

Northeast Michigan Regional Council on Aging
July 27, 2020 at 1:00 pm
Virtual TEAMS Meeting

The meeting was called to order by President C. Proulx at 1:06 pm

Roll Call

Roger Schulte, Darlene Huff, Cindy Sabin, Lorelei King, Carol Wilder, Barbara Kaye, Merianne Tappan, Corleen Proulx, David Burdine, Eileen Howell, Mitzi Downs, Dennis Fay, Chuck Corwin, and Madeline Hiller

Excused: Roberta Matelski

Unexcused: Terry Dutcher, Elaine Ableidinger, Violet Ward, and Jim Mathis

Guests: Steve Betterly (AASA)

AAA Staff: Laurie Sauer, Gina Bey, Yvette Smigelski, Connie McQuarrie, Kelly Robinette, Kitty Glomski, Brooke Mainville, Sara Gusler, Becky Hawks

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

Approval of Minutes – A motion was made by M. Hiller with support from R. Schulte to approve the minutes of May 18, 2020. Motion carried.

Nominating Committee - D. Fay reported Arenac Delegate, Virginia Zygiel has resigned due to health reasons. A motion was made by D. Fay with support from D. Huff to accept the resignation and send Virginia a letter of appreciation. Motion carried.

There are also two new nominations; Cindy Sabin to complete the term left vacant from Virginia and Lorelei King has been appointed Delegate for Crawford County. A motion was made by D. Fay with support from D. Huff to accept the nominations. Motion carried.

Speaker – Gina Bey, Associate AAA Director – MI Choice Waiver and Care Management Programs

Gina reported her primary focus as Associate Director are the Care Management and MI Choice Waiver programs. All staff continue to work remotely. A couple of exceptions have been made in the case of adult protective services referrals and transitions from nursing homes. In these cases, the client is being seen in person. Otherwise, most visits are being done remotely via Microsoft Teams or by telephone. All staff are focusing on protecting clients and themselves during the pandemic. Visits to residential settings such as adult foster care homes, nursing homes, etc. are still off limits to our staff.

C. Sabin - Have the staff been appropriately trained on PPE? There are proper ways to put on and take off PPE. Gina – Yes. All of our case managers and nurses receive annual training on bloodborne pathogens which includes the proper use of gloves, masks, etc. as well as the importance of hand washing. I am very confident they are observing the precautions and are comfortable when working out in the field.

C. Sabin – People wear gloves and then touch everything in the store or wear a mask without covering their nose. They may as well not even bother. Gina – Agreed.

CQAR - On July 3rd we received a list of the files up for this year's Clinical Quality Assurance Review for MI Choice programs. The files are sent to an independent review team that audits our files to be sure we meet the required program criteria and guidelines. Last year we received a total score of 4.0, this is the highest score you can get. We are all very proud of that; we worked hard.

NCQA – On July 21st, we reapplied for our 3-year accreditation with the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA). This is the gold standard for quality. It is up for renewal. The majority of the

information has been uploaded, but we still have a few more steps to go. They will conduct a virtual site visit in September.

Direct Care Worker Increase – The \$2 increase for direct care workers for the months of April, May, and June was paid. The money goes directly to the worker as an incentive to continue working. Another check will be going out for July through September.

C. Corwin – When are the payments going to start? Gina - Those have already been implemented for the waiver program. For non-Medicaid, Laurie will address.

Director's Report

Laurie first welcomed our two new council members: Lorelei King and Cindy Sabin. She then reported on the following:

CQAR – Laurie reviewed the 2019 MI Choice Clinical Quality Assurance Review handout that was distributed previously. She pointed out there are 17 focus areas for the review in addition to many more standards. We scored the highest rating in all areas of review. She is very proud of our program staff. It takes a lot of effort to score a 4.0. This demonstrates how committed our staff is and the exceptional work they do. The NCQA process is also an enormous undertaking. Our staff are working hard for the seniors in our region.

Direct Care Worker Increase – This will be happening for care workers working with our COAs as well. AASA will be issuing some guidance within a few weeks. We may handle it a little differently than with the MI Choice programs as our contracts with the COAs are cost based.

Coronavirus – As you all know, the numbers continue to rise with Alpena, Arenac, Crawford, Iosco, and Otsego having the higher numbers in the region. All staff will continue to work remotely. Some of the COAs are working toward reopening with a couple expected to open in early August with protections in place for staff and participants. Some have pushed their reopening date to September but with some uncertainty. All have been required to submit their reopening plans to the AAA for review. We are not approving them, just reviewing to be sure protective measures are in place.

Q-Boxes – We continue to offer the quarantine boxes of shelf-stable foods. Requests from Alcona, Arenac, Montmorency, Otsego, and Presque Isle counties remain low.

C. Sabin – What is in the boxes? Laurie – Noodles, canned fruit and vegetables, oatmeal and other shelf stable foods. People can sign up on the NEMCSA website. It is on the scrolling bar. If you don't have access to the internet, call me or Kelly Robinette (989-358-4628).

USDA Fresh Food Boxes – Boxes are still being distributed in Alpena, Cheboygan, Crawford, Ogemaw, and Otsego counties. Montmorency and Roscommon stopped getting them. We are down to 300 boxes coming to the region with an ending date of late August. These contain fresh fruits, vegetables or dairy.

PPE – AASA sent another shipment of gowns, shields, shoe coverings, and gloves that are available to our providers by request. We expect more to come. We also received a large shipment of cloth masks. If any of your COAs are in need of any of these items, please call us.

Older Michigianians Day – A new date has been set for next year on May 13, 2021. This year a Senior Action Day was held on June 24th in place of Older Michigianians Day. Hundreds wrote letters and made phone calls to their legislators in support of Older Americans Act funding, which was timely due to budget negotiations taking place. Our region's legislators did not get many calls. We need to work on that.

State Budget - Most budget gaps for AASA funded programs were filled with federal CARES funds, but a \$2.2 billion shortfall remained. MDHHS received a \$36.46 reduction in funding with AASA impacted

with a \$140,000 cut in its operating budget and the senior volunteer program budgets were reduced by \$1.7 million. More information is to come, but that is a significant hit.

Volunteer Programs – Also of note, the volunteer programs were rolled into the aging division a few years back and will now move to being overseen by Dorothy Pintar, School Success Director effective August 1st. There have been other leadership changes made in the Client Services Division as well.

Disaster Relief Funds – Many counties experienced flooding due to the dam failure in Midland including Arena, Iosco, and Ogemaw. Disaster relief was granted at the federal level so funds should be available soon.

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) – Good news for participants. Since most of our host partners are not open yet, participants were granted an extension of emergency leave. They will continue to be paid through September 30, 2020. Currently we have three participants who went back to work.

Legal Services Representative - Jim Mathis has resigned as our representative from this council on the Legal Services Board. We will need a replacement. C. Proulx agreed to be our representative. We will notify Legal Services of Northern Michigan.

MSAC – Bonnie Altman had expressed interest but has since declined the appointment. We need a replacement. If you know of anyone who may be interested, please let us know.

Miscellaneous – Our Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Implementation Plan is to be submitted to the Commission on Services to the Aging in August. At our last meeting you requested to have at least two speakers on the auto insurance changes. We have Terry Dutcher from this Council. Does anyone have ideas for other speakers? Yes, Elizabeth Fortino from Roscommon State Farm is interested in speaking and C. Proulx will check with her insurance agent in Montmorency. Lastly, ending on a good note, Brooke will report on an exciting new project she is working on.

Program Reports

Legal Services Board – No report. Will forward new appointment of C. Proulx for their next meeting.

Region 9 Directors Report – Merianne reported the directors have not met but they are communicating by phone and email about preparing to open their sites.

C. Proulx – Do you have a plan for congregate meal sites? Merianne – We tried opening for two weeks in June but only had three people. Then we had a virus outbreak in the Amish community, so we closed back down. We will offer takeout meals Monday through Friday beginning August 3rd. Participants are also welcome to stay and eat outside under an awning we had installed.

Long Term Care Ombudsman Program Report – Sara reported on the following:

Elder Abuse Prevention Grant – She is still waiting for Olive Animation to incorporate our specified language and send the results back for our review. This again is for the 5-minute public service announcements and the 30-second video with the focus on senior isolation.

Nursing Home Visitation – The Governor issued Executive Order 2020-136 on June 26, 2020. This order puts temporary restrictions on entry into healthcare facilities, residential care facilities, congregate care facilities, and juvenile justice facilities. The order provides further guidance relative to visitation restrictions for the range of residential care facilities, namely homes for the aged, nursing homes, adult foster care facilities, hospice facilities, substance abuse disorder residential facilities, independent living facilities, and assisted living facilities in order to ensure continuation of essential public health services while also providing clarity on the circumstances under which visitation is allowed in these facilities.

Sara continues to receive a lot of calls about visitation. Many of the nursing homes are starting and then stopping visitation based on the Governor's orders which has caused some confusion. Several nursing homes have started outside visits with family. All homes should be able to do virtual or window visits. Compassionate visits are allowed in person for end of life.

Click here to view the order.



MDHHS_Epidemic_
order_-_nursing_hoi

Coronavirus Update - We still have a couple of nursing homes in our region with the coronavirus. To check on virus information related to cumulative cases and deaths of residents and staff in long term care go to: https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus/0,9753,7-406-98163_98173-526911--,00.html.

Ombudsmen were notified by the state ombudsman office that they will be allowed to enter nursing homes. Sara hopes to hear Wednesday what the policies and procedures will be for visits. Currently, nursing homes do have to test everyone on a weekly basis unless they have consistent zero cases.

C. Corwin – Guardians have not had access to their clients. Have you gotten any clarification? Sara – No They are treated like any other visitor and cannot enter the nursing home.

C. Corwin – For those who visit to provide ADLs, maybe they should get their physician to write a prescription for the patient stating the need. It may carry some weight. Sara – It may, but the facility director still makes the ultimate decision.

Corkie – Is there any way DHHS will assist with direct orders? Sara – That is where advocacy comes in from the state. There is rarely an advocate committee with family members, the ombudsman, or advocacy agencies. LARA is the place to file a complaint.

PREVNT Grant Update – Sara is having difficulty scheduling the classes with law enforcement because businesses and libraries are closed. She will reach out to COAs this week for possible venue sites. Everyone is just uneasy. We need to provide the classes in a safe way.

SPOTS / Verify a License (VAL) Site – As of July 1, 2020 the nursing home public viewing site for CMS 2567 reports for federal surveys, enforcement letters, grids and POCs has been transitioned from SPOTS to the Verify a License website at LARA located at: <https://www.michigan.gov/lara/0,4601,7-154-89512--,00.html>. The historical information will remain in SPOTS, but new surveys will be available on the VAL website. This is the same site State Licensing reports are posted on.

Sara encourages you to look at the information and survey results. Let others know they can see this information. You may see something that says, "Immediate Jeopardy". This is an incident of harm. Only one nursing home was cited but it was removed before the survey was over. When conducting surveys, LARA looks at infection control, abuse, and neglect.

Please feel free to contact Sara with questions you may have related to any of the issues discussed at: guslers@nemcsa.org.

Planning and Volunteer Coordinator Report – Kitty reported that COAs have counselors working remotely and continue to be very active. They are getting a lot of referrals from DHHS since a letter was released pointing clients to call MMAP for more information. Other calls are mostly about Medicare and the new auto insurance coverage, Medicaid issues, medications, and insurance coverage for those with a job loss, nearing retirement and those that are planning to retire due to Covid-19. Other agencies (including DHHS) are telling clients to call the MMAP Hotline number 800-803-7174 for assistance. Cases are getting more complex to manage.

Meetings/Trainings – Kitty continues to hold regular Region 9 monthly planning meetings with site coordinators on the 1st Wednesday of each month. Counselors have gone through the annual

recertification process for MMAP. Crawford Counselors have teamed up and given two virtual New to Medicare presentations and an educational demo presentation for site coordinators using Zoom. The state office is holding virtual monthly meetings and webinars in lieu of in-person trainings. A remote Medicaid Training was held on July 15th. A Statewide Training on Changes to the Medicare Plan Finder is scheduled for July 29th. We are waiting to see if this process will go paperless.

Special Projects Coordinator Report – Brooke reported on Evidenced Based Disease Prevention Programs. Six participants completed the virtual Powerful Tools for Caregivers workshop that ended June 15th. All the reviews were good.

A virtual Powerful Tools for Caregivers started on Tuesday, July 14, 2020 and a Diabetes PATH Workshop is scheduled to begin on August 5, 2020. Twenty-five signed up for the Powerful Tools workshop so it was split into a morning and afternoon workshop. To date, no one has registered for the Diabetes PATH workshops. Information on available workshops can be found on our website on www.nemcsa.org

Facebook – Brooke recently launched the Region 9 AAA Facebook page. Go to Facebook and type in NEMCSA Region 9 AAA and like us. Follow us for lots of good information.

Caregiver Empowerment and Wellness Virtual Conference – This is our 3rd annual event. Due to the virus, it will be a virtual event this year held in two parts: July 31, 2020 and August 14, 2020. The conference is free. Call Brooke or go online to register. Part 1 on July 31st will be from 10:00 am to Noon with keynote speaker Jill Gafner Livingston who will present on Caregiving Survival and Jennifer Schultz with Michigan Disability Network will present on adaptive services. Part 2 of the conference will be held on August 14th from 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm. Keynote speaker will again be Jill Gafner Livingston who will present on Caring for Someone with Dementia and Nicole Wethington with MSU Extension will present on Stress Less with Mindfulness. Conference information can be found on our website and Facebook page.

Brain Health Toolkit – Brooke wrote and received a grant for Roscommon County to provide Brain Health Toolkits. It is a mailer with items to get older adult minds active. Toolkits will either be mailed or delivered. We also have a caregiver box for those taking care of someone with dementia. The amount requested was just under \$4,000, we received just under \$2,000. Our request was based on the number of clients. We will either have to limit the number of boxes or the number of items placed in the boxes. We are waiting to hear on additional grant submissions to cover additional counties. Otsego County is not covered under the grant service area.

C. Proulx – I have to say you are doing wonderful job with the funds you did get.

Advocacy Reports

Michigan Senior Advocates (MSAC) – Currently vacant, no report.

State Advisory Council – C. Corwin reported the Council is continuing work on the draft for submission in early fall.

State Updates

State Commission on Aging – No report.

Aging and Adult Services Agency (AASA) – Steve Betterly reported the state office has been very busy with the annual implementation plan development. Deadline for submission is August. The annual assessments are also due soon as well. AASA applied for additional Michigan Health Endowment Fund grants. A blanket waiver document is being reviewed. The Commission on Aging gave AASA

permission to make broad policy waivers for changes in units of service and other technical aspects. Over 60 policy waivers have been approved. Steve will put together a list of blanket waivers from individual waivers that have been granted that will work statewide. This is an unusual position for AASA; we are working to be responsive to the needs of the network. Steve thanked AAA staff and the COAs for their work in responding to the needs of seniors during the pandemic. The Commission on Services to the Aging board is now complete with three reappointments and two new appointments. On a sad note, some of you may know Don Ryan from Region 3A. We received word that he passed away this morning.

Local Updates From Council Members

There were none.

Laurie – I just wanted to add that we did receive a large shipment of cloth masks. We have 14 boxes of 500. Let me know if your COA needs them. The COAs were also given the option to request them on their own.

Action Items

AAA Director Evaluation – In accordance with the Michigan Aging and Adult Services Agency Operating Standards for Area Agencies on Aging, an annual evaluation is required for the AAA Director by their Board. The evaluation was sent previously for completion or members can click on the link in today's PowerPoint presentation and complete it now. There are five areas to evaluate: Multi-year and Annual Implementation Plans, Program Goals and Quality of Service, Ensure Compliance of Contracts with Federal, State and Local Entities, Community Relations, Advocacy, and Communications.

Endorsement of the Fiscal Year 2021 Funding Recommendations – Handouts were distributed before the meeting for review. Becky Hawks reviewed the recommendations for the Merit Award, Elder Abuse Prevention, Title IIIIE National Family Caregiver Support, and Evidence Based Disease Prevention Health Promotion programs. Following the recommendations of this Council and the approval of the NEMCSA Board of Directors, the AAA will negotiate participants and units with the applicants.

Merit Award – Seven applications were received. The AAA is required to spend 50% (\$119,530) of the expected award on the development of or on-going support of adult day centers. The remainder of service funds are being utilized to reimburse current providers of adult day care and respite throughout the region. available funding. Recommended funding of \$19,922 for on-going support for Sunrise Side Senior Services, Cheboygan COA, Ogemaw COA and Roscommon COA. Recommended funding of \$19,921 for on-going support for District Health Department #4 and Otsego COA. A motion was made by D. Huff with support from C. Wilder to approve the recommendations. Motion carried, no opposed.

Elder Abuse Prevention (EAP) – Three applications were received with \$6,625 in expected funding. Recommendation to fund the Ogemaw COA for \$600 for an Elder Abuse Prevention Program and Oscoda COA for \$700 and the Roscommon COA for \$1,464 to provide an Elder Abuse Prevention Seminar. \$3,861 remains unallocated.

C. Proulx – What happens to the unallocated funds? Becky – This year it was used for the videos Sara spoke about earlier. Laurie – Sometimes we put them out for rebid, but typically, we do projects throughout the Region.

C. Proulx – I'm surprised more applications weren't requested. Laurie – This is a unique year with the virus. We also have two new COA directors and some hesitation to take on new programs at this time.

A motion was made by C. Corwin with support from D. Huff to approve the recommendations for EAP. Motion carried, no opposed.

National Family Caregiver Support Program – Seventeen applications were received with funding expected at \$109,708. Recommended funding of \$91,050 with unallocated amounts of \$3,650 for Creating Confident Caregivers, \$7,508 both totally funded. for the Kinship Purchase of Service, and \$7,500 for EBDP for CG. \$25,000 allocated for Education Support. After fully funding EST required programs, \$12,346 remained unallocated. These funds were reallocated to respite, \$50,000 plus \$12,346 for a total of \$62,346 in funding for respite. All but Roscommon County were fully funded. A motion was made by M. Hiller with support by R. Schulte to approve the recommendations for NFCSP. Motion carried, no opposed.

M. Tappan - What was the amount of respite funding requested and received for Roscommon? Becky – They requested \$26,000 and will receive \$18,361.

Evidence Based Disease Prevention Health Promotion – Six applications were received with funding expected at \$24,000. Recommendation to fund the Crawford COA \$3,378 for Geri-Fit Strength Training, Montmorency COA \$2,700 for two Matter of Balance, Ogemaw COA \$2,000 for two Matter of Balance, Oscoda COA \$1,200 for two Matter of Balance, Otsego COA \$8,900 for four Matter of Balance and \$2,975 for four Walk with Ease, and Roscommon COA \$3,400 for four Matter of Balance. A motion was made by C. Wilder with support from D. Huff to approve the recommendations. Motion carried, no opposed. C. Corwin abstained from the vote.

The endorsement by the Council will be forwarded to the NEMCSA Board of Directors for final approval.

*All actual awards will be based on funding allocations to the region.

Question or Comments

No further questions

Adjourn

A motion was made by D. Huff with support from R. Schulte to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned by Chair C. Proulx at 2:34 pm. Our next meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 28th.