

DHHS Advisory Committee Meeting

June 2, 2015

8:30 – 10:15 a.m.

Golden Rule Building

Meeting called by	Marie Koehler (DHHSD, Regional Manager: Metro)
Note taker	Lori Sommerfeld
Attendees	John Fechter, Laura Godfrey, Bob Knoll, Dave McAuliffe, Kathryn Rose, Marie Saliterman, Katy Thorpe,
Absent	Mary Jo Duncan, Kim Fishman
Others present	David Rosenthal, DHHSD Director; Sharisse Leier, DHHSD staff interpreter; Lauri Krouse, freelance interpreter; Lisa Richardson from Paradigm, CART provider

Agenda Topics

Call to order / Introductions / Welcome

Marie Koehler

Discussion

The meeting was called to order at 8:35 A.M. Introductions were made and members were welcomed. Laura Godfrey was identified as the new Chairperson for the Advisory Committee and she will help facilitate the meetings.

Laura Godfrey

Acceptance of Minutes (from February 2, 2015 meeting)

Discussion

Marie Saliterman made a motion to accept the minutes and Bob Knoll seconded the motion. The meeting minutes were approved as written.

DHHS Update Report

Marie Koehler/Member Discussion

Discussion

The report was sent out for members to review in advance of the meeting but Marie wanted to point out the program challenges. In Fiscal Year 2015, there was limited funding. DHHS was unable to purchase any new technology for the lab. Trying to maintain state-of-the-art technology has become increasingly difficult. That being said, the Commission of Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing Minnesotans (MNCDHH) was successful in securing additional funding for DHHS through a bill they proposed this legislative session. The funding is for a two-year period of time.

TED/MR Update

Marie Koehler

TED Update

Effective April 1, TED expanded their existing contract with Teltex. Previously, the TED program had equipment shipped to the Golden Rule Building office site and then staff would send it to consumers. Now, the equipment is shipped directly from Teltex to consumers. Also, Teltex is picking up equipment from consumers if it is not working but still under warranty. However, if the warranty on the equipment has expired, the consumers can recycle the equipment, but must remove the State sticker before recycling. Consumers also have the option of keeping the equipment and using it as a backup. The TED program is no longer absorbing the cost associated with shipping, handling, and receiving of most equipment.

The TED program is currently being audited. The Public Utilities Commission (PUC) sent out a Request for Proposal (RFP) and selected a vendor to conduct the audit. David Rosenthal is meeting with the auditors this afternoon.

Feedback Regarding MN Relay, including CapTel

David proposed the question of who uses CapTel Relay. Dave McAuliffe said that he uses it in his places of work. He much prefers it to Caption Call because CapTel offers 24/7 Customer Service and the quality of the captioning is better.

Old Business

Marie Koehler

Appointment of DHHS Metro Advisory Committee Chairperson

As stated before, Laura Godfrey is the new Chairperson. Thank you Laura!

Appointment of DHHS Metro Advisory Committee Representative to the MNDCHH Advisory Board

Kathryn Rose applied to be the DHHS Metro advisory committee representative to the MNCDHH advisory board. She is still waiting to hear from the Governor's Office regarding her selection. Someone from the Governor's Office did acknowledge receipt of her application.

DHHS URL and Website

It has taken a long time, but the brochures are finally here. One significant change from the old brochure is the front page has gone from "1 in 10" to "1 in 5" individuals have a hearing loss. There are other statistics noted as well. Intentionally, there is a photo of a military person on the front cover as more members of the military are returning home with hearing loss and/or tinnitus.

The new URL has been finalized and there are new website cards. When the new website went live, the independent contract interpreters were not on the website. That list will hopefully be back on the website in a week.

New Business

Marie Koehler

DHS/DHHS Budget Update for FY 2016

FY15 was very problematic and the first four months, we were not allowed to spend any operating dollars. Additionally, we were not allowed to spend operating dollars the last quarter, so spending was limited throughout the year. Fortunately, MNCDHH helped cover a lot of the interpreting costs, both in the Metro and in Greater Minnesota. The Commission has secured additional funding for the next two years for DHHS, but we do not know exactly what that will look like yet.

Age and Disabilities Conference – DHHS Metro Involvement

Marie Koehler

Jan Radatz from the DHHS Central Office and Marie Koehler will be offering a session titled "Hear for the Health of it" which will address the consequences of untreated hearing loss. Marie will also co-present with members of the Access and Functional Needs work group that focuses on Emergency Preparedness issues. The topic of this session will be "Access and Functional Needs for Seniors" with an emphasis on the various accommodations that need to

be provided in an emergency situation. Kathryn Rose shared that DeafCan will also be present at the conference as one of the exhibitors.

Age Related Hearing Loss Task Force (ARHLTF)

Marie Koehler

David, Jan, and Marie have been serving on the ARHLTF and there was a wrap up meeting a couple of weeks ago. Soon, there will be a summary and recommendations from this task force that will be shared. There will hopefully be several state agencies working together to address ARHL and the consequences of not treating it. Research indicates a strong association between untreated hearing loss and Alzheimer's, dementia, cognitive decline, falls, social isolation, etc. The Task Force wants to target people starting at age 55 so they are identified early and can receive more immediate treatment.

The Task Force also suggested that relevant Minnesota agencies partner to offer a statewide summit/conference to bring to the forefront this critical health need. MNCDHH also plans to work with Dr. Frank Lin to replicate the pilot he is conducting in Baltimore on Personal Sound Amplification Products (PSAPs). These are much cheaper than hearing aids, however the platform is a standard chip as opposed to the customized chip used in hearing aids.

Another recommendation of the Task Force is to partner with Twin Cities Public Television (tpt) to create a documentary related to age related hearing loss. MNCDHH has already initiated this project. This documentary will be aired statewide meaning ensuring there will be a larger viewing audience. Yet another recommendation of the Task Force is pursuing the establishment of hearing screenings for people 55 and older.

Additional Information Regarding the ADA Celebration

Marie Koehler

The first ADA event is more of a community celebration scheduled for Sunday, July 26 from Noon – 4:00 p.m. This FREE family event will take place at the Minnesota History Center (and includes admission to the History Center's exhibits). This is not a formal event with presentations and workshops; instead there will be entertainment, activities for children, films and videos (including a tpt documentary regarding ADA), storytellers and an art display of work done by individuals with a disability or about disabilities. Weather permitting, the entertainment will occur outside. There will not be vendors at this event since space is limited. The Department of Transportation will allow people to park in their ramp near the Capitol and a shuttle will be provided to drive people to the History Center.

On October 28, there will be a second ADA event; this will be a free conference that focuses on employment/policies related to ADA. The Minnesota Business Leader Network is one of the planning partners, and they will sponsor a career fair for people with disabilities during this

conference. The conference will include a keynote speaker, workshops, booths, etc. If advisory committee members want their agencies to participate as a vendor, there is an opportunity for this. The time has yet to be announced, but this event will be held at the Minneapolis Convention Center.

Guest Speaker

David Rosenthal

David acknowledged that there was enough money in Fiscal Year '15 to operate, but very little beyond that. Rent, electricity, the state cars, etc. were covered, but there was no money for travel/overnight expenses, office supplies, etc. Gratefully, the Continuing Care Administration (CCA) provided some additional funding to DHHS but as an agency, the Department of Human Services (DHS) was also struggling financially. MNCDHH also helped cover the cost of interpreters and CART for advisory committee meetings and other events. It is too early to know what the division's budget will look like for FY'16. MNCDHH did secure additional money for DHHS for the next two years, but that money is targeted to support services for individuals who are deafblind, mental health services and a study/analysis of how DHHS can best provided services throughout the staff.

As noted, DHS had its own challenges this fiscal year well. There was a reorganization due to pressures from stakeholders. There is a new administration called Community Support Services (CSS) which consists of DHHSD, Disability Services Division, Chemical and Mental Health, HIV/AIDS and Housing and Support Services. A new Assistant Commissioner, Jennifer DeCubellis, was hired to oversee CSS. Her goal is to break down "silos" within the divisions and have the divisions do more collaborative/inter-sectional work. Events have been offered at DHS so that staff within these divisions have an opportunity to meet each other and learn about each other's programs.

While the division struggled financially this year, David did acknowledge that all of the regional offices continued to offer trainings, 1:1 consultation, community events, direct client work, etc.; all of which have been beneficial and successful. In addition to the regional office work, DHHSD Central Office staff oversee several grants that benefit children and adults who are deafblind, interpreter referral work in Greater Minnesota, Real-Time Captioning for Television, mental health services, etc. DHHS and the Department of Health provide funds to LifeTrack Resource's Deaf Mentor Program. Their goal was to serve 20 families this year and they're currently serving 31 families. The division contracts with ASLIS for interpreter referral includes a study of interpreter gaps in Greater Minnesota. ASLIS recently submitted to David a 500 page report summarizing their findings. David now has to analyze this report. David noted that the Mental Health program is doing well under the direction of John Gournaris. With the remaining grant dollars from the Mental Health program, the division is sending nine interpreters to Alabama for

a 40-hour training to become Qualified Mental Health Interpreters (QMHI). David noted that John was just elected President of ADARA.

David then proposed the question: How is DHHS doing?

John Fechter: We need more visibility in various parts of the state. Some people do not even know that the Division exists. Consumers need to know what services are offered by DHHS.

Laura Godfrey: A lot of parents at Hands and Voices go to in-person visits with their DHHS representatives and they collaborate on various seminars. People in Greater Minnesota utilize Hands and Voices and DHHS congruently.

Kathryn Rose: In regards to this office, when consumers is referred to Liz Brown, they tend to have the resource within the day and that is fantastic. There are things that need to be assessed in regard to the CADI waiver; there is confusion about who qualifies for these services and how they work. Also, Kathryn stated that therapists need to be billing for their services. Students are graduating from college with degrees and not working because they feel like they cannot compete with the services offered by the DHHS/Mental Health services. Many students switch to social work when what is NEEDED are Deaf therapists.

Katy Thorpe: There are people in the sober living program who really appreciate the resources they have been getting: especially those who are DeafBlind.

Date for Next Meeting

Marie Koehler

Marie will look and send out proposed meeting dates. The committee would like to schedule out the next several meetings. The time will be from 9:30 am – 11:30 am.

MCDHH Announcements

Marie Koehler

MNCDHH was successful in getting a few bills passed this legislative session: Centralized Accommodation fund - \$200,000 every year for employees who work for the state with ANY disability was approved. Increased funding for DHHS, \$1 million for the next two years (described previously), funding for Text-to-911. With the Governor vetoing the Education Bill, it is unknown what will happen with the Communication Access Supports for Workers, for programs like VECTOR and the Minnesota Employment Center (MEC) and the Education Finance Bill that would fund technology at Metro Deaf School and allow parents to choose the Metro Deaf School for Pre-K.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 and followed by the Meet & Greet Networking Event.