

DHHS Advisory Committee Meeting

October 7, 2014

8:30 – 10:30 a.m.

Golden Rule Building

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| Meeting called by | Marie Koehler |
| Note taker | Nancy Lovaas |
| Attendees | Laura Godfrey, Marie Saliterman, Jason Valentine |
| Absent | Lynn Bloom, Mary Jo Duncan, John Fechter, Bob Knoll, Kathryn Rose, Deanna Rothbauer |
| Others present | Invited guests: Adan Burke, Robin Coninx, Kim Fishman, Dave McAuliffe; Rochelle Garrow, DOC/TAM, Teika Pakalns, DHHS Program Planner; Mary Hartnett, Executive Director of MNCDHH, Eric Nooker, intern for MNCDHH; Sharisse Leier, DHHS staff interpreter; Patty Gordon, freelance interpreter; Kristi Arntzen, "CART" provider. |

Agenda Topics

Call to order / Introductions / Welcome

Marie Koehler

Discussion

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. Introductions were made and visitors were welcomed. Marie explained that Lynn Bloom, Deanna Rothbauer and Jason Valentine will be done serving two, 3-year terms in December. She asked invited guests to consider submitting applications for a position on the DHHS Metro advisory committee. She noted that the committee will also need one of its members to serve as Metro's representative to the Minnesota Commission of Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing Minnesotan advisory board.

Acceptance of Minutes (from June 10, 2014)

Marie Koehler

Discussion

Laura Godfrey made a motion to accept the meeting minutes from June. Marie Saliterman seconded the motion. The minutes were approved as written.

DHHS Update Report

Marie Koehler/Member Discussion

Discussion

The Deaf, Deaf World/Immersion into the World of Hearing Loss training has been very successful and popular the past 3 years. Since it has such a powerful impact on people, the Metro staff is working with Mary Hartnett (MNCDHH) with the goal of offering this training to state legislators in spring 2015. Marie passed out Metro's training calendar for 2014-2015 and encouraged everyone to post and distribute at their place of employment. This training cycle, Metro is offering 3 training seminars through statewide video conferencing which will allow staff to reach a larger pool of service providers.

The 24th ADA Celebration in July was a great success and plans are well under way for the 25th ADA Celebration. Two separate activities are planned for the Metro area, an education-focused event on July 9, with a keynote speaker and workshops, and a family-focused event on July 26, at the Minnesota History Center featuring talent and art work by people with disabilities.

TED/MR Update

Marie Koehler

TED Update/Feedback from DHS's Legal Management Office

The TED Program is striving to re-define itself since so much has changed over the years related to technology. TED's original purpose was to provide special telephone technology that was not readily available (off the shelf in stores) to consumers. The specialized equipment tended to be quite expensive compared to what standard telephones cost. Now the technology is readily available, and the cost of this equipment is often times the same as standard equipment. TED plans to pursue two legislative changes: 1. Loan to Own: Equipment would belong to the state through the warranty period (probably 3 years). After the warranty expires, the consumer would own the equipment. 2. Self verify: The state can determine client eligibility through client verify under perjury. (Many consumers do not like to provide confidential information such as their income, and TED knows some consumers do not apply as a result.) Rochelle Garrow shared her perspective as the fund administrator: Public perception is important because the TED program is considered a social service program and most social service programs require some type of verification process. Verification under penalty of perjury is useful, but only if you plan to prosecute - which can be costly. If fraud does occur and the public learns about it this could damage the program's credibility.

TED staff is also considering distributing iPhones or iPads to consumers. Adan expressed concerns about the short life of any new technology (2 years or less) and asked how the program could support and sustain these changes ongoing.

Currently, TED staff are researching the option of outsourcing some of its services to Teltex to see if it would be more cost effective for them to process and ship equipment directly to consumers.. A client would have expanded equipment options they could choose from. The idea is to create a small catalog of equipment we currently don't distribute to expand equipment options. It wouldn't involve a voucher. We would purchase is from Teltex directly.

Feedback Regarding MN Relay, including CapTel

Dave McAuliffe shared his experience using Caption Call in his place of business. Because of firewalls it did not work well. He will soon switch to a CapTel phone. He expressed concern that if the TED Program was eliminated, it would be difficult for consumers to go into a wireless store and get answers to relay related questions.

Old Business

Marie Koehler

Own Your Future, Booklets and Insert

Metro staff completed the document related to hearing loss that they will insert into the DHS "Own Your Future" long-term care planning booklets. Copies were disseminated.

New Business

Jason Valentine/Marie Koehler

Background on DHHSD Budget

State employees received a 3 % increase in their salaries for the past two consecutive years. The money to cover this increase comes out of each agencies operating budget. As a result, this fiscal year, which began in July, the DHHSD office experienced a significant budget crisis. The division has enough money to meet its fixed expenses (office leases, car rental, etc.) but not its day-to-day operating expenses. MNCDHH stepped forward and committed up to \$30,000 in funding to the division to help cover the cost of communication access (interpreters and CART services). MNCDHH can justify this action because one strategy in their strategic plan is to support and strengthen the capacity of the DHHSD Regional Service Centers. The Containing Care Administration, which is an operational unit of DHS of which DHHSD is a part, recently allotted \$24,000 for travel expenses. This will greatly assist Greater Minnesota staff who were not allowed to travel if their travel would result in incurred expenses such as meals and lodging. Central office is working on legislative initiatives which *could* result in additional funding for DHHSD in fiscal year 2016 and beyond. These initiatives need to pass through many levels of approval, and given that it is an election year it is difficult to know what the outcome will be. DHHSD is NOT the only state agency facing these budget issues.

Be Safe, Be Cool

Marie Koehler

MN Hands and Voices and Minneapolis Police Special Operations Center partner with the Metro office to provide this educational safety fair for K-transition aged students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Students learn a myriad of safety lessons; in addition it is an opportunity for them to learn about potential career choices. This year's event is scheduled for October 24; currently 286 students and teachers have registered.

Grants Awarded to Vendors

Teika Pakalns

Teika Pakalns from the DHHSD central office provided members with a snapshot of all of the grants DHHSD staff oversee, which totals to 2 million dollars. Grant money has a separate funding stream and has not been impacted as DHHSD has. In fact, the legislature appropriated additional funding this fiscal year to cover cost of living increases for the grantees. DHHSD grants include services for:

- Mental Health Services, \$750,000: John Gournaris previously spoke about these services.
- DeafBlind Services, of which three different services are provided. 1. DeafBlind Services Minnesota receives \$600,000 to serve children and adults. Children can receive services through an intervener who works 1:1 with them and can offer support to family members. Adults can receive SSPs (Support Service Specialists) to help with their independent living needs. Last fiscal year, these grant dollars served a total of 93 individuals, 49 children and 44 adults. 2. The DeafBlind Consumer Directed Services (DBCDS) program empowers consumers to purchase their own support services to help meet their independent living needs for things such as SSP services, drivers, technology, etc. A total of \$180,000 is targeted for this program with a maximum of \$6,795 allotted for each enrolled consumer, per year. Last fiscal year this program served 46 individuals. 3. Minnesota DeafBlind Association (MDBA) receives \$10,000 to help support communication access needs for their meetings.
- Interpreter Referral Support for Greater Minnesota, \$200,000: This grant was awarded this fiscal year to ASLIS to research and address the critical gaps in interpreting services in Greater Minnesota. ASLIS also provides some funding for non-mandated communication access needs, such as funerals and AA meetings.
- Family Mentor Program, \$100,000: This money was awarded to Lifetrack Resources. The program also received \$130,000 from the Minnesota Department of Health. A key component of this program is to provide Deaf mentors to help families with a child with a hearing loss to learn ASL. Last year, 24 children were served, of which 25% were from minority families.
- Live Real-Time TV Captioning, \$200,000: DHHSD oversees this grant but the funding comes from Department of Commerce to support real time live TV captioning of news that is generally not under the auspices of the FCC. There are four stations in MN that are beneficiaries of these grant dollars; one in Austin, Duluth, Bemidji, and TPT in Metro.

Voter Registration

Mary Hartnett and Eric Nooker

Mary Hartnett shared with members that DHHSD was established in 1980 through grass root work of consumers who were deaf or hard of hearing and whose recommendations greatly influenced legislators. MNCDHH was created five years later as an independent commission that could lobby with community members. To date, MNCDHH has passed 66 bills. MNCDHH sponsored "Captioning on a Stick" at the state fair this year as a means of challenging political candidates to caption their campaign ads. MNCDHH is also working hard to reach out to consumers to educate them about the importance of voting and becoming engaged in the

political process. MNCDHH will pay for communication access if consumers want to attend any of the debates scheduled statewide. Mary talked about “No excuse voting.” Effective 9/17/14 all Minnesotans who are registered to vote can vote in advance with absentee voting – with no justification of why they are voting in advance. Consumers can also register to vote on-line. Eric Nooker is responsible for voting outreach and public policy for MNCDHH. He will also help oversee Deaf Lobby Day scheduled for March 4, 2015.

New Committee Members

Visitors were again encouraged to consider becoming a member of the DHHS, Metro advisory committee. Dave already submitted his form. Terms for new members will begin in January 2015.

Recognition of Outgoing Members

Marie Koehler

Marie presented Jason with a small thank you gift for serving six years with the advisory committee.

Date for Next Meeting

Marie Koehler

Marie will send out proposed dates for the next meeting which will probably be scheduled for April 2015.

MCDHH Announcements

Jason Valentine

MNCDHH recently hired Anna Paulson to work as the education consultant. The Governor recently signed an Executive Order which requires state agencies to increase from 3% to 7% the number of individuals with disabilities hired for state jobs. The Commission sends out regular alerts, members can sign-up for those on the MNCDHH website.

Announcements All

Marie Koehler

None

Meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

AS ALWAYS, THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING THE DHHS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING AND OFFERING YOUR TIME AND FEEDBACK!