

## SW Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

December 7, 2007

**Attendance:** Kristin Hemstock, Lori Palesotti, Bonnie Frisk, Tracy Koster, Jerry Pouliot, Sarah Maheswaran, Jeff Erickson, Nancy Karkoska. **Interpreter:** Stephen Medicott.

Welcome and Introductions: Tracy welcomed all and introductions were made. Our newest member, Jill Rohman was not able to join us. She is our MCDHH representative as well. Tracy will ask Jill for her MCDHH report and forward that on to the Board. Tracy also asked each member to think about the possibility of taking turns with Jill at the MCDHH meetings.

### Reports/Discussion

#### **TED: Nancy Karkoska**

- Nancy presented her annual statistics regarding the number of individuals served and the presentation given. Additionally she commented on the networking activities she has engaged in order to work with other providers.
- She talked about some of the new equipment the program will be using and changes in existing equipment.
- The Board enquired about how many children are being reached with news of the program. Discussion ensued about the various avenues we use to get information out to parents and providers. The teachers for the deaf and hard of hearing are primary contacts and can share information about the program with families.
- TED will also pursue working with area school nurses to remind them of our services.

#### **SW Consultant: Tracy Koster**

- She has been working with area consumers one-to-one.
- She shared information about the new Mental Health positions that the Division will be filling in the Rochester and St. Cloud offices. She will be working closely with the person to provide comprehensive mental health service to area consumer and service providers.
- Area In-house trainings are continuing and have been well attended
- The open interpreter position in Mankato has been posted and in the process of accepting applications
- The Deaf mentor program is up a running again and she has been meeting with an area mentor that will be working with area families on sign language and communication skills.
- She has been consulting with SMILES, an independent living center, regarding the development of an equipment loan library
- The SW area will be hosting two ice skating parties for area youth. January in Mankato and February in Redwood Falls.

#### **Southern Area Manager: Jeff Erickson**

- Jeff has been working with DHS and the Work Force Center to post the Interpreter position in Mankato.
- He is involved in the interview process for the mental health position in Rochester.
- He is working with area TV stations to get better real time captioning. He may be asking for a letter of support from area Board members.

### **TED Program Administrator: Sarah Maheswaran**

- The program is looking into distributing wireless devices such as cell phone, pagers, etc. She is contacting other states to see how they are implementing these in their state. A survey went out to the deaf community to gather information about this topic. We learned that most of them are already using a wireless phone of some type. Concerns with distributing wireless devices include, who is the provider, out-state coverage, payment plans and types of devices given. We also need to consider the statute and see if there are any changes that need to be made in order to comply with the law that set up the program. The plan is to have a pilot program in place by July 1, 2008. Jeff suggested using Mankato as a pilot site.
- Board feedback indicates that they are in favor of us offering a wireless option to people as that is the wave of the future. Questions arose about age limits and if those should change when it comes to handing out wireless devices.

### **Message Relay: Jerry Pouliot**

- There has been some recent trouble with the Relay service. They transitioned into a new system and are having trouble with it. If you know of someone that is experiencing problems please let us know so we can get their name on a list and have their calls routed to a system that is working.
- Jerry has been dropping in on business to let them know we have a partnership with them when it comes to consumers contacting the business owner. They are given a packet of information that allows the business owner to display the relay number. The packet also contains information about training that can be given to employees about how to use relay.

**Board updates:** Kris is working with Sertoma on grant funding for amplified classrooms in the area.

**Next Meeting:** Jeff will be coming up with a list of dates for the next year and will have those sent out to each member so they can get them on the calendar.