

**Rhode Island Division of Elderly Affairs
74 West Road; Cranston, RI 02920
Garden Conference Room
Home & Community Care Advisory Committee
Minutes
June 24th 2014**

Attendance:

Rebecca Martish / Chair, CareLink; John O'Hara, AARP; Charles Dress, AARP; Donna Lonschein, The Alliance for BLTC; Dottie Santagata, Cornerstone Adult Day Services; Thomas Martin, EOHHS; Mario Oliveri, EOHHS; Kelly Lee, PACE with Adult Day Center of Westerly; Verteal Patterson, AARP; Julia Gold, RI Department of Health; Linda A'Vant-Deishinni, Diocese of Providence; Nicholas Oliver, RIPHC

The meeting began at 9:05 AM. Introductions followed.

The May 27th 2014 minutes were reviewed. No changes, corrections or additions were noted. Minutes accepted.

Update on Transportation: Tom Martin and Mario Oliveri, EOHHS

A new transportation broker was selected, LogistiCare to administer the non-emergency medical transportation. The transition to the new broker occurred on May 1st 2014. EOHHS noted that the transition occurred quickly because of problems with transportation. In April of 2014 before the transition there were 930 missed trips. It was a rocky start in May and complaints have been tracked, currently EOHHS is dealing with quality issues. Since the start-up EOHHS has noticed a drop in the number of complaints. EOHHS is working with LogistiCare and The Alliance on training for drivers. The use of taxis has been a major issue and LogistiCare is seeking to get more transportation providers to meet the transportation demand. Drivers from taxi companies have 60 days to complete training. One issue is that taxis do not have signs or markings on their vehicle which indicate to clients and their families that the taxi is their ride to their appointment, adult day, etc. The Public Utilities Commission will not allow any signs in the taxis to address the issue. EOHHS is hopeful to come to a resolution with the Public Utilities to avoid any need to go through the regulatory process.

There is the concern that there seems to be a systems issue that EOHHS and LogistiCare need to address. If a provider calls LogistiCare they blame RId and if you call RId they blame LogistiCare. A meeting with Elena had been requested by some of the providers. One concern out of the Long Term Care Coordinating Council meeting was that the group was only looking at percentages i.e. if only 2 or 3 people were not getting their RId that it was not a major concern. Tom Martin mentioned that his office has been following up with those providers who have been experiencing more issues than others on a daily basis.

Kathy Heren from the Alliance is working on a training program for drivers. Dottie Santagata from Cornerstone Adult Day Services noted that she had developed a curriculum for drivers and how to properly care for the elderly when they are transporting them, especially those clients with dementia and Alzheimer's. The Developmentally Disabled community also did a training for drivers on how to

transport clients. Cornerstone would be able to lend support to The Alliance in developing the training for drivers.

A common theme with some of the transportation issues noted by providers is that the issues are happening to clients that have new standing orders, which could be indicative of a communication or systems issue that needs to be addressed. Tom mentioned that providers should report specific cases including the name of the person to him. EOHHS is trying to be proactive and trying to get the issues addressed.

Another issue is a problem with those clients that are under the age of 60 with a dementia diagnosis. There is no alternate form of transportation for this population because of the age restriction. This is a policy issue that needs to be addressed and moved forward. This is an issue that the Division of Elderly Affairs should address. The industry needs an advocate/champion within this administration now that Catherine Taylor leaving her position. The home and community care recipients need an advocate and it has been a struggle to meet with the Governor.

Update on Climate Change and the Elderly Project: Julia Gold RI Department of Health

Julia provided an update on the Climate Change and Elderly Project. The program is getting a name change to the "Senior Resiliency Project." The program was recently awarded a \$150,000 grant to do Sandy Recovery Planning. The Senior Resiliency Project will focus on three high priority sites in Washington County that were directly impacted by Hurricane Irene, Super Storm Sandy, and Winter Storm Nemo. These pilot sites will include one nursing home, one assisted living residence, and one senior housing facility. There will be an application process for the pilot sites, and once the award is made in July the application will go out to providers.

The Senior Resiliency Project will work with a team of partners, stakeholders, and a qualified vendor to assist nursing homes, assisted living residences, and senior housing complexes prepare for disasters through intensive and site-specific energy resiliency audits and the development of all-hazards emergency plans that emphasize sheltering in place.

Currently the program is conducting a survey for independent housing. The program has four interns from the Lt. Governor's Office to assist in survey administration and data input. There are two surveys one for management and the other for residents. The goal is to have someone involved in the management of each independent housing facility complete the survey. Julia noted they are currently working on how best to have residents complete the survey and return the survey. Julie also mentioned that Meals on Wheels has distributed the survey to over 1400 of its clients.

It was noted that the Long Term Care subgroup for the Climate Change program had stopped meeting because there was no clear project to work. The group decided to postpone meeting while waiting to see if the grant was awarded.

A question was asked if the program has been working with the Emergency Preparedness office within the Department of Health. It was suggested that a table Top Exercise on Sheltering in place occur in the fall. Julia said she would reach out to emergency Preparedness and work on getting placed on the agenda for one of the Table Top Exercises.

Legislation Update

- a. Adult Day and Home Care Rate Increase: H 7732 and S 2583: the legislation that would have increased reimbursement by 10% for adult day and home care was not passed.
- b. Aging in Community Fund: H 7316 and S 2215: A sub A passed both the House and Senate. The bill was amended to eliminate the fund, what remained was a provision for a Long Term Care Coordinating Commission to create a subcommittee to develop a plan to provide a plan for support services, housing, and transportation to enable the state's elderly population to remain living in the community.
- c. Community Senior Services Grant Program: H 7236 and S 2194: This legislation would have established a permanent formula for funding community service grants for senior centers and other local senior services programs operated by municipalities or non-profits based on local senior population. The legislation did not pass.
- d. Assisted Living SSI Reimbursement: H 7251 and S 2471: This piece of legislation would restore the cuts to assisted living SSI, which happened several years ago. The legislation passed however funding for SSI was only restored for the four RI Housing Facilities.
- e. National Criminal Background Checks: H 7413 and S 2652: The legislation would establish national background checks for all long term care workers. The bill was passed.

Comments/Questions on Update on Transportation, Climate Change and the Elderly or Legislation Update:

Given that we are entering an election year it is very important to advocate for senior issues. It was announced that the Senior Agenda Coalition is organizing a Governor's Candidates Forum, which will be held on Monday August 4th from 1:00-2:30pm at the Crowne Plaza in Warwick RI. There will be a moderator for the session and six questions will be asked of the candidates, all of which on senior issues.

Meeting ended at 10:30 am

Next Meeting: September 23rd 2014 at 9:00am