

Northeast Michigan Regional Council on Aging
December 3, 2018 at 1:00 pm
NEMCSA Large Conference Room – Alpena

The meeting was called to order by President E. Corpe at 1:00 pm

Roll Call

P. Knaus, A. Lange, V. Zygiel, E. Corpe, C. Wilder, T. Dutcher, C. Proulx, E. Ableidinger, E. Howell, B. Kaye, M. Downs, D. Fay, C. Corwin, M. Hiller

Excused: D. Burdine, D. Huff, M. Newman, J. Mathis

Unexcused: D. Henig, E. Henig, S. Wojnar

Guests: John Briggs -SAC, Dan Doezema –AASA, Gary Wilder, Ronald Kaye.

Aging Staff: Laurie Sauer, Connie McQuarrie, Yvette Smigelski, Susan Bowen, Sara Gusler, Kelly Robinette, and Brooke Mainville

Approval of Agenda – A motion was made by C. Corwin with support from B. Kaye to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes – A motion was made by D. Fay with support from M. Hiller to approve the minutes of October 22, 2018. Motion carried.

Nominating Committee – D. Fay reported on the following appointments/reappointments:

Alcona Delegate – New appointment of Paul Knaus to fill the vacant position.

Alcona Member-at-Large – Allan Fischer has been appointed to replace Stanley Wojnar

Ogemaw Member-at-Large – Eileen Howell has been reappointed.

Roscommon Delegate - Chuck Corwin has been reappointed

A motion was made by D. Fay with support from M. Downs to accept the appointments and reappointments. Motion carried.

Speaker – Donna Hardies – Catholic Human Services - Drug Free Northern Michigan

Donna is a Certified Prevention Specialist. She is currently working with the Up North Prevention Initiative. Catholic Human Services covers 21 counties.

Opioids – We've all heard about the opioid epidemic. There are three basic things you can do to help be the solution; monitor, secure, and dispose. Know your prescriptions and why and how the drug works. Lock them up in a safe place only you or your caregiver know. Prescription drugs are most likely to be stolen by someone you know. Dispose of any unused, expired or unwanted medications properly. You may take all of your medications to your local law enforcement agency for disposal. On January 1st the Opioid overdose reversal drug Narcan is available to anyone. Michigan ranked in the top 10 for overdose deaths in the nation. Anyone who attends a training will receive a kit with two applications of the drug in it for free. Kits cost \$75 each. Narcan is a nasal spray that can stop an overdose. It does not hurt you if administered to someone who is not overdosing on drugs.

Earl – Who provides the training? Donna - NEMRE will host the trainings. The State is making an effort to get drug endangered alliances set up in communities to bring awareness of endangered children who are raised in drug homes. Trainings are free of charge. In our region there is one scheduled on January 15, 2019 in Gaylord and January 17, 2019 in Alpena.

Marijuana – Donna reported the State of Michigan passed a law legalizing recreational marijuana which goes into effect on December 6th. None of our local townships passed it but we still have to deal with it. Michigan passed the largest amount a person can possess. If you are 21 or older you can carry up to 2.5 ounces in public and at home have up to 10 ounces and 12 plants. Youth access will go sky high. Ten ounces is equal to 800 joints. All of the testing done was with THC levels of 12%-15%. THC is the ingredient that gets you high. Now levels of THC can be as high as 30%-40%. Other forms of marijuana such as dabs have 60-70% and shatter has 90%. Edible food products have THC levels between 80%-90%. A bottle of pop with marijuana in it is equivalent to 10 servings of pot. A gummy bear can have 4 servings. The CBD levels have stayed the same. There was already an incident in the Atlanta public schools where a child brought brownies with marijuana in them to school. As a result, any foods brought in by students to share has to be prepackaged products.

C. Proulx – Where was the fault before the vote? Donna – The big money investors are looking at marijuana like its tobacco. The groups against legalizing it couldn't compete with the money.

B. Kaye – Are the edibles going to have age limits? Yes, the 21 and older. The problem is it's similar to alcohol, the advertising is geared to attract our youth.

P. Knaus – What is the difference between THC and CBD levels? Donna – CBD is the medicinal part of marijuana that shows some health benefits. The THC is the drugs psycho active portion.

Vaping – Rates of vaping or e-cigarette use in youth has risen 900% with a high majority of use at the junior high level. Marijuana can now be vaped. The extraction process takes the skunk smell out of it. The process can also be dangerous and has caused home explosions. This is huge for our emergency responders and in home staff. The fumes are the danger, the oil produced by the extraction is more concentrated which is what users want.

C. Proulx – How does this jive with the federal law? Donna – It is still illegal under federal law. You can't cross state lines with it or sell it unless it's an approved medical marijuana business. Townships would receive tax money, and revenues from legal medical marijuana.

B. Kaye – People think marijuana is no big deal, it doesn't mean anything, but with the increased THC levels, it can that lead to addiction. Donna – Typically smoking marijuana is where drug use starts and from there leads to harder drug usage. I am truly concerned about the youth and what opening this door will lead to. Police have gone through a lot of training to tell if someone is under the influence.

D. Fay – Can we do anything if we don't want the places selling the drug in our county? Donna – Yes, your county would have to pass an ordinance to opt out. You could still have it in your home but not public dispensaries. It has been proven that the IQ of persons who use marijuana is lower by 8 points. We won't see as much up here as down by Detroit but this will definitely change our environment and we'll have to adjust.

P. Knaus – I'm from a small west coast town that had a county population of 12,000. Since legalizing pot, the population increased to 40,000. The amount of businesses selling marijuana really increased as have the amount of arrests. This is not just impacting our youth but our entire communities. It overwhelms small communities.

Donna had various handout materials to share including free packs to render drugs inactive and random drug tests if you have a concern about your child. Random drug tests for a business to conduct can cost \$75.

Talk Sooner – TalkSooner.org is a resource for parents to access information about substance use prevention. It shows what drugs look like, their effects, etc. We need to work together and get this information out. Kids are vaping in school. Some of the devices are small and resemble a computer thumb drive. Please call Donna if you would like her to speak to local groups in your county.

Director's Report

MI Choice Waiver – The renewal was approved by CMS. It is good for five years. There are changes coming to the program that we will need to face. Enrollments are a little low so spread the word.

Cheboygan – Congratulations to CASA's efforts in having Cheboygan designated as a Community for a Lifetime this past October. They join Alpena and Gaylord in our region. It will be interesting to watch them as they work through their plan for the older adults in their community.

RSVP – Rick Houchin has been hired as the new Services Coordinator. The program currently has 260 volunteers.

E. Corpe – Amy Fuller, the RSVP Director, is resigning. Laurie – Yes, she will stay until a replacement is found. We will be interviewing five people for the position this week. She will be very hard to replace.

McLaren Contract for Community Health Worker – We received notice on Friday that the contract has been finalized. We are waiting for the details on how to move forward. We will have one staff person providing community assistance. We have no idea of the volume of clients at this point.

MMAP – So far this year during open enrollment, counselors and staff have helped save approximately \$2.4 million. They are doing a great job.

Marijuana Law. Passage of the law impacts older adults substantially. Both the AAA and COAs have staff working in the home. Clients don't always want to refrain from smoking while workers are in the home. It's a big issue of concern. Tomorrow we are meeting with all the COA directors and will provide the NEMCSA marijuana policy for guidance.

Minimum Wage and Sick Leave Laws – Laws to increase the minimum wage and change the sick leave law will cause some problems. We already have a shortage of home care workers. The laws passed the Senate and are hung up in the House due to the lame duck session.

The Corporation for National and Community Service – CNCS is restructuring their State offices to regional offices serving multiple states. This will result in the closure of the Detroit field office. We will now deal with staff in the Chicago office for our senior volunteer programs; FGP, SCP and RSVP.

Maddie – Will a lot of folks in Detroit lose their jobs? Laurie – Yes.

November Election Updates – Senator Jim Stamas is the Chair of Appropriations, House Speaker is Lee Chatfield, Floor Leader is Triston Cole, and new to our region is State Representative Curt VanderWall who replaces Booher.

Michigan Health Endowment Fund (MHEF) – Michigan United received \$200,000 in grant funds for a long term care study. The study will conduct a needs assessment of long term care in Michigan and provide actuarial analysis of potential solutions within a year. Moving to a Medicaid Managed Care system in Michigan is not looked at positively because they work from a profit mentality.

D. Doezema – What organizations make up Michigan United? Laurie – I'm not sure of all the entities.

D. Doezema – If they do an actuarial, how accurate will it be? At AASA we take various other funding sources into consideration such as millages.

IMPART Alliance – IMPART also received a MHEF grant in the amount of \$407,000 to adapt the BTBQ training for high school students.

Connect2Care – The Area Agencies on Aging Association received a MHEF grant for the Connect 2Care project. The funds will be used to develop a system to allow the AAAs to receive electronic information when clients are admitted or discharged from a hospital, nursing home, home health agency, etc.

NEMCSA Client Satisfaction Surveys – The survey will be conducted this year and there are more extensive questions this time around. It is not the little card with three questions. It's one page.

Resource Guide – A copy of A Guide to Services for Older Adults was distributed. It focuses on information about the AAAs and COAs.

Program Reports

Legal Services Board – No report.

Region 9 Directors Report – No report. The group is meeting tomorrow and Merianne will have a report ready for our February meeting.

Ombudsman Program Report – Sara reported the issue of drug use in our region also affects nursing home residents. More nursing home residents die every day from dispensed medicine that they don't necessarily need than those that die from opioid overdoses. She has been handling various complaints. A handout on how to file a nursing home complaint was distributed. You are encouraged to file a complaint online but they still have to take a complaint over the phone if you request it. October was Resident's Rights Month. Sara distributed her new business cards which includes her picture along with a door knocker that she has been handing out to residents to put on their door that asks to please knock before entering. The residents love them and administrative staff hate them. She is always looking to recruit new volunteers as well. She also attended the Consumer Voice Annual Conference in Washington DC. Michigan Elder Justice pays for all ombudsmen to go. It was all about the involvement of residents. Discussion followed.

C. Proulx – Who is responsible to know if something happens to the resident if they leave to go shopping or out to lunch. Sara – It's different if the resident has a guardian, etc. but otherwise, the nursing home is responsible if something happens. The nursing home can make up a release of liability contract for a resident to sign if they choose to go out.

C. Proulx - Can the resident make a call to get a doctor? Sara – This is an issue we are working on but doctors don't want to take patients on Medicaid who are taking drugs like Methadone. It comes down to residents rights and that a facility can't hold those things against a resident. There is a huge power struggle between administration and residents.

P. Knaus – Is there any kind of addiction program for older people up here? Sara – There is in Gaylord. P. Knaus - Is it lack of resources or funding? Sara – It's a lack of resident's rights.

P. Knaus - They can't legally admit them if they don't have the resources to treat them. Sara - That's true, but they do it all the time. Paul – I don't understand how they get away with that, where are the class action suits? Sara – I agree.

D. Doezema – There used to be a statewide substance abuse program. It's easy to assume a client isn't competent. They don't get it. Sara – In Michigan we have a huge guardianship problem. Michigan has the highest number of guardians in the nation. Nursing homes feel they have a huge power over the residents.

P. Knaus – In Alcona, the population of older persons is increasing. There are less resources. I'm taken back that when you get old your choices, rights, etc. go away. Sara – That's the culture we want to change. We have the mentality that at a certain age a person can no longer make any decisions. Overall the culture of skilled care is that they rule your decisions.

P. Knaus – Who are the advocates for us. Sara – Me, your local ombudsman and Legal Services of Northern Michigan. Social work is a profession, not a title. Less than half of the nursing homes have a professional social worker.

P. Knaus – What's the answer? Sara – I think long term care providers need more training and LARA should be citing on these issues. D. Doezema – All you need is a bachelor's degree to get a job at LARA.

MMAF Program Report – No report.

Developmental Projects Coordinator Report – Brooke reported she expended the first quarter funds for Kinship on 13 requests. Kinship is the grandparents raising grandchildren. The first Powerful Tools for Caregivers workshop was conducted in our region. With eleven completers. She has also started the Developing Dementia Dexterity Counseling program with three consults scheduled so far. The program provides tools and strategies to better handle caregiver challenges.

M. Downs – When will we get the annual meeting schedule? Laurie – At the February meeting.

Advocacy Reports

Michigan Senior Advocates Council (MSAC) – We continue to look for volunteers, we can have two. Please take this information back to your COAs and community. This position requires travel to Lansing to meet with legislators. The AAA pays mileage and overnight lodging. For more information go to: <http://www.mi-seniors.net/msac.html>

State Advisory Council – C. Corwin reported the task was to revisit previous year's projects and update them. The group conducts phone conferences monthly and will meet in person in March.

State Commission on Aging – J. Briggs reported the Commission did not meet in Nov. The Commission is made up of 15 members statewide. Mark Bromberg of Gladstone was recently appointed. He will be a good addition as he understands senior programs. John is willing to meet with anyone to help with senior issues at the state level. He will stay on as a member.

Ageing and Adult Services Agency (AASA) – Dan Doezema reported they are working on the multi-year format for 2020-2022. Online access to the work on it will be available February 1st. Recently the Federal General Accounting Office consulted with AASA on the nutrition programs.

Local Updates From Council Members

None

Action Items

MSAC Appointment – We will revisit in February.

Question or Comments

M. Hiller – Dave Zeller is the Lion in your area to contact for a speaker about the programs they have available.

C. Corwin – We are using the BTBQ program in Roscommon. All of our in home providers will be going through it to become CNAs. Chris Curtain and Melanie are doing the training.

Laurie – This is a 77 hour training program. How will they do CNA certification? Chuck – Participants will do the classroom part first and then the mandatory 16 hours of hands on in nursing homes which is required.

Adjourn

Our next meeting is scheduled for February 25, 2019 at 1:00 pm. This includes the election of officers so please notify Dennis Fay if interested in the Chair or Vice Chair positions.

A motion was made by B. Kaye with support from C. Wilder to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 pm by Chairman E. Corpe.