

Minutes
East Central DHHS Advisory Committee
January 19, 2010

Attendance: Emily Lundberg Smith, Jody Gertken Teter, JoLynn Larson, Brenda Hommerding, Beth Schutz

Guest: Marty Barnnum

Staff: Diane Leonard, Rich Diedrichsen, Jennifer Robinson (interpreter)

Absence: Ernie Watson, Linda Henrickson, Michele Isham, and Rebecca Crowell

Meeting was called to order by Emily Lundberg Smith our new chairperson; all present introduced themselves. Minutes from the last meeting were reviewed and approved as printed.

DHHS Update:

Diane told the committee about workshops and trainings in the area since our last meeting. A lot of work has been completed with hospitals and senior agencies. Diane noted that our area worked with Rubin Latz of the VR Rapid Response team on a situation in our area; she also reminded members of Rubin's role and that he had spoken at our last committee meeting.

Rich reported on the hiring of our new OASI, Staci Lahr who will start work on February 17, 2010. He also noted that he attended a manager's meeting that morning and the DHHS does not have any legislative agenda items this year since it is a non-budget year. This means there will be no changes in the TED program for now, but noted that the Wireless Pilot project will proceed.

Members:

JoLynn mentioned that there will be a SNAPS (Parent/Family) event Feb 7 from 1-5:00 p.m. at the Community Center in Monticello (a handout was passed around).

Marty asked if any kids from area went to Be Safe Be Cool workshop in the metro. Some committee members mentioned that they did not hear about it until the week before. Brenda said it went to parents on mailing list. This event will happen again in the fall and we will get information out.

Brenda reported on roller skating event in St. Cloud last fall. This was very well attended. Two signing Santa events were held in the region; the one at North Junior High School had less attended this year than last. Emily noted that the event at Confidence Learning Center in Brainerd was successful and well attended.

Brenda also noted that the ASL Films movie "Gerald" coming March 19 at Sartell High School, that she will present at a local Sertoma Club on Feb. 25th asking for funds for the SNAPS organization. MN Hands and Voices downsized (actually split) the central region; Brenda now covers 6 counties. The national Hands and Voice Conference is coming to MN this year; July 8 – 10 with the location to be confirmed at a later date. They are looking for support. Rich suggested that the information on the conference be sent to him (Candace Lindow Davies will do this) and he agreed to ask for support for DHHS. Finally Brenda noted that she is seeing many new families in the region and workload continues to grow.

Beth completed several training events partnering with DHHS and these have been successful. A workshop for interpreters on working in MH setting is scheduled for April. Overall, CSD interpreter referral has noticed some local shortages due to the fact that there are 2 VRS services in St. Cloud now. For the first time in a very long time, some interpreting jobs went unfilled due to shortage. Recruitment efforts have been vary active, but still a shortage. Rich noted Jenny's work with schools and mentioned that the EIPA test coming to the area soon. Emily asked about monies for providing accommodations for deaf professionals, who are not consumers of VR and working in non-covered workplaces? We discussed some possible options including PTE monies.

Emily noted the following D/HH camps scheduled at Confidence Learning Center:

Sibling Camp (hearing and deaf siblings)

Koda (Kids of Deaf adults) Family Retreat

Hearing Parents with Hard of Hearing Children

Wellness Retreat

Cued Speech Retreat

Pink Deafies + (Deaf Women who are Breast Cancer Survivors/have Breast Cancer) and general

Deaf Women are welcome

Deaf Women's Retreat

D/HH Youth Science Camp

Deaf Blind Camp

Hearing Parent Deaf Children

Deaf Men's Retreat

If you want more information on specific camps, email Emily. Emily will e-mail all committee members a general brochure about her program, along with the dates of each retreat/camp.

Emily presented a MCDHH up-date from Michelle that was sent to Diane via email.

Michelle reported that the commission's focus in 2010 will be to prevent cuts in vital programs for existing customers who are deaf, deaf-blind or hard of hearing. If committee wants more information, please contact Michelle.

Guest Speaker – Marty

Marty presented a demonstration of Interpreter On-Line (IO) technology with her laptop using WiFi technology. The technology (VIDYO) uses internet and the program is designed to adjust for bandwidth that is being used for maximum clarity. The picture is reported to be very clear most of the time. Sometimes problems with clarity can occur is the traffic on the internet is very high at the time. This VIDYO system is more compact – using laptop computers and web-cams compared to the Polycom devices witch used large screens. In addition the cost is much less (a few hundred dollars compared to thousands for the Ploycom system). To use the system the user must buy, or have a laptop computer, a camera and headphone device. The program is possible because of Grant seed money from DHHS, who brought cameras, headphones and external microphones to get the program started. About 13 interpreters now have a "license" to be on server; and thus provide the IO services. Currently, two medical clinics in SW MN use the technology along with a couple of jails including Benton, Itasca Counties. The initial focus of the program will be on greater MN first because of need. Input on establishing the service was gathered from a Focus group of deaf people in metro who helped to establish (set up) parameters for using this technology mode. One parameter is that at any time during the use of the service, the interpreter, person receiving the accommodation or agency is empowered to say [this is] "not working" and discontinue the transmission and request that a "live present" interpreter be brought in. It is believed that the service will be successful for situations like "booking of

suspects” but would not be used for giving of the Miranda Warning or for interrogations. Hospitals limits too.

Discussed the benefits and costs and based on 30 minute chunks at 2 dollars per minute (\$60.00). User buy and initial license, which has to be renewed yearly at the estimated cost of \$230.00 for whole kit (average)

The system can be used with three people on screen at one time so this makes it possible to include services from a Certified Deaf Relay Interpreter if needed. It is also possible to use a LED screen to enlarge the images for low-vision consumers or meetings. The program will be available 24/7 which makes it user friendly for emergency providers and Law Enforcement.

The new Committee meeting is scheduled for **May 18, 2010 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the East-Central DHHS Office, meeting room.**

Meeting adjourned at 6:00PM.