

DHHS ~ METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

Monday, June 2, 2008

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jennifer Anderson, Melinda D'Angelo, Ken Hobbins, Merrilee Knoll, Liz McDevitt

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jessalyn Frank, Melissa McNamer, Joe O'Brien

OTHERS PRESENT: Guest Speaker, Lee Clark, DeafBlind Specialist with DHHS Marie Koehler, DHHS Regional Manager; Stephen Medlicott and Heather Ortiz, DHHS Interpreters; Angi, Paradigm Captioning;

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS:

The meeting was called to order at 11:07 a.m. Introductions were made.

II. ACTION ON MARCH 10, 2008 MINUTES:

Liz made a motion to accept the meeting minutes as written. Merrilee seconded. The minutes were approved as written.

III. DHHSD/RSC UPDATE:

- The Legal Assistance to the Disadvantaged Committee of the MN State Bar Association set up a sub-committee to address access issues within the legal system for people with a hearing loss. DHHS staff views this as significant and promising.
- Marie clarified that the increase of TED applications resulted primarily from outreach done with senior high rises and senior centers. Additional outreach occurred in Scott and Carver counties because fewer people have been served in these counties, so applications are coming in from these two counties as well.
- Members acknowledged the importance of the Kids and Cop event co-sponsored by DHHS in May.

IV. TED/MINNESOTA RELAY:

A. Program Update:

- Effective October 1, 2008, the TED income guidelines will increase by approximately \$2,000, to \$42,368. Last year the income guidelines decreased, so the increase means more individuals may qualify for services.

- In the last few months the Metro office has received an increase in the number of TED applications. This is credited to the outreach and promotional efforts of staff.

B. Feedback Regarding Minnesota Relay:

- CAPTEL continues to be the best option available for Merrilee
- Ken plans to test out the web-based CAPTEL and will provide feedback at the next meeting.

V. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Revised DHHS Brochures:

- Members received copies of the new brochure and were encouraged to distribute them to families, services providers, consumers, etc.
- The new brochure is also available on the DHHS website and can be printed from there.
- The new brochure includes a "Language Block" in 11 different languages. If non-English speaking individuals call DHHS, staff will communicate with the callers by doing a 3-way call with the Language Line.
- Serving foreign language speaking families will result in having to hire foreign language interpreters. Members indicated that their places of employment are also offering this service.

B. Kids, Cops, and Firefighters, Too Event:

- Approximately 100 individuals attended the event, less than the committee had hoped for, but those in attendance expressed their appreciation and relayed the importance of getting this information out to kids and their families.
- The Minneapolis Police Training Center is interested in offering the "Kids and Cops" event next year. The committee agreed to offer a similar event, but to schedule it during the week day to draw students from deaf/hard of hearing educational programs.
- The "Kids and Cop" committee is meeting June 5 and has invited representatives from the schools to join the meeting. Coordinated efforts were suggested since the schools do offer training on some of this within their curriculum. Stay tuned for further updates!

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

A. READY IN 3 DVD, Emergency Preparedness:

- Each member was given a copy of the revised READY IN 3 DVD. This DVD was originally done in ASL, so the Metro office worked to have captions and voice-over added. The DVD could not be viewed due to technical problems. Unfortunately, due to technical problems, this DVD could not be viewed during the meeting.

- DHHS offices statewide will distribute copies of this DVD to their consumers and deaf/hard of hearing organizations.
- Members brainstormed where these DVDs could be distributed in the Metro area. Locations identified include: MEC, Rehabilitation Services (Rubin Latz), Libraries, schools that have deaf/hard of hearing programs, MADC, and HLAATC.

B. Guest Speaker, Lee Clark – DHHS DeafBlind Specialist:

- Lee began working as the DeafBlind Specialist for DHHS on March 4, 2008. Previously, he worked as a DeafBlind Specialist in North Carolina for 12 years.
- His duties at DHHS include: providing consultation and training to agencies that serve deafblind consumers; monitoring the DeafBlind Consumers Directed Services (DBCDS) program; working with the DHHS Consultants who offer case management services for the DBCDS program; developing relationships with other DHS programs, some of which includes helping these programs adapt their forms so that they address dual loss; offering training and activities, such as training on SSPs.
- The DBCDS Program currently serves 20 consumers. These consumers receive \$7105 annually. This money can be used for SSP services, training and equipment/technology – there is a limit on how much money can be spent on technology. Any money a consumer has remaining near the end of the fiscal year gets redirected to the “Equipment Fund.” Monies available in this fund are directed at technology that can be purchased to serve other deafblind individuals who are on a waiting list.
- Lee plans to work collaboratively with other organizations/agencies that serve DeafBlind individuals such as representatives from SSB, the DeafBlind Technical Assistance Project, and DeafBlind Services Minnesota. Ken suggested to Lee that he also connect with Dennis Johnson with Rehabilitation Services, who formerly worked at SSB.
- On a personal level, Lee shared he grew up in North Carolina. He has an Accounting Degree from Gallaudet University and a Masters Degree in Education from McDaniel University. He received his certification as a DeafBlind Trainer from Northern Illinois University. His wife is Deaf and she grew up in Minnesota (although she is still living in North Carolina until they sell their house), he has 3 children, two boys and a girl. (They are now adults.) The two boys have Usher’s Syndrome (similar to Lee), and his daughter is deaf.
- Lee can be contacted at Lee.Clark@state.mn.us
- Lee encouraged members to view the DeafBlind website at www.deafblindinfo.org

C. DHHS 2008-2010 WorkPlan:

- Members were asked to assist DHHS with one of their workplan goals. The Metro office is monitoring the captions of local TV stations as it relates to emergency announcements (such as tornado warnings). A form was distributed to members so that they can provide their feedback.

- Merrilee indicated that the TV stations also need to receive feedback regarding their captioning of local news programs. Marie indicated that this information could also be included on the form provided.
- Feedback gathered will be shared with all of the TV stations. Once the DHHS office has specific names and contact information for the appropriate contacts at local TV stations, this will be shared with members.

VII. MCDHH REPORT Update Report: Liz shared the following:

- MCDHH experienced several successes this legislative session.
 - MN is the first state in the country to require candidates for office who file with the Campaign Finance Board to caption their ads. Television and Internet ads must be captioned. In addition, transcripts of radio ads must be posted on the internet.
 - MCDHH's name is now the "Commission of Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing Minnesotans."
 - MCDHH can now conduct electronic meetings (via phone, video phone or videoconferencing) for official business.
 - Real-time captioning for live news broadcast funds will continue; funding for this service was slated to end in 2010.
 - The state law explicitly states that MCDHH will advise and advocate for all three branches of state government for equal access.

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Merrilee announced that there will be a picnic sponsored by the Cochlear Implant Club on September 18 at Brookview Park in Golden Valley. The HLAATC organization will sponsor a conference in St. Cloud on March 27 - 28
- Melinda shared that Ramsey County (through People Incorporated) has a full-time Case Aid Interpreter position available. The salary range is \$31,000-\$42,000 (plus mileage). Visit www.peopleincorporated.org and click on "Case Aid."
- Jennifer passed out a new brochure that promotes the MEC program. These are being distributed to employers to entice them to work with MEC and their clientele.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

Thanks for attending the meeting!

REMEMBER, our next meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 8th, from 11:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.