Region 9 took the second-place award. It recognizes the MMAP team that served the highest percentage of their Medicare population in a quarter. This speaks highly to the efforts of our counselors. First place went to Region 2 AAA.

Annual Day of Training – The AAA will host a free training for staff, our community partners, and MMAP counselors on Thursday, April 28th. This will be an all-day boot camp on long term care services, navigating the system, surrogate decision making, Medicaid basics and planning. Chalgian and Tripp, a legal firm out of Lansing will provide the training. They are really invested in the long-term care process and will provide this invaluable training for free, which is incredible. CEUs (continuing education units) will be offered for Social Workers.

Multi-Year Plan – The process for development of the 2023-2025 Multi-Year Plan has begun. As part of the process, we have developed a needs survey which will be out soon. This is used to help us set our goals for the coming years. The survey targets those age 60 and older, but those under 60 can take it as well. Their input is also valuable. An electronic version and paper form will be available.

KN95 Masks – We received a shipment of 10,000 masks from the state office. They will be divided and distributed to the COAs. NEMCSA also received a large shipment which are being made available along with Covid rapid tests at commodity distribution sites in the region.

Critical Home Repair Program – The Alpena Habitat for Humanity of Northeast Michigan received a grant from the Alpena County Older Persons Committee to provide the Critical Home Repair Program to qualified residents of Alpena County. The program can provide funding for projects that include the installation or repair of handicapped ramps, heating equipment, wells and septic systems, and the replacement of roofs, gutters, downspouts, siding, windows, exterior doors, and more. Each project is limited to \$7,500 per household. Applicants must own and live in their house and own the land it sits on. Mobile homes are generally not eligible. Applicants must have a household income less than 60% of the area median income; for a family of two the limit would be \$30,720. A family of four would be \$38,340. The program is designed to help senior/veteran low-income homeowners who struggle to maintain their homes due to limitations related to income, age, disability, or other circumstances. For more information call Kristen LeSage, Program Coordinator at 989-354-5555 or klesage@habitatnemi.org. The program is also available in other counties as well. Check with your local Habitat for Humanity.

CARES Funding – NEMCSA still has funds available from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Services for assistance with home repairs, car insurance and repairs, transportation (gas cards), funeral assistance, water, and sewer, rent and mortgage and school-based assistance. For more information click on the CARES tab on the NEMCSA website or call central intake at 989-358-4700.

ARP Funds – We are still waiting to hear from the state on the American Recovery Plan funding that is supposed to come to the aging network. The proposal passed the House and is now in the Senate for a decision. We did receive the funding for the direct care worker premium payments. Those are \$2.35 per hour this year plus an additional amount for taxes.

New NEMCSA Address – Just a reminder that our address has changed to 2569 US-23 South, Alpena, MI 49707. Please be sure to update all your information. Forwarding with the postal service will end soon.

Conflict of Interest Statement – This is a compliance issue with the state. Please fill it out and return it to Connie as soon as possible.

Elder Abuse Taskforce – Laurie will be sending out information from the Attorney General's Office. There is a newsletter and great information on initiatives they are undertaking related to elder abuse prevention. To report abuse call 1-855-444-3911. Our staff and all COA staff are mandatory reporters and required to report any suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation to the state.

Coming Events – Starting today through February 16th is a Matter of Balance class. There is still time to join. February 16th, 2022 is the Countdown to Medicare training that Kitty has put together. May 11th is Older Michigianians Day. It will be in person this year in Lansing and held in conjunction with Senior Action Week. This is a time for the aging network and seniors to meet with their legislators. May 23rd is one of our public hearings on the multi-year plan. This will be held as part of our regularly scheduled Regional Council on Aging meeting, so it is very important that we have a quorum that day. We will also host two input sessions and one other public hearing in the region. Notices will be sent out for these events for you to participate. We plan to hold all of them in person.

Program Reports

Legal Services Board – Terry Dutcher – No report.

Region 9 Directors Report – We still have no representative from this group.

Long Term Care Ombudsman Report – Maija Aikens – Maija reported the ombudsmen are still being advised not to frequent the nursing homes. Calls and video chats are preferred. She has a new volunteer that recently started in Alpena. She is working with Brooke to develop an elder abuse webinar for later this year. Good news, the nursing homes will receive doses of the vaccine and booster that can be administered at the nursing homes. They are now mandated to offer them on site.

Planning and Volunteer Coordinator Report – Kitty Glomski – Kitty reported during open enrollment for Part D Prescription Plans from October 15 through December 7, 2022, MMAP coordinators served 2,330 clients and saved \$1.26 million in prescription copays. We no longer record other savings. Open enrollment for Medicare Advantage Plans is January through March. There is a lot of marketing out there. Virtual monthly meetings for our counselors continues the first Wednesday of the month and New to Medicare Presentations are held the second Wednesday of the month.

We have a new MMAP counselor training scheduled for February 14-15-16. Kitty has three new counselors participating, one in Otsego, Alcona, Cheboygan counties and one new application for Iosco County. We are always looking for new counselors.

Kitty and Brooke have developed a pod cast entitled "Let's Talk About Aging" to talk about aging issues. We received a small grant from state MMAP office to increase our virtual presence. The pod cast will be held bi-monthly, and the format will include identifying active scams and fraud throughout Region 9 to encourage local reporting, a calendar of events, and Kitty will discuss Medicare topics and events and Brooke will discuss Region 9 services and events. This is new for us so we are really looking forward to it.

Also scheduled is a Count Down to Medicare Zoom training for beneficiaries preparing to start Medicare. It will be held Wednesday, February 16, 2022 from 10 am to 2pm. Featured presenters include the Alpena Social Security Administration, Krystal May from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Bill Stypick from Alpena County Veterans Affairs, and Kitty from MMAP. Call 989-358-4612 to register.

C. Messina – Will the podcast be available through the website? Kitty – Yes, we are also looking at tagging to others.

Special Projects Coordinator Report – Brooke Mainville – Our elder abuse webinar series will be held on the 15th of June, July, and August from 1:00pm – 2:00pm. Topics will include scams, social isolation, and elder abuse. Please let us know if you have any topic suggestions. Brooke also has some Evidence Based Disease Prevention Programs scheduled. Powerful Tools for Caregiver May 3, 2022 – June 7, 2022 from 3:00pm – 4:00pm. Two Creating Confident Caregiver workshops; March 1 – April 5 from 3:00pm – 4:30pm and May 5 – June 9 from 10am to Noon. One Matter of Balance is scheduled for March 2 – April 20 from 1:00pm – 3:00pm.

Caregiver Newsletter – Topics this quarter include Hospice Care, Malnutrition in Older Adults, MiCafe, Skin Care: Recognizing Changes, Technology and Caregiving, and Assistive Technology. To view the newsletter, go to:

<https://www.nemcsa.org/userfiles/filemanager/oh03ge9o2v28gwj9k85k/>

Services Coordinator Report – Kelly Robinette – Kelly reported February is Heart Health Month. People who eat more generous amounts of fruits and vegetables as part of a healthy diet are likely to have a reduced risk of chronic diseases which include type 2 diabetes, stroke, heart disease, high blood pressure and some cancers.

Only 1 in 10 adults meet the fruit and vegetable recommendations set by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. 11.9% of adults meet the daily fruit intake recommendations and 7.7% of adults meet the daily vegetable intake recommendations. Scientists are reporting new health benefits associated with fruits and vegetables. Also, eating a variety of different colors of fruits and vegetables has added health benefits of antioxidants and phytochemicals.

How many servings of fruits and vegetables are adults over 60 supposed to eat every day? Two cups of fruit and 2 ½ cups of vegetables. When we are eating our fruits and vegetables it is important that we eat a variety of colors. Every week we need to eat: 1 ½ cups of dark

green veggies, 5 ½ cups red/orange veggies, 1 ½ cups peas-beans or lentils, 5 cups starchy vegetables (potatoes, corn, etc.) and 4 cups other veggies (cucumbers, eggplant, onions, green beans).

Think of a roll of lifesavers - red, orange, yellow, green, and white or rainbow. Why do we need to eat a rainbow of colors? Eating a rainbow of colors will provide a variety of nutrients, fiber, and vitamins. Red-orange-yellow fruits and veggies are colored by a pigment called lycopene or anthocyanins. They may reduce the risk of several cancers and protect the cells from damage. Green fruits and veggies – are colored by a pigment called chlorophyll. They also, contain lutein, zeaxanthin, and indoles. Together these chemicals help reduce cataracts, macular degeneration, some cancers. Blue or purple fruits and veggies are colored by pigments called anthocyanins. They may help reduce the risk of cancer, stroke, and heart disease. Eating more blueberries is linked with improved memory function. White fruits and veggies are colored by pigments anthoxanthins. They contain health promoting chemicals such as allicin which may help reduce the risk of stomach cancer and heart disease.

Advocacy Reports

MSAC – Lorelei King reported the group will meet this Wednesday. She will have a report for our next meeting.

State Advisory Council – C. Corwin reported the final draft of their Aging in Place report is finished and being sent to the Commission on Aging for final review. It will also be sent to the AAA and COAs. Representatives from the State Advisory Council also met with the Commission to ask for our charge for 2022.

State Updates

ACLS Bureau (Administration for Community Living Supports) – Lacey Charboneau reported that it is anticipated they will begin referring to themselves as the ACLS Bureau instead of HASA. Official guidance on the change will be coming soon. The ARP funds have been approved and should be released this week or next, so we are one step closer to receiving the funds. She is excited to be involved with our multi-year plan process and hear about the needs assessment. The state office is finalizing the instructions for the plan and will do a little training on the process and how to access demographic information for the AAAs and any staff involved in the process. The 2020 census data is still not official so basic demographic information will be provided in late February or early March.

Local Updates from Council Members

C. Fleming – For the first three months of the fiscal year, the Iosco COA served 3,412 congregate meals and 14,545 home delivered meals. We currently have a cook and four in home provider positions open. The activity at the Oscoda center is ramping up. Hale is struggling. They have a new host site coordinator so we anticipate the activity will improve. An Operations Coordinator will also be hired. We are working on our ballot proposal for the August 2022 vote.

Action Items

None

Questions or Comments

None

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 2:34 pm. Our next meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 28, 2022.

Northeast Michigan Regional Council on Aging
Monday, March 28, 2022 at 1:00 pm
NEMCSA Conference Room

The meeting was called to order by Chair T. Dutcher at 1:00 pm

Roll Call

Jerry Broad, Darlene Huff, Roberta Matelski, Lorelei King, Carol Wilder, Terry Dutcher, Dale Evilsizer, Julie Kendrick, David Burdine, Connie Messina, Mitzi Downs, Dennis Fay
Excused: Cindy Sabin, Cindy Fleming, Eileen Howell Unexcused: Mike Maturen, Tammy Emig
Guests: Chuck Corwin, Lacey Charboneau, Gary Wilder
AAA Staff: Laurie Sauer, Yvette Smigelski, Kelly Robinette, Kitty Glomski, Connie McQuarrie, Maija Aikens and Brooke Mainville

Quorum - Yes

Approval of Agenda – A motion was made by L. King with support from D. Huff to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes – A motion was made by D. Fay with support from C. Wilder to approve the minutes of 1-24-2022. Motion carried.

Nominating Committee Report

Resignation - John Paulus, Oscoda Member-at-Large has resigned due to health reasons. A motion was made by C. Wilder with support from D. Huff to approve the resignation and send a letter of appreciation. Motion carried.

Region 9 COA Directors Representative - Dale Evilsizer, Iosco COA Director, has volunteered to represent their group on this council. A motion was made by J. Broad with support from L. King to accept the appointment. Motion carried. Welcome.

Director's Report

Introductions – This was the first in-person meeting in a long time. Introductions were made of members, AAA staff and guests.

Staff Updates –Jaime Carney has been hired as our new AAA Associate Director. She is a registered nurse with a BSN pursuing her master's degree. She has experience in long term care. The AAA has also experienced challenges with our staffing levels and we are happy to report that we have hired Stephanie Prow, Case Manager in our Gaylord office, Ashley Berry, RN in Alpena, and Heather Morris, Case Manager in our West Branch office. We still have to fill a Case Manager and Intake Specialist position in West Branch and the Financial Services Analyst position in Alpena working with Yvette.

Direct Care Worker Shortage. The direct care worker premium pay amount was approved at \$2.35 per hour with an additional amount of .29 cents per hour to help with the extra taxes, etc. Last week we were informed by the state that it was a mistake, it should be .21 cents per hour. This will be a huge undertaking for both the AAA and our partners if we have to make

that correction. It is currently under review by the actuarial director. We are hoping to be able to make the adjustment at some point going forward.

M. Downs – Do we have to pay it back when it's their fault? Laurie – Yes. Yvette – These are direct passthrough funds to the care worker.

ARP – We have received the funding, but we are still waiting for final guidance from the ACLS Bureau. There are some funds that were targeted for equipment purchases. The ACLS Bureau had us talk to providers to develop a wish list. There were some factors for use. It can only be used for equipment that cost \$5,000 or more and they can only receive the percentage of the cost of the item that relays to program funded participants. You have to know how many participants using the equipment are from Older Americans Act programs, or how many are waiver. We are to receive training on this in April and we will see if there's an alternate way to fund equipment. There does have to be a methodology for the use of the funds if we get audited.

Immunization Grants – The AAA did receive two grants. The progress on spending the funds has been slow. Brooke is working on a project to do some billboards encouraging vaccination in the region. There will be 15 billboards, at least one in each county. Watch for them in the month of April.

Annual Day of Training – We have scheduled an all-day virtual Medicaid Bootcamp by Chalgian & Tripp, a law firm out of Lansing. It will be mandatory for AAA staff. We are also inviting our community partners, COAs, and MMAP counselors. The training will be held on Thursday, April 28th. Chalgian & Tripp are graciously providing the training free of charge.

AAA Needs Assessment Survey – Please complete the survey by March 31st. The information gathered will be used in developing our multi-year plan for 2023-2025. A link to the online survey is available on our website or Facebook page. We can also help you fill it out today before you leave. To date we have received 205 surveys.

C. Wilder – When completing the survey, I looked at how important things were based on my opinion, not experience. Laurie – Yes, base you're answers on what you think you might need.

Input Sessions – Two input sessions were held last month. We had five participants in Cheboygan and over 20 in Ogemaw. We had good conversation at both sessions. All of the input will feed into our multi-year plan. The plan format has been approved for use by the ACLS Bureau. We will begin work on the document and present a draft to this council at our May meeting for approval and recommendation to the NEMCSA board for final approval. It is then presented to the ACLS bureau in June and then on to the State Commission on Aging for final approval.

C. Messina – Is this process done every year? Laurie – Yes. The multi-year plan is done every three years with an annual conducted every year. The annual 2023 plan will be part of the multi-year process this year.

Provider Monitoring – Monitoring for waiver providers will resume in April as well as the assessment of general and nutritional programs. It will be a busy spring and summer.

MI Choice Waiver Clinical Quality Assessment Review – Good news for our region. The results of the review showed us at 95% of compliance. During this process charts are reviewed as well as procedures and making sure services are being provided as ordered, etc. We currently have over 400 waiver clients. Some minor things need to be addressed but there were no major issues. Along with the review, home visits are conducted on a few participants. We received 100% on that section of the review.

T. Dutcher – 95% is really good. That shows good work.

Regional Council Membership – Chuck Corwin has expressed interest in returning to this council in May to represent Roscommon County. We will consult with our attorney before the next meeting.

Program Reports

Legal Services Board – Terry Dutcher – He missed the last meeting but reported on the minutes from their December meeting. Their cost wages were over budgeted \$14, 836 and \$5,698 for staff. A 5% bonus for employees put them over budget. The HUD grant showed an overage, but six months had not been entered. Several other items over budget costs were offset by various grants. They ended the year \$9,000 in the black.

Region 9 Directors Report – Dale Evilsizer reported the directors group met on February 28th. They are working on getting compliance to complete the community needs surveys. They have all started to track the drive through meals and the dine in congregate meals separately. The state is implementing a new NAPIS form on April 1st. They are all working on getting people to participate in Older Michiganians Day and Senior Action Week and discussing the importance of advocacy. The group has concerns about funding and the sustainability of programs, labor issues and the increases in food and mileage costs. Filling in revenue for those will be a challenge now and in the future. The direct care worker shortage remains a big issue. In Iosco, Dale needs 8 workers and currently has 3 and he's not alone. They have raised wages twice this year and direct care workers are getting to where they may make more than the director wages.

T. Dutcher – At the county, we were told the restricted funds were no longer restricted. I understand that is done. Laurie – The funds we get come from the ACLS Bureau. They have some flexibility but also have specific requirements for use.

Long Term Care Ombudsman Report – Maija Aikens – Maija reported she has been working with Brooke to develop three Elder Abuse webinar series scheduled June 15, 2022 Challenging Perceptions, Sexual Violence in Later Life July 20, 2022, and Basics of Elder Abuse August 17, 2022. For more information go to: https://www.canva.com/design/DAE8XuPkk7U/nUkKjIXCuEOMxSg1jcqlsQ/view?utm_content=DAE8XuPkk7U&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=publishsharelink. The webinars will also be posted in our newsletter and on our website and Facebook page. The recorded webinars will be on Facebook as well.

An elder abuse poster has also been developed (a sample was shared with the group). Topics include signs of physical abuse, financial abuse, emotional and behavioral abuse,

sexual abuse, and neglect. Copies will be mailed to various agencies. The elder abuse hotline number is included on the poster.

L. King – Is there a plan for a smaller version to put in other public places such as public restrooms, etc.? Brooke will have a smaller version emailed to each council member.

C. Messina – Where will they be distributed? Maija – We are printing 250 that will be distributed to the COAs, various financial institutions, dental and doctor's offices, etc.

T. Dutcher – Do you discuss financial abuse. Maija – Yes, it's covered during the second webinar. Also, last year when a new law came out about mandatory reporters, Brooke held a conference to train staff of financial institutions in the region.

C. Messina – Where will they be posted? Brooke – Break rooms or bulletin boards accessible by the public, the COAs will post at their centers.

Maija also reported on February 28th, the Biden Administration announced a set of wide-ranging reforms aimed at improving the quality of nursing home care for residents. If implemented, these reforms would be the most significant increase in protections for nursing home residents in decades. The announcement was broken into five categories:

1. Ensuring Taxpayer Dollars Support Nursing Homes That Provide Safe, Adequate, and Dignified Care. This will establish a minimum nursing home staffing requirement, reduce resident room crowding, strengthen the Skilled Nursing Facility Value-Based Purchasing Program, and reinforce safeguards against unnecessary medications and treatments
2. Enhancing Accountability and Oversight. This will adequately fund inspection activities, beef up scrutiny on more of the poorest performers, expand financial penalties and other enforcement sanctions, increase accountability for chain owners of substandard facilities, and provide technical assistance to nursing homes to help them improve
3. Increasing Transparency. This will create a database of nursing home owners and operators, improve transparency of facility ownership and finances, enhance nursing home care compares and examine the role of private equity.
4. Creating Pathways to Good-Paying Jobs with the Free and Fair Choice to Join a Union. This will ensure nurse aide training is affordable, support state efforts to improve staffing and workforce sustainability, and launch the National Nursing Career Pathways Campaign.
5. Ensuring Pandemic and Emergency Preparedness in Nursing Homes. This will provide continued COVID-19 testing in long-term care facilities, continued COVID-19 vaccinations and boosters in long-term care facilities, strengthen requirements for on-site infection preventionists, enhance requirements for pandemic and emergency preparedness, and integrate pandemic lessons into nursing home requirements.

Planning and Volunteer Coordinator Report – Kitty Glomski – Kitty reported the open enrollment period for Medicare Advantage Plans ends on March 31st. Aggressive marketing by insurance agents continues to be an issue. People are getting cold calls or respond to the

TV commercials and sign up for something that may not work for them. The MMAP counselors are working to inform and assist. All states are having the same issues. We're hoping the Medicare rules may change.

Our Count Down to Medicare virtual event held in February was a success with 31 participants and speakers from the Social Security Administration, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Veteran's clinic.

Monthly meetings continue on the first Wednesday of the month for MMAP counselors and the second Wednesday of the month for New to Medicare Presentations. We hope all of our MMAP counselors will attend the Medicaid Bootcamp by Chalgian & Tripp on April 28th. They have provided trainings for counselors in the past through the MMAP office in Lansing and they always provide excellent training.

The state's requirement to keep people enrolled in Medicaid throughout the COVID public health emergency will be ending soon. When that happens, the state will resume the Medicaid recertification process. This will create a risk of coverage loss for a lot of recipients and an increased demand for MMAP assistance is expected.

Kitty is also working on two new counselor applications: one in Otsego and the other from the Alcona Health Center. Counselors are providing documentation for the current CMS audit of the Open Enrollment. The recertification for MMAP counselors starts in April and will now include counselor job evaluations.

Podcast – Kitty and Brooke have developed a Podcast "Let's Talk About Aging". Each podcast will feature a scam alert, calendar of events and a topic of interest. Kitty will report on MMAP topics and Brooke will report on various AAA services. We are doing two per month. Two episodes (2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month) are already uploaded on Facebook for you to listen to. We hope all the COAs will link the podcast to their websites as well. Call Kitty if you need help with this.

T. Dutcher – These people that are calling from Medicare insurance, I'm curious what can be done. Kitty – We report them through the CMS network (Medicare), DIFS (Department of Insurance and Financial Services), the police and other agencies as appropriate. It's an industry, so it's not just one insurance company. It's also against Medicare rules for insurance agents/companies to make cold calls. We tell our beneficiaries, "Don't answer the phone if you don't recognize the number."

Special Projects Coordinator Report – Brooke Mainville – Brooke passed around a sample of the billboards that will be going up in the region in April regarding COVID information. There will be at least one in every county. Let Brooke know if you see it. The COVID poster will be mailed out soon with the elder abuse poster. Two handouts were distributed on the Caregiver and Living Healthy webinar series. The free webinars will be held on the 2nd and 3rd Fridays of the month from 1pm – 2pm beginning in April and cover a variety of topics.

Various virtual Evidence Based Disease Prevention Programs are scheduled as follows:

- Powerful Tools for Caregiver May 3, 2022 – June 7, 2022 from 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm and July 11, 2022 – August 15, 2022 from 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm.

- Creating Confident Caregivers workshops May 5, 2022 – June 9, 2022 from 10 am – noon.
- Matter of Balance at the Hale Senior Center June 6, 2022 – June 29, 2022 from 9:30 am – 11:30 am and we are looking to schedule one in Cheboygan for August 2, 2022 – September 20, 2022 from 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm.
- Chronic Pain PATH August 26, 2022 – September 30, 2022 from 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm.

An Alzheimer's Association Lunch and Learn session on Financial Planning for Caregivers is scheduled for Wednesday, May 25, 2022 from 11:00 am – 12:30 pm followed by a Community Forum from 5:00 pm – 6:30 pm.

Services Coordinator Report – Kelly Robinette – Kelly reported March celebrates 50 years of the Senior Nutrition Program and is also National Nutrition Month. The COAs have been very busy with the meal programs. In 2015 they served a total of 623,840 meals, 614,114 in 2016, 612,374 in 2017, 617,076 in 2018, 623,229 in 2019 and 629,152 in 2020.

One idea to celebrate the month is to celebrate a world of flavors. Step out of the box and prepare dishes we normally don't eat. Enjoying different flavors of the world is a chance to learn more about other cultures. Familiar ingredients can be presented in new ways. You may come across ingredients and flavors you've never experienced before. Trying new flavors and foods from around the world can help increase the variety of foods we eat. Other cuisines offer dishes which include foods from all food groups.

Think seasonally when it comes to ingredients. For example for breakfast try a smoothie with low-fat yogurt or buttermilk with papaya or mango, a Spanish omelet with potatoes and other veggies, or Scottish oatmeal or bulgur with low-fat milk topped with fruit or nuts. For lunch try Gazpacho, a soup made with tomatoes, peppers, and other vegetables served cold, Sambar a spicy lentil and vegetable stew from India, or Mahshi, a Middle Eastern dish made with zucchini stuffed with cooked rice, lamb and spices served in tomato sauce. For dinner how about Da pan Ji a Chinese stew made from chicken, potatoes, ginger and garlic, salads that include different types of produce along with whole grains, dairy and protein foods. Many options exist, such as tuna salad with Greek yogurt, onion, celery, and whole wheat pasta. Try different snacks such as fruit chutney and goat cheese eaten on crackers, raw veggies with hummus or tzatziki, which is a creamy yogurt-based dressing made with cucumbers, garlic, and dill, or whole grain tortilla chips with guacamole or salsa made with veggies or fruit. We have some recipes posted on our Facebook page using simple ingredients.

Mileage Sheet Review – Yvette – You were all emailed a copy of the new mileage sheet and have a paper copy in your packet today. Please be sure you are using the newest mileage sheet. In the past we had to have odometer readings, now we just want you to record your total miles. Be sure to include the type of vehicle and sign and date at the bottom. Checks will be mailed on Monday for mileage turned in today.

Advocacy Reports

MSAC – Lorelei King reported Representative Phil Green's policy for insurance reform hit a back burner for now. Lobbyists have to prioritize issues and this one is not a priority right now. The MSAC group has been disappointed the governor has chosen not to attend some of

their meetings when invited. The GCSI lobbying group is trying to flush out federal funds that were stalled. Other issues are taking priority due to some senators and representative's time terming out. Handouts on decreasing auto insurance premiums and the legislative platform for Older Michigianians Day (OMD) were distributed. The platform and a form letter will be sent out and to local COAs with a goal to collect as many as possible to take down to Lansing for Older Michigianians Day because there is limited attendance this year. Three to five delegates will be selected from each AAA to attend the event in Lansing. A formatted schedule of events for OMD – Senior Action Week can be found online at: <https://4ami.org/event/older-michigianians-day-senior-action-week-2022/2022-05-08> The focus is to stress advocacy for seniors. There will also be a special livestream event on Wednesday, May 11th from 11:00 am – 12:00 pm.

State Advisory Council – Chuck Corwin reported there are funds available through the Federal American Rescue Plan as Laurie discussed previously. The new charge for the State Advisory Council this year is Living Transitions. What resources are available to families to transition from home to a more supportive environment. The purpose of our Mi Choice Waiver program is to keep people at home if that is where they want to be, and it's proven to be more cost effective than nursing home placement. Representative Dingell recently authored the Better Care Better Jobs Act to strengthen and expand access to the long-term care system while supporting the direct care workforce. Chuck also brought copies of the council's 2020 report on social isolation.

State Updates

ACLS Bureau (Administration for Community Living Supports) – Lacey Charboneau reported she's been with the bureau now for 11 months. She previously worked at the Region 8 AAA and was a long-term care ombudsman for 5 years. The ACLS Bureau works specifically with Older Americans Act funding.

Local Updates from Council Members

None

Action Items

None

Questions or Comments

None

Adjourn

A motion was made by D. Huff with support from C. Wilder to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 2:27 pm by Chairman Dutcher. Our next meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 23, 2022. It is important you and we have a quorum. This is also a public hearing for the multi-year plan and a recommendation for approval from this council will be needed for the NEMCSA Board.

**Northeast Michigan Regional Council on Aging Meeting and
Public Hearing on the 2023-2025 Multi-Year Plan
Monday, May 23, 2022 at 1:00 pm
NEMCSA Office - Alpena**

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm by Chair Terry Dutcher

Roll Call

Jerry Broad, Darlene Huff, Roberta Matelski, Lorelei King, Carol Wilder, Terry Dutcher, Dale Evilsizer, Julie Kendrick, Eileen Howell, Connie Messina, Mitzi Downs, Dennis Fay
Excused: Cindy Sabin, Cindy Fleming, Dave Burdine Unexcused: Mike Maturen, Tammy Emig
Guests: Chuck Corwin, Lacey Charboneau, Pat Rondeau
AAA Staff: Laurie Sauer, Yvette Smigelski, Kelly Robinette, Kitty Glomski, Connie McQuarrie, Maija Aikens, Brooke Mainville and Bryanna Beyer

Quorum - Yes

Approval of Agenda – A motion was made by D. Huff with support from D. Fay to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes – A motion was made by C. Wilder with support from J. Kendrick to approve the minutes of 3-28-2022. Motion passed unanimously.

Nominating Committee Report

C. McQuarrie reported on two recent resignations: Cindy Sabin, Arenac Delegate and Cindy Fleming, Iosco Delegate. A motion was made by J. Kendrick with support from D. Fay to accept the resignations and send a letter of appreciation. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by T. Dutcher with support from L. King to close the meeting and open the public hearing. Motion carried.

Public Hearing on the 2023-2025 Multi-Year Plan

Copies of the draft plan and presentation were distributed. Kitty Glomski, Planning and Volunteer Coordinator, gave a Power Point presentation on the 2023-2025 Multi-Year Plan and 2023 Annual Implementation Plan.

Each state must submit a three-year plan to the Administration on Community Living (ACL). Each Area Agency on Aging must also submit a three-year plan to the Bureau of Aging, Community Living, and Supports; Health and Aging Services Administration, formerly known as AASA. Plans must be approved by the Michigan Commission on Aging.

The plan highlights accomplishments, program priorities, planned services, program development objectives, advocacy efforts, leveraged services, focal points, and budget. The plan is important because it outlines our direction for the next three fiscal years including our goals, projects and funding based on the Older Americans Act (OAA).

The OAA was established in 1965. It is reauthorized every five years and establishes the national framework for Area Agencies on Aging (AAA). There are 56 state agencies on aging, 629 local agencies on aging, and 16 AAAs.

Reauthorization Highlights – Provide support for modernizing multipurpose senior centers, highlights the importance of addressing economic needs, requires all health promotion and disease prevention initiatives be evidence-based, promotes chronic disease self-management, and fall prevention, includes stronger elder justice and legal services, and clarifies caregiver support and establishes Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs).

Needs Assessment Survey – Kitty reviewed the survey results. Surveys were made available online and by QR Code for cell phone access and included 25 questions, 3 write-in questions, an online survey option with mandatory questions, and a PDF file and paper copies were distributed to all the Councils/Commissions on Aging. We received 587 surveys. Kitty reviewed the results of each survey question. When asked what their experience is with the Region 9 AAA, 51% said they sought services for themselves with 33% saying they were not familiar with the AAA.

L. King – I delivered meals for the senior center for years. I wasn't aware of the AAA either until I joined the board. It's not common knowledge.

Persons age 60 and over made up 89% of those taking the survey and 30% said they had a disability. It has always been difficult to identify Hispanic, Native Americans, People of Color, LGBTQ+, etc. in our region. We asked for volunteers to be part of a focus group for older adults who identify as minority, immigrant, or LGBTQ+ and received 45 responses. The majority taking the survey were age 70-79 followed by 60-69 and 80-89. The majority were female at 72%. 150 were age 60 and over, 181 aged 70-79, 135 aged 80-90 and 48 were age 90 or older. 300 have sought services, 284 live alone or independent and 211 live with a spouse or partner. Congregate meals, home delivered meals and in home care services remain very important. Overwhelmingly 547 or 93% wish to stay in their own home.

T. Dutcher – Staying in your own home is important but may not always be the best idea.

When asked if you heard of or participated in any of the fitness activities and wellness programs such as Matter of Balance, Walk with Ease, Personal Action Towards Health (PATH), Diabetes PATH, and Chronic Pain PATH, 62% said they have not heard of any of them. 65% Said it was very important to have fitness and health and wellness programs for older adults and 63% said resources, training programs, and other supports for caregivers was very important. 51% said they or someone they know provided care for someone with dementia or Alzheimer's. There were also high percentages 77% - 84% of people that haven't hear of Creating Confident Caregivers, Powerful Tools for Caregivers, Dementia Consultation, the Caregiver Newsletter, Kinship Care, Caregiver Webinar and Dementia Webinar Series or the Caregiver Empowerment and Wellness Conference.

L. King – Maybe if the list wasn't combined you would have a more accurate breakdown.

Additional services such as snow removal, lawn care, and home repair are also very important with 63% in favor of a list of preferred providers. Transportation remains a need

especially for doctor's appointments, shopping, and running errands. Many seniors are willing to pay for these services.

T. Dutcher – The finances for lawncare, snow removal, etc. is what drives a lot of retired seniors out of their homes.

The survey also showed that 50% of those taking the survey connect with friends, family, or neighbors in the community on a daily basis, 35% weekly, 7% monthly, 2% seasonally, and 1% yearly. Most do not feel socially isolated. The majority, 35%, say they never go online to access services such as email, getting news, searching for information, paying bills, manage their finances, or to use social media. Seniors are also using email, Facebook, and texting to stay connected with family and friends. When asked if they would like to learn how to use technology and computer programs, 286 said no, 158 said maybe and 143 said yes.

C. Messina - Some think it's too much when they see folks using a computer.

C. Wilder – Or they feel they're already proficient.

When asked if there is enough affordable housing in your community to accommodate older adults and persons with disabilities, 289 said they didn't know, 233 no, 31 neutral, and 34 said yes.

D. Huff – There is definitely not enough housing. Laurie – We do have a shortage in our region, not just for subsidized.

There were two questions about volunteering. 198 said they do, 389 said they do not. The most important reasons for volunteering were making a difference, training, meeting people, feeling needed, mileage reimbursement and short-term commitment.

Some of the other needs expressed by those taking the survey include aerobic drumming, work for all wanting to work, checkbook balancing, heavy cleaning, someone to fix a roof, and toenail trimming.

Core Functions – The Region 9 AAA concentrates resources to develop capacity, a comprehensive and coordinated service delivery system, provide planning, program development, administration and monitoring as well as advocate for vulnerable populations.

Focal Points – Our region is made up of 12 counties with one community focal point, County Council/Commission on Aging (COA), designated in each. Designation was determined with input from elected officials with special consideration to multi-purpose senior centers. Our COA partners leveraged an additional \$854,811 in service dollars to provide Outreach, Transportation and Information and Assistance.

State Goals – The state has specified four goals for fiscal year 2023-2025. Regional goals are optional but must match all state goals. Region 9 made the decision to align our goals with the state office goals.

M. Downs - Are our goals and downstate goals similar? Does the region dictate the goals? Laurie – There are some specific things the state wants us to address. Lacey – The one goal is tied to diversity equity and inclusion for every AAA. Otherwise, the AAAs have the autonomy to set their own goals.

M. Downs – I wondered if the numbers downstate effect that. Laurie – The funding we receive is based on many factors but some do get more millage dollars. Typically, our COAs receive all of the millage dollars except for Alpena. We as a AAA do not receive millage dollars. That’s why we struggle to meet match for some of the state programs.

M. Downs – I know when you donate to Hospice you have to specify where you want your donation to go.

J. Kendrick – They promote more than we do. Laurie – They take their information to funeral homes, etc., so they receive a lot of bequests. Some of the COAs have materials at funeral homes now.

State Goal #1 – Expand the reach of information and awareness of aging network services, ensuring all older adults and caregivers can access culturally and linguistically to appropriate information and, have awareness of quality services where and when they need them.

Regional Goal: Improve access of aging services to Black, Indigenous, People of Color and LGBTQ+ older adults in northeast Michigan.

Objective: Decrease evidence of implicit bias, racism, or lack of cultural sensitivity in AAA Operations

Objective: Increase awareness of Aging services and service accessibility to Black, Indigenous, People of Color and the LGBTQ+ communities.

Objective: Increase the number of AAA staff, caregivers, subcontractors, purchase of Service providers and direct care workers trained in diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI)

Objective: Improve access to translation services and ensure all communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate.

Objective: Increase awareness of Aging network services throughout the AAA region.

L. King – Aren’t you doing some of that already? Can you reword it to say, “continue to improve?” I’m amazed at all that you do.

State Goal #2 – Prioritize resources to promote social interaction and connectedness, including expanding access to technology and transportation.

Regional Goal: Reduce the impact of social isolation on older adults and improve access to information, assistance, and social outlets via a variety of means to improve their quality of life in northeast Michigan.

Objective: Expand access to educational opportunities related to healthy living.

Objective: Increase efforts to reduce the incidence of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Objective: Improve access to transportation services.

Objective: Improve and increase access to services and supports so that older adults have access to technology-based community connections and supportive services to live their best lives, with a focus on rural communities and underserved populations.

L. King – Don't you already do this as well? Kitty – Yes, but we haven't always been aware of these communities. Laurie – We need to expand these areas again. Transportation is always an issue, we don't have the funds to provide it, but we can find ways to support access. We're improving. How can you test if the word is getting out or how many you actually serve?

T. Dutcher – Expand, increase, improve. What guage do you use to test that? It's an improvement but a difficult matrix.

L. King – Can you really improve access to transportation? Laurie – Will they actually get rides from us no, but potentially they could by educating about resources.

C. Messina – I like how it's written. You can always improve. Laurie – We will work with RSVP to identify volunteer drivers. Brooke started a Facebook campaign for volunteers. We have a roster of services available in the communities, and there will be a resource on our website, easy to access. For those who are not tech savvy, the information will be given to our partners for local access.

D. Fay – We have had transportation in Presque Isle for several years by working with MDOT and the millage. Every five years we get a new bus. We realized transportation was not a money maker, but the millage covers us enough to enable us to offer free rides for seniors and the disabled for doctor's appointments, shopping, errands, etc. Laurie – Some other COAs have implemented transportation as well. We are also looking at ARP funds to purchase bus vouchers. This would mean more requirements on those we contract with, which many prefer to do it themselves with their millage funds. Many did that for friendly reassurance during covid. We have great partners.

State Goal #3 – Increase the number of well-trained, qualified, and supportive multicultural direct care workers through collaboration by; elevating the workforce, improving retention, promoting its collective value, and supporting opportunities to increase wages.

Region Goal: Ensure older adults have a robust, well-trained workforce to serve their needs.

Objective: Increase the number of well-trained, qualified, multi-cultural direct care workers available to serve older adults throughout the region.

Objective: Improve direct care worker skill levels by providing continued opportunities for direct care worker education to ensure effective delivery of services and a confident workforce.

M. Downs – It's next to impossible to hire anyone. Laurie – We don't have a lot of diversity so meeting that goal will be a challenge. There is a large migrant population coming into the country. My plan is to speak with some federal legislators and see if some would be willing and able to train for this type of work.

C. Corwin – Our report to the state in 2019 was on the direct care workforce and our recent report is on social isolation with a focus on equity. The Commission on Services to the Aging

is working on several of these issues. There are a lot of resources. On May 29th we will have 13 of our providers enroll in BTBQ classes from the Roscommon COA. All will start with this in-home training. Laurie – We were one of the original pilots for this program. We had trainers but experienced limited success in our region. We worked with the COAs and Michigan Works to identify participants. Many didn't decide to pursue the career path. It was difficult for the COAs to participate because they didn't have enough staff they could send. They were needed to provide services.

State Goal #4 – Leverage programs, services, and resources to ensure older adults have the opportunity to make their own decisions and enable them to age in place.

Regional Goal: Ensure access to services and supports in a manner consistent with person-centered practices.

Objective: Increase caregiver awareness and utilization of supportive services and resources to prevent caregiver burnout.

Objective: Maintain service delivery following a person-centered philosophy.

Objective: Support the provision of community-based services with leveraged resources from community partners in the form of county senior millage funds.

Laurie – This is not just to leverage millage funds; it will be expanded.

Direct Services – The AAA also provides directly; Long Term Care Ombudsman, Outreach for Kinship Care, Care Management, Medicare/Medicaid Assistance Program (MMAP), and Dementia Consultation.

Regional Priorities – These remain important to the AAA: Support services that promote older adult independence and allow them to remain in their home for as long as possible, Promote Evidence-Based Disease Prevention Programs, Provide person-centered thinking education and training, DEI education and linguistic appropriate access to services, Provide technical assistance to COAs and partners, Effective stewardship of funding, Caregiver and dementia education and services, and Protect older adults against scams and fraud.

Purchase of Service – Contingent upon funding we have a small amount of funding to provide medication management, specialized respite, and personal emergency response units. These services typically have a wait list.

Planned Budget – A total budget of \$5,090,368 is planned for next year with 2% for purchased services, 15% direct services and 83% for contracted services.

Laurie – This is projected based on this year's funding, that figure will change. This doesn't include waiver funds.

Advocacy Strategy – We plan to maintain our membership on various local, state, and federal organizations, advisory councils, support coordinated system of information, referral and access to services, support MMAP, Senior Corps Programs, and LTC Ombudsman, Michigan

Senior Advocates and Senior Organizations, and we continue to support Community Based Care Programs and the long-term care rebalancing, as well as work to advocate and educate our legislators on the various programs throughout the aging network. Part of this includes participation in the Annual Older Michiganians Day which was held May 11th this year as part of Senior Action Week.

Written Testimony – Deadline for written or electronic testimony is June 10, 2022. Send testimony or written comments to Region 9 Area Agency on Aging, attention Laurie Sauer, Director, 2569 US-23 South, Alpena, MI 49707, or email sauerl@nemcsa.org.

Comments/Questions.

Nothing further.

A motion was made by D. Huff with support from L. King to close the public hearing and reopen the meeting of the Northeast Michigan Regional Council on Aging. Motion carried.

Regional Council on Aging meeting continues.

Director's Report

The Council enjoyed cake for Lorelei King's birthday.

Staff Updates – We continue to advertise for a social worker in our West Branch office. Recruitment has been difficult. The Lara site only shows 10-15 licensed social workers living and working in the area. The staff is overwhelmed, we may have to look at some internal restructuring. Patty Rings, our Director of Business and Financial Resources is retiring on June 3rd. She takes with her a lot of historical knowledge after 45 years and leaves a big hole to fill. We have a candidate, but need a signed letter before announcing. Bryanna has recently been hired as our Financial Analyst. She has a business background and will work directly with Yvette.

Billboards – Has anyone seen our vaccination signs? Darlene – Yes. We have 15 up for a month. This project was part of our Covid funding from the state. Please encourage folks to get vaccinated.

Bridges of Self Sufficiency (BOSS) – NEMCSA was awarded one of four state-wide Innovative grants to develop a new pilot program. For this initial pilot program, four current program participants will be identified in the counties of Alcona, Alpena, and Iosco. Participants will be paired one-on-one with a current staff member, who will act as a mentor, and will receive individualized support to move them towards self-sufficiency. The assistance of a mentor can be paramount in achieving goals. Brooke will be one of the mentors. We would like to identify an older adult, at or below 125% of poverty, and not on a fixed income. The program is structured to be a two-year commitment for both the individual receiving services and the staff person providing the service. Staff will meet with these individuals regularly and set goals that they help them achieve. Program results will be shared, and best practices

incorporated into existing grant programming in the future. If appropriate funding is obtained, this program would expand to include more participants.

Older Michigianians Day – It was a great event this year with a different format than in the past. You all received the link to the Livestream event; we hope you were able to watch it. It was nice to be back in Lansing in person. Laurie attended along with Lorelei King and Dona Wishart, Otsego COA Director. Dona was chosen as one of the two recipients of the Older Adult of the Year Award. Laurie also delivered 170 advocacy letters to legislators.

Tornado in Gaylord – Gaylord suffered devastating damage. We attempted to reach all of our care management and waiver participants. We were not able to reach all of them, but the ones we did make contact with were doing well. Most were without power. One client's mobile home was destroyed and another's apartment building had roof damage. Two people were killed and 44 injured. Laurie spoke with Dona. They contacted all of their high need clients. Residents of the nursing home and homes for the aged were all ok. They experienced power outages. The nursing home had a generator. Please keep all the residents of Gaylord in your thoughts and prayers. A flyer was distributed on how to help.

Kelly – There is a big relief effort going on. The E-Free Church is organizing volunteers, the United Way is handling donations for the Red Cross who set up across the street. The COA is starting their home delivered meal routes back up.

AAA Assessment – We will have our annual assessment next week with Lacey. The Clinical Quality Review for the MI Choice Waiver is being conducted as well. It's a very busy time.

Opioid Crisis Settlement Funds – A lawsuit was settled from the Opioid crisis. There may be some funds available to help older adults with abuse issues. We are seeing what the prevalence is in our region.

Covid Public Emergency – The public emergency was extended to July 15th. There is additional talk of extending it again. One of our COAs has mandated masks again.

NEMCSA Weatherization Program. This program usually has a very long wait list. They did receive increased funding and a lot of projects were completed, but there is still an 18-month wait list.

C. Messina – Is this the program for home service repairs? Laurie - Yes

Location of Regional Council meetings – In the past we discussed the topic of having the meetings in other locations rather than just Alpena. It hasn't been a popular idea in the past. What is the pleasure of this Council? Discussion followed:

D. Huff – This is more convenient for me.

L. King – The convenience of having your offices and staff here is helpful. I know where to go now. It's difficult finding locations in new areas, attendance may drop.

C. Messina – I come from Gaylord. I left earlier, there was road work and RV's slowing us down. If you drive to other areas, you may not be aware of these types of problems.

There being no further discussion, a motion was made by C. Messina with support from M. Downs to keep the meetings in Alpena. Motion carried unanimously.

MMAP – Jo Murphy, Executive Director of MMAP at their corporate office in Lansing is retiring this. Her position is advertised.

Older Michigianians Day – A video of Dona Wishart, Otsego COA Director, accepting the Older Person of the Year award was viewed. Dona has been the COA Director for 28 years and also served on the Michigan Commission on Services to the Aging. She has been a strong advocate and supporter of the needs of older adults and caregivers.

Program Reports

Legal Services Board – Terry Dutcher had nothing to report this month.

Region 9 Directors Report – Dale reported the director's group did not have a meeting. They did attend a pre-bidders meeting on April 27th for annual and multi-year contracts. They are all working on their Request for Proposals due June 3rd.

Long Term Care Ombudsman Report – Maija reported on April 15, 2022, the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) published a Notice of Proposed Rule Making that included requests for information regarding the implementation of a minimum staffing standard in nursing homes and input on measuring health disparities in resident outcomes. CMS states it plans to propose a minimum staffing standard with one year. May is Older Americans Month. This year's theme "Age My Way" focuses on how older adults can plan to stay in their homes and live independently in their communities for as long as possible. World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) is June 15th. This is also the first day of our Elder Abuse Prevention Webinar Series from 1:00pm – 2:00pm. Two other webinars are scheduled for July 20, 2022 and August 17, 2022. Topics to be covered: Challenging Perceptions: Sexual Violence in Later Life with speakers Paige Allia and Emily Nowicki from Hope Shores Alliance, Basics of Elder Abuse with speaker Tammy Cordes from the Michigan Long Term Care Ombudsman Program Michigan Elder Justice Initiative, and Basics of Reporting Elder Abuse with speaker Elizabeth Hincka from Adult Protective Services.

Planning and Volunteer Coordinator Report – Kitty reported MMAP is recertifying 31 counselors by mid July. Our counselors attended the Medicaid Bootcamp put on by the Chalgian & Tripp Law Firm. We are planning for the deluge of people who will need to recertify for Medicaid once the Covid emergency is lifted. The recertification process will be done over the internet in the MMAP database called SHIPtools. Our MMAP counselors continue to meet the first Wednesday of every month as a region to receive updates, address concerns and plan for training/events. A virtual New to Medicare workshop is conducted every second Wednesday of the month for new beneficiaries starting Medicare. Participants can also call their COA to sign up. Our Let's Talk About Aging Podcast will interview Jo Murphy, Executive Director of MMAP. We will also have a scam alert segment from Oscoda County that discusses an employer coverage appeal after the client changed to an Advantage Plan. Brooke interviews Maija to discuss the Ombudsman program. Please check them out at <https://www.nemcsa.org/services/senior-services/podcast.html>.

Special Projects Coordinator Report – Brooke reported she is trying to find a Kinship family for her BOSS project but is running into issues with the income level. She has a four-day BOSS training coming up from 11:00 am to 6:00 pm each day. The project will be very intensive with Brooke acting as a role model, meeting with them monthly and providing lots of one-on-one assistance. On May 25th there is a free Lunch and Learn scheduled here at NEMCSA on financial planning for older adults followed by a community forum in the evening to gather input on the obstacles and challenges of dementia.

E. Howell – The BOSS program is in what three counties? Brooke – Alcona, Alpena, and Iosco. There will be one mentor for one person for a year. The visits are less frequent the second year. Please let me know if you know of anyone who may qualify.

Services Coordinator Report – Kelly reported June is brain awareness month and distributed information on how trauma impacts four different types of memory; Semantic (the memory of general knowledge and facts), Episodic (the memory of an event or experience including the who, what, and where), Emotional (the memory of the emotions you felt during an experience) and Procedural (the memory of how to perform a common task without actively thinking). Memory is essential to our lives. Researchers believe there are not distinct types of memory but stages. Sensory memory holds information for a brief period, usually a second or less like the sounds you hear on a walk or something you see in your peripheral field of vision. Short-term memory allows a person to recall a limited string of information for a short period. These memories disappear quickly after about 30 seconds. It is a type of short-lived storage that can only hold a few pieces of information such as remembering a string of 5-7 words and repeating it back or remembering a phone number while getting a pen to jot it down. Working memory is like short-term memory. It helps a person remember details of their current task like solving a complex math problem where you must remember several numbers or baking a cake and remembering what ingredients you have already added. Long-term memory stores a wide range of memories and experiences. Memories that people recall, especially those older than 30 seconds. Long-term memory can be explicit where you remember events and autobiographical facts such as events from childhood, personal facts, marriage, anniversaries, etc. Long-term implicit memories are those that influence a person's behavior. You don't consciously think about them such as walking or driving. The brain is not a computer and memories do not take up physical space. In theory, there is no specific limit on the capacity for long-term memory. However, the quality of the memories and their details may vary and change with time.

Advocacy Reports

MSAC – L. King had nothing else to report.

State Advisory Council – C. Corwin reported on his last meeting in Lansing to work on this year's project "Living Transitions." They have a shortened timeline this year. The group is looking at legal issues in older age. He is charged with consumer issues and started looking at scams. There is a lot of information about scams but nothing about what to do if you are scammed. That's the information people need. Their report should be out before the end of the year.

K. Glomski – When that is finished, I want to interview you for a podcast.

State Updates

ACLS Bureau (Administration for Community Living Supports) – Lacey Charboneau reported the administration at the state office has been reorganized twice. We are now under the Behavioral and Physical Health and Aging Services Administration (BPHASA). We will continue to go by The ACLS Bureau - Aging Community Living and Supports Bureau. The ACL is the federal entity. That's who we report to. The state acknowledges your direct care worker concerns. We are constantly working on this issue and talking all the time. There has been an extension of the Public Health Emergency. The longer it lasts, the longer our waivers and more time we have to prepare for it to end. We'll know what worked and what should we keep after it officially does end.

Local Updates from Council Members

None

Action Items

Endorse the 2023-2025 Multi-Year Plan and the 2023 Annual Implementation Plan. A motion was made by D. Fay with support from D. Huff to endorse the plan as presented and forward the endorsement on to the NEMCSA Policy Board for final approval. There being no opposition, the motion carried.

Questions or Comments

J. Broad – Alpena has an enhanced 9-1-1 program. If you call in, your information pops up on their computer. T. Dutcher – It has to do with their actual system and the information they keep. They have close tabs on the police system. The GIS System is being revised.

J. Broad – Should we get more involved to be sure seniors have their information in there?

Laurie – Anytime we enrolled someone in services, we sent that information into 9-1-1. We were told by some that they didn't use it. But those with the enhanced system do keep more information. We can certainly do some work on finding out which counties have it, etc.

Adjourn

A motion was made by J. Broad with support from C. Wilder to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 3:25pm by Chairman T. Dutcher. Our next meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 25, 2022 at the NEMCSA office.

Northeast Michigan Regional Council on Aging
Monday, July 25, 2022 at 1:00 pm
NEMCSA Conference Room

The meeting was called to order by Chair T. Dutcher at 1:00 pm

Roll Call

Darlene Huff, Lorelei King, Terry Dutcher, Carol Gosse, Dale Evilsizer, David Burdine, Eileen Howell, Mitzi Downs

Excused: Jerry Broad, Carol Wilder, Roberta Matelski, Julie Kendrick, Connie Messina, Dennis Fay

Guests: Fran Ommani, NEMCSA, Chuck Corwin, SAC

AAA Staff: Yvette Smigelski, Bryanna Beyer, Kitty Glomski, Connie McQuarrie, and Jaime Carney

Quorum - Yes

Approval of Agenda – A motion was made by D. Huff with support from D. Burdine to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes – A motion was made by D. Huff with support from M. Downs to approve the minutes of 5-22-2022. Motion carried.

Nominating Committee Report

Nominating Committee Vacancy – C. McQuarrie gave the report as no members of the committee were present. We are in need of a third member for this committee. Darlene Huff volunteered. A motion was made by M. Downs with support from L. King to accept Darlene as a member of the Nominating Committee. Motion carried. The committee will also need to appoint a chairperson for their group to give the report.

Resignations – Two Delegates have resigned due to health reasons: Mike Maturen – Alcona and Tammy Emig – Oscoda. A motion was made by L. King with support from D. Huff to accept the resignations and sent each a letter of appreciation. Motion carried.

New Appointment – Carol Gosse has been appointed by the Iosco County Commission on Aging as Delegate. Her background includes being a Certified Public Accountant. A motion was made by D. Burdine with support from L. King to accept the appointment. Motion carried. Welcome Carol.

Vacancies – Our membership has declined. Four counties currently have no representation on this Council – Alcona, Arenac, Oscoda, and Roscommon. We have additional Member-at-Large vacancies in Cheboygan, Montmorency, and Otsego. Please advocate to your COA the importance of filling these positions.

Speaker – Fran Ommani, Communication & Development Director at NEMCSA

Fran reported on the NEMCSA annual report and website. NEMCSA is a Community Action Agency which were established in 1968. We are 1 of 28 in Michigan and there are over 1,000 nationwide. NEMCSA covers a core of 11 counties with Roscommon added as a county covered by the AAA. We are a cradle to grave organization helping all walks of life. The Early Childhood Services Division is the largest. The School Success Partnership Program partners with public schools to provide support to at risk students in K-12. Our Homeless Prevention Services assist those that are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless to secure and retain housing. We provide financial assistance with security deposit, rent and back rent as well.

M. Downs – Where does the funding for these programs come from? Fran – The agency receives both state and federal grants. It is broken down in the annual report.

The Weatherization Program receives funding to provide upgrades to homes that need energy efficiency improvements. We have inspectors on staff that go into the home and check things like insulation, hot water heater, etc. We work with contractors to make the renovations. These improvements help lower utility bills for the client. NEMCSA also has food programs that provide both a monthly and quarterly distribution of food. We work with the Foodbank of Eastern Michigan. There is no age requirement. NEMCSA also has four Volunteer Programs: Foster Grandparent Program, (FGP) Senior Companion Program (SCP), Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), and the Shine Bright Program. Both the FGP and SCP are income based with volunteers committing to 20 hours per week. Participants receive mileage reimbursement and a small stipend. The newest program, Shine Bright, uses volunteers for special projects. And then, of course, there is the Aging division, which you are aware of their programs and services. Fran distributed and reviewed a copy of the NEMCSA 2021 Annual Report and then the website. She showed how to tap into the various programs for additional information.

Director's Report

Yvette gave the report in Laurie's absence.

Public Health Emergency – The emergency has been extended to mid-October. The waivers and flexibilities we provided to health care providers will also continue. These have provided special access to health insurance and telehealth since the pandemic began. Many of the AAA's programs and participants have benefitted from these waivers such as the grab and go meals.

Inflation Rate – The inflation rate is currently up to 9.1%. Everyone is feeling it at the gas pump, grocery store, utilities, etc.

1.5% decrease for Waiver – At a recent meeting with the Milliman Firm, Michigan's actuarial contractor for the Waiver program, it was announced the program will see a 1.5% decrease in reimbursement rates this October rather than the 2% increase the legislature had approved. This is devastating news. We, and other providers, have been experiencing the higher costs of goods and services, and have also raised salaries in an effort to retain and recruit workers.

The direct care workforce shortage is already at crisis level and providers are expecting an increase in rates. Milliman is using two-year-old data to set the rates. In response to this action, the AAA Association has retained a different actuarial firm to look at the data and calculate the rates in an effort to validate or refute what has been presented by Milliman. A reduction in rates is simply unconscionable.

Program Issues – Bed bug issues in participant homes is becoming prevalent again. These types of issues are very time consuming for staff. It is a service provided under MI Choice, but not other programs, so for those without MI Choice, it is very difficult and expensive to find a solution. Most people can't afford the eradication services. We also recently received an anonymous complaint regarding a senior housing complex remodel. The residents feel the improvements are downgraded materials and replacement items such as cabinets are much smaller, and they lose storage space. Residents are concerned the poor-quality items will not last long and their complaints are going unheard by the management company. This type of issue is not usually something the AAA deals with and it is uncertain if we can provide any real assistance other than advocacy, particularly since the remodel is well under way, but we will certainly try to help. Finally, an informal notice was received from a MI Choice provider that they will cease operations on September 30th. Any provider loss is devastating to the program, but this one will really cause some challenges in their service area as there are few available companies to assume the cases.

NAPIS – A new form was released earlier this year. This is a federal reporting requirement. There was added selection options for how people identify, e.g., Male, Female, LGBTQ. The intent was to gather information to better understand how many LGBTQ individuals our programs are serving, which would hopefully eventually lead to more culturally-appropriate programming. However, the Iosco COA recently received an anonymous letter from an individual terribly upset about the added questions and felt insulted stating it was none of anyone's business and everyone involved should feel ashamed for asking. This is the first complaint we have had on this issue, but the letter will be shared with the state.

C. Corwin – I am a nurse for the Roscommon COA and do their assessments. The seniors are aghast when I ask those questions. It is very upsetting. All our questions are voluntary, but the fact that we are asking is offensive.

L. King – When asking about gender identity, you really must work individually with them. We have small pockets of LGBTQ individuals.

C. Corwin – Our staff tell them the responses to the question is voluntary and regardless of the answer, they still get the services if eligible. They consider it an invasion of privacy and some refuse anything being offered if we are asking that question.

E. Howell – Would it help if you explain why the question is being asked? That you are gathering data to improve programs and serve diverse communities.

Clinical Quality Assessment Review (CQAR) – Good news. The preliminary results for MI Choice show we scored 92.28%. This is a rigorous review of the program, clinical compliance, participant files, and data. We do expect the final score to be higher once rebuttals are made to questionable findings and submitted. Kudos to our staff for their hard work and dedication.

Two Grant Proposals Related to Caregivers – We have been invited to work with two separate entities on two separate grant proposals to the Michigan Health Endowment Fund related to caregivers. We are pleased our current work in the caregiver realm has made some impressions around the state to garner these invitations. More to come as the project proposals are written and submitted.

AAA Staff Meeting – We have a full staff meeting scheduled for August 4th in Gaylord. This is our first in-person meeting since the pandemic. We have some great presenters lined up.

Program Reports

Legal Services Board – Terry Dutcher – The board is working on long range plans. Three meetings are scheduled between August and September with one at the end of September to vote on the final plan.

Region 9 Directors Report – Dale Evilsizer reported the directors met on June 16th to discuss the American Rescue Plan funds and use. There was a lot of concern about sustainability of our programs in the near future. The law only allows COAs to have one full mill for millage. One COA is already at that limit. Some of the COAs are having funding problems and are basically keeping what they have. Also discussed was the in-home care worker crisis. We are having difficulty with kitchen and admin staffing as well. It is hard to find quality help. Laurie suggested we needed to do a better job advocating to our legislators and tell them the struggles we are dealing with. Please contact your state and federal representatives and express your concerns. The future of our programs is concerning.

Long Term Care Ombudsman Report – Maija Aikens – Yvette reported the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) published new guidance for calculating staffing stars in the public 5-star rating system. The new calculation includes total nurse staffing on weekends, annual registered nurse (RNs) and total nurse and administrator turnover. The guidance also stated that only facilities with 5-star staffing ratings will receive an extra star for above-average staffing, rather than also awarding an additional star for facilities with a 4-star staffing rating as before. The third webinar of the Elder Abuse Prevention series will be held on August 17th from 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm. On June 29th, CMS released much awaited Phase 3 guidance along with updated Phase 2 guidance. In 2016, CMS updated the Medicare Requirements for Participation for Nursing Homes. Due to delays caused by the pandemic, CMS is only now releasing the last set of guidance, which was originally scheduled to be released in 2019. You can read more at:

<https://theconsumervoicework.org/uploads/files/issues/phase-3-summary.pdf>

Planning and Volunteer Coordinator Report – Kitty Glomski – Kitty reported MMAP held its annual awards ceremony last week. Region 9 was recognized along with 2 other regions to share the Statewide Team Award. Also, Sandy Woods (Crawford), Kathy MacArthur (Alpena) and Karen Meyers (Presque Isle) were recognized for Region 9's most hours/outstanding counseling, and Shelly Olree (Montmorency) was named Region 9 Rookie of the Year. Some elected to attend the recognition in person and were notified the following day that an attendee had tested positive for Covid. Just a reminder to stay vigilant; the Public Health Emergency is not over.

The Let's Talk About Aging podcast is going very well. Bob Callery from Region 8 gave an interview on the Public Health Emergency and what Medicaid beneficiaries can expect when the Public Health Emergency ends. MMAP was awarded a small grant (Senior Medicare Patrol) allowing Region 9 to send birthday cards to new beneficiaries turning 65. The postcards will include MMAP contact information and a list of the helps that MMAP provides. New to Medicare virtual presentations continue every second Wednesday of each month. Participants can speak one on one with a counselor afterwards. We have an upcoming new MMAP counselor training to be scheduled the end of August or September. So far we have three signed up, but we can always use more. We need more volunteers in all our counties, and especially Arenac County, and Montmorency County that has no site coordinator at this time.

Special Projects Coordinator Report – Brooke Mainville – Bryanna reported for Brooke. The following webinar series are scheduled for August and September:

- Caregiver Webinar Series on August 12, 2022: Navigating Family Dynamics in Caregiving and on September 9, 2022: Dealing with Grief and Loss.
- Elder Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation Prevention Webinar Series on Wednesday, August 17, 2022: Basics of Reporting Elder Abuse
- Healthy Living Webinar Series on August 19, 2022: Living with Chronic Pain and on September 16, 2022: Managing Stress and Mental Health.

Upcoming Evidence Based Disease Prevention Workshops:

- MOB (Cheboygan) August 3, 2022-September 21, 2022 from 9:30am-11:30am
- CCC (Virtual) August 2 - September 13, 2022 from 10:00am-12:00pm
- PATH Pain (Virtual) August 26, 2022-Sept 30, 2022 from 1:00-3:00-pm
- MOB (Oscoda) October 17, 2022-November 9, 2022 from 9:30-11:30
- CCC (Alpena) November 8 - December 13, 2022 from 1:00pm-3:00pm
- PTC (Virtual) January 11, 2023- February 15, 2023 from 10:00am-11:30am

Roscommon Bowling Party August 5, 2022 from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm – The AAA received funding from the Howard B. “Corky” Galor Memorial Fund and the Roscommon County Kellogg Youth Fund through the Roscommon County Community Foundation to provide Kinship Caregivers and their youth living in Roscommon County with a free bowling event. To attend this free event, you must be a Kinship Caregiver over the age of 55 caring for a youth in your home. The purpose of the event is to create a fun environment so that the caregiver and child can create memories together. Along with bowling, the event will provide prizes, dinner, and vendor tables with helpful information and resources for the caregiver. Contact Brooke for more information and to register at 989-358-4616 or mainvilleb@nemcsa.org. The same grant was written for Alcona, Alpena, Montmorency, and Presque Isle Counties.

COVID Grants – The AAA received grant funds to spread the word about the importance of Covid vaccinations. We will use the funds to create a TV commercial, postcards, and door signs. A luncheon will be held with volunteers making phone calls to homebound seniors offering at home COVID shots. Two of our Case Managers were interviewed for the commercial.

Matter of Balance – Flyers were distributed. Region 9 AAA is offering a free MOB training on August 29, and September 1, 2022. To register contact Brooke. A MOB refresher training is scheduled for September 8, and September 19, 2022.

C. Corwin – Roscommon COA will have a MOB class starting on August 15th as well.

Services Coordinator Report – Kelly Robinette – Yvette gave the report for Kelly. Kelly attended the Gordon Food Service In-Service and Food Tasting at the Posen Senior Center on July 12th. This was open to all appropriate COA staff. The in-service is usually held in September, attendance was low due to the centers being short staffed and the short notice of the event. There was a training on the GFS menu program and the different features that can be used for menu planning. The cooks found this helpful. They also learned how to spice up menus for an international flare.

Enhanced 911 – Kelly spoke with an emergency manager and all of our counties have the Enhanced 911. He also gave her information about Smart 911, handout distributed. All of our counties have Smart911 except Alcona and Otsego. Until 2020, the State of Michigan was paying for counties to have it, now it is up to each county to decide whether they have it in their budgets to continue the service. Most counties are experiencing a 7% sign-up rate. Roscommon has promoted Smart911 since 2015 and has less than 300 profiles registered within the county. A plus to the system is when you sign up, your profile will follow you and be displayed at any 911 center that has Smart 911 capabilities, including if you are out of state and call 911. The downside is your profile must be updated or validated every six months. It is as simple as signing into your profile on a computer and reviewing and updating the information. You are automatically deleted by Smart911 if you do not validate your information after a year.

Nutrition/Wellness Summit – The Behavioral and Physical Health and Aging Services Administration Nutrition/Wellness Summit will be held on Friday, September 9, 2022 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm at the Ralph MacMullan Center in Roscommon. This is an opportunity for nutrition providers to learn about best practices and innovative services. Contact Kelly for more information at 989-358-4628 or robinettek@nemcsa.org

Associate AAA Director – Jaime Carney – Jaime reported she took over for Gina Bey in March. She is learning about our programs and the CQAR review process. She is reviewing the waiver and other contracts to review policies and check for compliance. She loves what our organization is about and is happy to be here.

Advocacy Reports

MSAC – Lorelei King thanked those promoting advocacy. The Area Agencies on Aging Association is getting the MSAC members lists of legislators and/or their staff contact pertinent to our counties. We really need your voice in Lansing; they want to hear from their constituents. Thank you for signing the letters taken to Lansing for Older Michiganians Day. We needed them to hear about the needs of the MI Choice programs and other pertinent issues affecting your communities. You will be getting a list of contact information for your individual counties.

State Advisory Council – Chuck Corwin reported they are continuing to work on the Enhancing Aging project. They have spent a lot of time on items to include and it looks like there will be a dropdown of things to consider. It is an extensive list of topics. The council will meet in person the end of August to compile the information.

State Updates

ACLS Bureau (Administration for Community Living Supports) – No report.

Local Updates from Council Members

None

Action Items

Endorsement of the Fiscal Year 2023 Funding Recommendations. Handouts were distributed. Funding amounts are based on a cost allocation plan from the state. These are all formula based. All 12 COAs applied and are recommended for funding. There being no questions, a motion was made by D. Huff with support from M. Downs to approve the funding for fiscal year 2023. A rollcall vote was taken; Huff – yes, King – yes, Gosse – abstain, Dutcher, yes, Evilsizer – yes, Burdine – yes, Howell – yes, Downs – yes. Motion carried.

Endorsement of Fiscal Years 2023-2025 Funding Recommendations. Handouts were distributed. There were no questions. A motion was made by M. Downs with support from D. Burdine to approve the funding recommendations for fiscal years 2023-2025. A rollcall vote was taken; Huff-yes, King – yes, Gosse – abstain, Dutcher – yes, Evilsizer – yes, Burdine – yes, Howell – yes, Downs – yes. Motion carried. The recommendations will now go to the NEMCSA Board for final approval.

Questions or Comments

L. King – Please communicate the national suicide hotline number 988 in your communities.

M. Downs – Who calls the number? King – It is for those contemplating suicide

T. Dutcher – In 2021 counties received 3.6% in estate sales tax, approximately \$228 million. In 2022 it is proposed at 2.47%, approximately \$245 million. Please advocate to your representatives to get the 3.6% back to the counties.

Adjourn

A motion was made by L. King with support from D. Burdine to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 2:12 pm by Chairman Dutcher. Our next meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 26, 2022.

Northeast Michigan Regional Council on Aging
Monday, September 26, 2022 at 1:00 pm
NEMCSA Conference Room

The meeting was called to order by Chair T. Dutcher at 1:00 pm

Roll Call

Kim Fleming, Shelby Gohl, Jerry Broad, Darlene Huff, Roberta Matelski, Lorelei King, Carol Wilder, Carol Gosse, Terry Dutcher, Dale Evilsizer, David Burdine, Eileen Howell, Connie Messina, Mitzi Downs, Dennis Fay

Excused: Julie Kendrick, Chuck Corwin

Guests: Ted Fines, Habitat,

AAA Staff: Laurie Sauer, Yvette Smigelski, Connie McQuarrie, Brooke Mainville, Maja Aikens, Kitty Glomski

Quorum - Yes

Approval of Agenda – A motion was made by J. Broad with support from L. King to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes – A motion was made by D. Fay with support from C. Messina to approve the minutes of 7-25-2022. Motion carried.

Nominating Committee Report

Alcona Delegate – C. Messina reported Kim Fleming has been appointed as Delegate by the Alcona COA. A motion was made by C. Messina with support from C. Wilder to accept the appointment. Motion carried. Welcome Kim.

Alcona Member-at-Large - Shelby Gohl has applied to be the Member-at-Large for Alcona County. She is the Food Service Manager for the COA. Per our Operational Policies, two COA employees may be considered for membership. One is automatically filled by the COA Directors Representative, currently Dale Evilsizer. A motion was made by D. Fay with support by D. Huff to accept the application. Motion carried. Welcome Shelby.

Roscommon Delegate – Chuck Corwin has been appointed as Delegate by the Roscommon COA. A motion was made by C. Messina with support by D. Fay to accept the appointment. Motion carried. Welcome back Chuck.

NEMCSA Board Representative – This Council is allowed two representatives on the NEMCSA Policy Board. Current members are Dennis Fay and Julie Kendrick. Dennis is stepping down from that position, so we need another volunteer from this group. NEMCSA board meetings are held the first Friday of the month in various locations, lunch is provided. Meetings cannot be virtual. Kim Fleming volunteered. A motion was made by L. King with support from C. Messina to appoint Kim as our second representative to the NEMCSA Board. Motion carried.

Vacancies – C. Messina reported we continue to have no representation on this council for Arenac and Oscoda counties.

Speaker – Ted Fines, Executive Director of Alpena Habitat for Humanity

Ted reported the Alpena Habitat covers Alcona, Alpena, Montmorency, Oscoda, and Presque Isle counties and is also doing work in the four additional counties of Arenac, Crawford, Iosco, and Ogemaw. They have done 175 home repairs at an average cost of \$8,085 each. The services are funded by HUD. Ted also wrote another grant for \$500,000 to help seniors and two weeks ago they were awarded \$113,000 in millage funds from the Older Persons Committee in Alpena for 2023. There is a great need for critical home repairs, many of the clients are veterans. Habitat partners with many agencies to address the immediate needs of residents. Working with Home Depot, they will build seven ramps by winter for clients in Alpena, Oscoda and Presque Isle counties. Home Depot is very good about providing materials and sometimes volunteers.

K. Fleming – Is there a list of where you are working? Ted – In the 9 counties I mentioned but we will help wherever we can.

M. Downs – What kind of repairs? Ted – Just about anything that is a critical need such as wells, septic systems, roofs, furnaces, home modifications to accommodate wheelchairs like widening doorways, installing rails, etc. Ramps are also very important. Many clients can't be sent home from the hospital or rehab facility without a ramp.

M. Downs - Do you send people out to do an assessment? Ted - Yes. The assessment allows us to offer a more holistic approach to address all kinds of issues. It identifies what the needs are. We have a tremendous group of subcontractors we work with. All are certified, licensed, etc.

C. Wilder – Is there a habitat in Ogemaw, Arenac, Crawford, or Iosco? Ted – No, those counties do not have a Habitat affiliate. There used to be 87 in the state, we are now down to 46. The Alpena Habitat has 12 full-time employees, 3 part-time and lots of volunteers.

M. Downs – Do you weatherize as well? Ted - Yes. We also work with A Brush With Kindness for some of the outdoor projects. We have to prioritize our projects due to limited funds. A leaky roof is more important than replacing windows.

C. Messina – You're not in Otsego? Ted - No, they have their own affiliate. They have a new director and are not currently as active as us, but we do work together.

C. Messina – Are the ReStores owned by Habitat? Ted - Yes. We now own our new building free and clear. It's a great location.

J. Broad – We bought furniture there; the employees were great. Ted - Thank you, we have a great team.

J. Broad – I know before when a new house was being build, the homeowner had to participate. Is that still the case? Ted – Yes, we currently have two properties to develop and are working with two families. One is a mom with three kids who just got approved for credit. We worked with her for two years to build her credit. The homes we build are modulars from Bay City. They are green homes, high tech, and energy efficient.

We need good housing and rentals. We are developers. If we can get more property we can develop it. It's not easy to get families pre-approved for a mortgage. Ours is a no profit mortgage. These are for first time homeowners.

C. Wilder – Can someone from Crawford fill out a form? Ted - Yes, just for repairs.

C. Gosse – Do we have any options in Iosco County? Ted – Yes, you do as far as repairs because the need is there. We can't say no because the need is so great.

Director's Report

Multi-Year Plan – Good news. Our plan was approved by the State Commission in August. This means we will start working on the goals we set effective October 1st. One of those being the need for home repairs and smaller jobs for seniors. We hope to have the collaboration grow and have a vetted list of providers on our website. This will involve a lot of groundwork. It may be difficult to get contractors to agree to be on the list.

Staffing – Our staffing challenges continue. We are still in need of a social worker in West Branch. We really need to fill that position so if you know of anyone send them our way. let us know. Full time with benefits. Also, Bryanna Beyer, our Financial Analyst, had to resign for health reasons. We are filling two Financial Analyst positions. We have a candidate that will start tomorrow and a second candidate in process. We will announce their names once they have signed on and are ready to go.

West Branch Office Updates – We were contacted last month by DHD#2 regarding our office space. First they had us minimize the amount of rental space we used, now they want us to vacate the building altogether by December. We have a few leads on some new office space.

Legislative Redistricting – Lorelei provided handouts from MSAC. We encourage you to look over the list and get to know the candidates for your county. The potential to older adult issues is great. Advocacy is so very important, and it makes a difference when they hear from their constituents. We did lose one congressional seat with the redistricting.

Caregiver Resource Centers – The Area Agencies on Aging Association of Michigan (4AM) and the AAAs have requested \$16.8 million to establish Caregiver Resource Centers across the state. There are roughly 1.73 million unpaid caregivers in Michigan which equals 23% of the population. Region 9 has been invited to join UPCAP in a MHEF grant submission along with the MSU School of Social Work on this caregiver project. Senator Jim Stamas will be here on October 10th to discuss this funding. He is on the Appropriations Committee.

ARPA Funding – Requests for equipment purchases by the COAs have been submitted and some have come back approved. We are waiting on the other requests. Iosco received funding to purchase a freezer and Montmorency received the partial cost of a home delivered meal vehicle. It was a long, confusing process to deal with, but more counties should be approved soon.

Adult Day Center Closed – The Lodge in Roscommon has put a temporary suspension of services due to budget constraints. We are down to three adult day centers in our region.

L. King – I read about it, but they didn't say how many participants would be affected. It's not well attended. Laurie – They average between 2-7 participants. The centers are not typically well attended. It takes a large amount of millage dollars to support.

COVID Grants – The two immunization grants we received are keeping Brooke very busy. The Immunization Clinic she scheduled here at NEMCSA last week had 21 participants for vaccines and boosters. We are getting our agency information out there. Hopefully, people will start recognizing the AAA for help.

Annual MI Choice Provider Meeting – The meeting was recently held in August for new contracts to start next week. We granted a 7% increase to providers for the new contract period. The net increase to our program from the state was .8% this year. Close monitoring of the budget will be necessary.

Fiscal Year End – This week closes out the year so there is a lot going on at the AAA. Be patient as finance staff are very busy.

4AM Conference – Laurie attended the conference last week. Lots of great information was presented. There will also be a free Age Friendly Conference on October 12th in Lansing. The flyer will be emailed to all of you as well as the COAs.

Public Health Emergency – The emergency is slated to end in October, but we hear it is expected to be extended to the middle of January.

MVC Presentation - Jenna Lindholm, our Clinical Quality Supervisor, was invited for a second time to present on AAAs and how we can contribute to the mission of staying healthy. The MVC is coordinated by the University of Michigan and consists of clinical case managers from across the state. It was a great opportunity, and she did a nice job.

Program Reports

Legal Services Board – Terry Dutcher – He reported on information he received from Ken Penokie of Legal Services of Northern Michigan. Their August expenditures were high due to wage increases for attorneys and computer upgrades. Their revenue is currently on track with a shortfall expected. Account totals equal approximately \$1.66 million.

Region 9 Directors Report – Dale Evilsizer reported the directors have not met other than the provider meeting. They should all have their new contracts submitted. The concern remains regarding the direct care worker shortages. The last weeks of the fiscal year are also a busy time for all the COA directors. Dale expressed his appreciation for the AAA. We know they are shorthanded as well and handle their work with efficiency and grace. Laurie – Thank you, we appreciate hearing that from you.

Long Term Care Ombudsman Report – Maija Aikens – Maija reported she attended the National Adult Protective Service Conference this past month. There were approximately 700 Adult Protective Service workers from across the country in attendance. There were 50 different workshop topics making it difficult to pick from. Maija continues to make visits to nursing homes in the region. Staffing issues remain a common complaint. Laurie – Maija is

taking over some of the Elder Abuse Prevention for the AAA. She also met with Karrie Craig, the Assistant Long Term Care Ombudsman for the state. She had good things to say about Maija's work.

Planning and Volunteer Coordinator Report – Kitty Glomski – Kitty reported preparation has begun for open enrollment October 15 - December 7. Counselors have various webinars available as well as a full day of training scheduled for October 4th. The region will likely have some follow-up training as well. Counselors will continue to meet virtually and in person as necessary. Some sites have already experienced Covid. Kitty continues to hold monthly planning meetings. When the Covid health emergency ends, a large number of Medicaid recipients will need help to recertify. She has a new counselor in Otsego, Cheryl Collins. She's a retired DHS worker. A new trainee in Iosco County will be on board soon. Counselors must devote 30 hours of prep time required prior to the training. This is a big commitment. We are always looking for new counselors. New to Medicare presentations continue on the 2nd Wednesday of the month. Don't forget our monthly podcast "Let's Talk About Aging." The last one interviewed Kelly on cooking for one or two and another interviewed four MMAP counselors recognized by the state. You can find all the podcasts on our website or search podcast on the NEMCSA website search or by doing a Google Search. MMAP has a new director, Jennifer Paige. Finally, CMS will begin cracking down on the tv commercials and ads for advantage plans.

T Dutcher – I keep getting the phone calls. Kitty – Stop answering the phone or hang up if anyone asks for personal information.

Special Projects Coordinator Report – Brooke Mainville. Brooke gave a Power Point presentation on the following:

Covid Grants – A Walk-In Clinic was held in Alpena on Friday, September 23rd. Twenty-one community members received their vaccine or booster. We have also produced vaccine postcards, billboards, a commercial and just recently we had subway signs and tabletop signs promoting the vaccinations. They are being distributed to all the COAs. What's nice about them is after a month, they can replace the information with anything they want. Ads have been placed in the Alpena News and the Up North Newspaper which covers several counties. Ads will run in the Up North Voice for six months. We have about 19,000 postcards left that we will give to our COA partners to help distribute. We also have a supply of hand sanitizers and wipes. She played the commercials the AAA had developed on the importance of vaccinations and elder abuse. Brooke played the commercials for vaccines and elder abuse.

C Messina – The Week or Weekly Choice is a free paper that many seniors receive.

Cheboygan Matter of Balance Workshop – We had a great group with lots of completers.

Roscommon Kinship Bowling Party – Only one family attended. They reaped the benefits of all the giveaway items and left very happy. The remaining items were given to the Roscommon COA to be distributed to Kinship families.

Healthy Living Webinar Series – A total of 40 participants attended. Topics included: Healthy Cooking and Nutrition, Living with Diabetes, Healthy Living for your Brain and Body, Fall Prevention, Living with Chronic Pain, and Importance of a Positive Mindset.

Caregiver Webinar Series – A total of 72 participants attended the webinars. Topics included: Changing Negative Self-Talk, Understanding Hospice and Palliative Care, Understanding and Responding to Dementia, Relatives Raising Related Children (Kinship), Navigating Family Dynamics in Caregiving, and Dealing with Grief and Loss. They are recorded and available on our website.

Elder Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation Prevention Webinar Series – A total of 26 participants attended the webinars. Topics included: Challenging Perceptions: Sexual Violence in Later Life, Basics of Elder Abuse, Basics of Reporting Elder Abuse.

2023 Caregiver Webinar Series – Webinars will be held the second Friday of the month from 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm as follows: November 11, 2022 Living Well with a Cancer Diagnosis: A Personal Story Plus Helpful Tips, December 9, 2022 Importance of Self Care, January 13, 2023 Preparing to Care: Caregiving 101, February 10, 2023 Navigating Difficult Conversations, March 10, 2023 Understanding and Responding to Dementia and April 14, 2023 Parkinson's.

Services Coordinator Report – Kelly Robinette – Laurie reported Kelly attended the State Nutrition Summit this month and will have a report for our next meeting. S. Gohl also attended and found it very informative. She learned a lot about how to report the various congregate, home delivered and Covid meals.

Advocacy Reports

MSAC – Lorelei King reported on the handouts regarding congressional redistricting. Several legislators will be terming out. There is \$7 million on the table for the budget and several legislators are choosing not to deal with it. We do have advocates on our side. We know the data will be looked at. It may help us get back the 2.5% we lost. We are also encouraged to advocate for the direct care worker shortage. Representative Debbie Dingall is a caregiver and strong advocate. The goal of MSAC is to get back the funding we lost and release some of the \$7 million sitting on the table. The next MSAC meeting is this Wednesday. MSAC has a workgroup looking at the MI Choice waiver and the direct care worker shortage. They are looking at how to combine efforts to make our voice count. MSAC is also concerned about senior scams and overdraft fees. We want to set a limit and restore the authority of the FTC to take cases to court.

State Advisory Council – No report.

State Updates

ACLS Bureau (Administration for Community Living Supports) – Lacey Charboneau - No report.

Local Updates from Council Members

L. King – The bids are out for our new center. Prices have gone up for supplies leaving tough decisions to be made on what we need versus what we want. We are also looking at how we continue to meet the meal needs of our seniors. We need meal drivers.

D. Fay – Presque Isle is having a health fair next month in Posen with multiple vendors.

M. Downs – Because of staffing shortages, many of our staff are doing extra jobs to get the work done.

T. Dutcher – The Iosco County budget is running on ARPA funds. We are hoping to get millage funds for 9-1-1, the Sheriff's Department and jail. The infrastructure at the county has been down because no funds were available. We have put money into a broadband consortium and to Alpena for their recycling program. We have lots of projects going on to benefit the community.

Action Items

Set the date for the combined November/December meeting – Discussion was held and the date chosen was Monday, December 5th. A motion was made by D. Fay with support from L. King to set December 5th as the date of our combined November/December meeting. Motion carried.

Questions or Comments

L. King – I am amazed at all the programs the AAA put out this year.

Adjourn

A motion was made by J. Broad with support from C. Messina to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 3:04 pm by Chairman Dutcher. Our next meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 5th at 1:00 pm in the conference room at NEMCSA.