

Advisory Committee Meeting

Southwest

12 Civic Center Plaza, Suite 1670 Mankato, MN 56001

Friday, December 8, 2017

Members: Jacqui Shasky, Lisa Dembouski, Howard Rosten, Kris Hemstock, Curt Slater

Guest(s): Roberta Johnson

Absent: Mike Goodlander, Cassie Ramerth

Staff: Tracy Bell

Interpreter: Jenna Murphy

Note taker: Natalie Regenscheid

Community Updates:

Kris Hemstock:

- MN Hands and Voices are experiencing a turn over, have yet to find a replacement for Cassie Ramerth for the SW Parent Guide. SE Parent Guide is now vacant. When new parent guides are hired, it would be nice for DHHS to reach out and explain their services and develop a relationship.

Lisa Dembouski:

- No new updates.

Howard Rosten:

- Still working on Ramps.
- South Central Service Coop (SCSC) will be doing a presentation in January, will email the flyer to Tracy and Natalie to be forward to AC Members.

Curt Slater:

- Think Self reached their goal in the "Give to the Max Day" of their goal two weeks ago, such a great thing.
- Students who need skills such as English, math, etc. can now get training on video rather than transporting to the ThinkSelf office. This can outreach to more consumers because it is a struggle to find transportation to be at the office for services/training.

Jacqui Shasky:

- There will be a play in May at the Children's Theater.
- No updates in regards to the Family Getaway. It is hard to find volunteers who has the time to put together this event as it does require a lot of work. The deaf and hard of hearing teachers will be getting together soon to discuss more on this so should have a better answer in February. They have been trying to recruit parents to volunteer to take the lead in this event, but no luck.

Other:

- Equipment Loan: It has been discussed that it would be nice to have equipment loans available. Sometimes equipment will get destroyed or stop working and it would be nice to have a loaner until a replacement arrives.
- Howard Rosten will be the Chair for the SW Advisory Committee!

DHHS Updates:

Tracy Bell:

- Text-to-911: Hand-outs have been distributed. This is a great way for those who are deaf and hard of hearing to contact 911 via text. This is also another alternative for if someone is in a position where they cannot make a call, such as domestic violence. It is simple, send a text with your name, location, and say if you are able to talk on the phone or not. They will send you a message when your time with them is closed.
- Our team hosted an all-day training on November 8. About 20 people attended, and about half of them came from the St. Peter Regional Treatment Center. Our team recapped the day at our last team meeting and we agreed that it was long (6 hours) and overwhelming with information. The feedback from the audience was positive. For the next training, our team will attempt to split the training into two sessions, first in the morning and the second in the afternoon. These trainings will focus on different topics (ie: hearing loss, technology, communication modes, ASL and access, mental health, etc.) and give attendees the option of attending one training or both.
- Hearing Aid Bank Updates: we continue to have a waiting list of ten or more people. When funds become unavailable, we plan to do a trial run of offering the people on the list the option of staying on the list and wait until funds become available or offer for them to buy their own HA at MA rates.
- Tony and I are starting to see more consumers from other countries – Somalia, Burmese, Guatemala, and Mexico. We will need to have some diversity training soon.
- Technology in our office continues to be a major asset in providing services to consumers – when consumers try equipment “hands on”, their confidence is increased and their motivation to purchase equipment becomes apparent. Having technology also

helps service providers get an idea of the type of equipment to purchase for or recommend to their consumers.

- Tony and Nancy hosted a booth at the annual Veterans' Standdown event in Mankato this month which has been happening every year for the last several years. About 50 people stopped by the booth and Tony and Nancy demonstrated equipment including telephone equipment, hearing aids, Roger pen, microphones and this gave the attendees a hands on experience and this helps people "get it" rather than show pictures. Tony is still grateful to have the technology and he has seen it benefit consumers, and consumers are more confident in accepting (and purchasing) equipment to enhance their lives. He said 3-4 people stopped by to thank him and Nancy for their services in the past. Nancy said that the fact that DHHS and TED are being visible helps in "getting the word out" about our services. CVSO (County Veterans Service Office) services staff from counties stopped by the booth and learned more about telephones and other technology besides Captel. Staff are familiar with OEI (Outreach, Education and Installations) that provides Captels, so it was good that staff are aware of other technology besides Captels.
- Tony and Nancy also manned a booth at a technology fair held by ARC in Rochester. People who stopped by the booth learned about technology at the booth, and this led to a referral to a consumer in a nearby city to demonstrate a smoke detector.
- We will have our ice skating event on November 21, 2018. We are seeking sponsorship from HyVee, McDonald's, Gaylord Sertoma Club and Mayo Clinic.
- Staffing updates – the Division Director Position was posted until 11/30/17. Hopefully interviews will be set up soon. We currently have three RM positions vacant in Greater Minnesota – St. Cloud, Moorhead and Duluth. They are temporarily filled for the time being. The second specialist position in Mankato is vacant, and I am waiting for approval to fill the position – hopefully we can post it in January.
- We need a MCDHH representative for SW MN. Curt and Lisa are unable to join MCDHH. Is anyone interested and willing? Members agreed to consider this opportunity and either let me know of their interest, or apply on the Secretary of State website.

MNCDHH Updates:

- We still need a rep for MNCDHH. Meetings in January, May, September and November. The goal is to get communication out to all communities, including the rural areas. Commission meetings are always open to the public, anyone can attend to be involved or to check it out to see if anyone would like to become a representative.

OTHER

Roberta Johnson:

- There are a few new staff members in VR, including Fairmont and Watonwan counties. The staff is overwhelmed with a huge work load.

FUTURE MEETING DATES:

- Friday, February 2
- Friday, June 1
- Friday, September 28 OR Friday, October 5 for Joint AC Meeting (will check with SE to see which date works for them.)
- Friday, December 7