

DHHS, METO ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, December 4, 2001

MEMBERS PRESENT: Richard Laurion, Jodi Miller, Phyllis Nessel, Lee Perish, Brenda Rystephanuk-Giese, Dann Trainer, Joan Treichel

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Rachelle Cooper (DHHS Interpreter), Marie Koehler (DHHS Regional Manager), Linda Scenechal, (guest speaker on cochlear implants). Mary Bauer, Dale Finke, Sharie Hawkins, Liz Brown and Marge Johnson from the DHHS office sat in on Linda's presentation.

I. **MEETING CALLED TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS:**

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m.

II. **ACCEPTANCE OF SEPTEMBER 6, 2001 MINUTES:**

Jodi motioned that the minutes be approved, Dann seconded. Minutes were approved as written

III. **DHHS/D/RS UPDATE:**

Members were given the opportunity to comment on the DHHS Update Report. Richard suggested that the new Interpreter Referral website include a page on "volunteer interpreters." He noted that St. Kate's would be willing to write a draft regarding this. Richard was directed to contact Carrie Wilbert about this issue. A discussion ensued about the disappointing attendance at the November 17 legal workshop. Jodi indicated that this workshop conflicted with the SHHH meeting. This group always meets the third Saturday of the month. To inform hard of hearing individuals about these types of events, we should submit information for their newsletter by the 2nd Saturday of each month. Some members felt that workshops should be offered in the evening, versus on a weekend. Consumers may be willing to attend more time-limited sessions. If an evening event is offered, perhaps subs could be served to attendees.

IV. **TED/MRS BUSSINESS:**

A. **New TED Application Forms:** TED application forms were passed out to members. Members were asked to distribute these applications to appropriate consumers and service providers. The changes made to these applications should speed up the overall process, resulting in consumers getting their equipment in a more timely manner.

B. **Feedback on 711 Access:** Members were asked to give their feedback to how well 711 was working for them. Brenda said that it did not work, that the numbers just rings and is not answered. She still relies on the 800 #. Lee and Dann both indicated that they are asked to give the number to be called at least 3 times before the number is accepted. Lee indicated that it works better if she types "Hi" first and then the number to be called. Jodi said she has not had any problems using the 711 number. Members also discussed their frustration with trying to get through voice mail options. Richard said that hearing people face the same frustration. When using MRS, it helps to inform the CA prior to the call going through, which voice mail option you want (if you know it).

V. **OLD BUSINESS:**

A. **Aware Fair Update:** September 21, 2001 is the *tentative* date scheduled for the next Aware Fair. This date will not be

released to the community until Marie has had an opportunity to check on contractual issues for the St. Paul T.C. site. Note: The Aware Fair date may have to change because it conflicts with MSAD's homecoming events. Stay tuned for further information.

- A. B. Region 5 Update:** Richard shared that he is the Project Manager for the Region 5 Federal Interpreter Training Project. They have just completed year one a 5-year cycle. A significant goal of this project is to create new resources for interpreters. They have developed two CD-ROM's; one entitled "Mirrored Math," and the other "To the Heart of the Matter." Educational interpreters can access these tapes and view them for the purpose of interpreter development. The Federal Clearinghouse will be distributing these tapes. They currently have a waiting list because they have been overwhelmed with requests for these materials. The Clearinghouse told Region 5 staff that they have received more requests for these CD's than any other product. These CD-ROM's can actually be obtained from the College of St. Catherine's through the month of December. Richard also provided DHHS, Metro with 13 videotapes on various multicultural interpreting situations. These tapes can be copied.

V. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Homeland Security:** (Topic postponed)

- B. Promoting Community Events:** (See III., Update Report)

- C. Meetings Dates for 2002:** Members agreed to meet on the following dates in 2002:

Tuesday, March 5

Tuesday, June 4

Thursday, September 5

Tuesday, December 3

The meeting time will change to **1:30 – 3:30.**

- D. Presentation on Cochlear Implants/Club:**

Linda Senechal, a member of the MN Cochlear Implant Club, presented on cochlear implants and the CI Club. This club has been in operation for 3 years. Members meet 4 times a year and they produce a quarterly newsletter.

Linda wanted members to be aware of the situation at the University of Minnesota. The number of cochlear implants they are doing has increased from 8-9 per year, to 40-50 per year. They are actually losing money on these operations because each surgery cost \$50,000. Insurance reimbursement does not begin to cover the actual cost. Last year alone, they lost \$1,000,000. Linda and members of the club have concerns of this program closing. The only other clinic that provides cochlear implant surgery in MN is the Mayo Clinic. This surgery requires a fair amount of follow-up, travel to Rochester from the Twin Cities and northern MN could prove difficult.

Linda went on to say that a very large percentage of people whom could benefit from CI's don't have the surgery. Their reasons are as follows: 1. Many people think they cannot afford the surgery, but thus far in MN, Medicare/insurance has covered all of the operations. 2. Some people have an aversion to surgery or doubts about its success. 3. A lot of people are not even aware that this medical technology exists. 4. It is a controversial issues. Many deaf adults think it is wrong to have children receive implants (don't try to fix them).

Reasons why more people are getting cochlear implants include: 1. The word is getting out and more and more people are learning about this as an option. (TV programs such as ER). 2. The criterion for candidacy has decreased from a 90-dB loss to a 70-dB loss. 3. The size of the unit has decreased significantly. Children as young a 12 months are receiving successful

implants. People receiving this surgery are released from the hospital one-day after the surgery. One month later they receive the speech processor. Mapping then occurs 10 times within a 6-month period, and then adjustments are made annually. It takes about 1-2 years for the brain to be trained. Side effects include facial paralysis, although this is a temporary condition and occurred in earlier surgeries. Another more common side effect is loss of taste, although this too, is temporary. A good movie that addresses the cochlear implant topic is *Sound and Fury*. Linda also suggested the following books: Wired for Sound, a Journey in Hearing by Beverly Biderman, and Hear Again by Arlene Romoff.

VII. MCDHH UPDATE:

The MCDHH did not have a full commission meeting this fall. Instead, the Executive Committee met to talk about restructuring.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Jodi said that the St. Paul/Minneapolis SHHH group will meet the third Saturday in December. They will have their holiday party at this time (potluck), and a cookie sale.

Joan shared that the Signing Santa Program has been very successful this year. Some malls have even scheduled their Signing Santa's for two evenings during the holiday season. The Pioneer newspaper has also provided coverage and identified these dates for kids who sign (so as not to disappoint hearing kids.)

Richard shared that Jimmy Beldon's wife gave birth to a baby boy, named Jared.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.