

# Advisory Committee Meeting

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*Southwest*

*12 Civic Center Plaza, Suite 1670 Mankato, MN 56001*

*Friday, February 2, 2018*

**Chairperson:** Howard Rosten

**Members:** Jacqui Shasky, Roberta Johnson (in place of Mike Goodlander), Lisa Dembouski, Curt Slater

**Guest(s):**

**Absent:** Mike Goodlander, Cassie Ramerth

**Staff:** Tracy Bell, PG Greene-Kelly

**Interpreter:** Jenna Murphy

**Note taker:** Natalie Regenscheid

## Community Updates:

Lisa Dembouski:

- Reminder for Family Emerging Weekend, April 13-15 at MSAD. Will forward new information to Natalie Regenscheid and she will send it out to all the AC Members.

Jacqui Shasky:

- Met with Sharie Cook – talk to youth and will do parent workshop on May 10.
- March's Family Get Away weekend will not happen this year due to shortage of volunteers and funding.

Roberta

- Chandra on maternity leave, Holly Johnson is covering for her.

## DHHS Updates:

Tracy Bell:

- Staffing update
  - Division Director hiring update – other than the information from Claire, they are still processing the interviews.
  - D/HH Specialist position update – I am in contact with HR to get this position filled. I hope to have the position posted next week and will send an email with the link to the position. We continue to get support from Sara Kreiling in St. Paul to serve consumers

in SE MN and Diane Leonard in St. Cloud to serve consumers in the northern part of SW MN, and we are grateful for their assistance!

- Administrative Assistant position update – Natalie will be leaving her position today, February 2. I am waiting for approval to fill the OASI position.
  - NW D/HH Specialist position update – Jerry Geist has been hired as a temporary D/HH Specialist for one year so Jeannie Kolo-Johnson can carry her responsibilities as a temporary regional manager.
  - NW DHHS will be posting a position for a temporary staff interpreter to meet needs of staff who are deaf as well as pick up community interpreting work when not needed by DHHS staff.
  - Some positions are being put on hold until the new director starts and for a “redesign” of our services based on feedback from the studies completed two years ago and recommendations from a consultant.
- Resources
    - Medicare will cover the cost of both UbiDuos (handout)
    - Communication Cards (cannot distribute yet but will send link when can distribute)
- Quarter 2 update/statistics/Quarter 3 so far and future
    - Tony presented about accessories for hearing aids and cochlear implants to TDHHS in Region 9 in December.
    - 346 contacts were made during 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter – most were related to general inquiries about hearing loss as well as social services. 34 consumer files are documented.
    - Sara Kreiling represented DHHS at a booth at the Assistive Technology Carnival in North Mankato and provided resources and technology information on hearing loss to service providers, parents, teachers, etc. Thanks Howard for the referral!
    - Tony and Nancy presented to county providers at the Des Moines Valley Health and Human Services about our services and TED. This included workers from Jackson and Cottonwood counties.
    - We are getting more referrals from county service workers on serving people with hearing loss, and we are developing collaborative relationships with them.
    - Tony and Nancy will be presenting about our services to a large assisted living/nursing home/senior apartment facility in Northfield on February 15 and already have appointments with consumers scheduled for 1:1 consultation about hearing loss, technology and telephones.
    - Tony and Nancy also will be presenting to county workers serving adult and children in Olmsted County in April.
    - Our staff will continue to collaborate with St. Cloud staff in hosting deaf gatherings in western MN. It was a success last year and the attendees want to continue to meet every other month between April and October. On April 24, the mental health staff will speak on self-advocacy.
    - Mankato will have their 18<sup>th</sup> annual ice skating event on Wednesday, February 21.

- TED program updates:
  - TED program is awaiting approval to begin a very limited distribution (second pilot) of IOS devices (iPhone/iPad). The plan is to start the pilot project in March. It will last for 3 months. Data will be gathered during these months and a report will be written about both pilot projects. Based on these results, a request may be made to include IOS devices as part of the TED's regular distribution beginning in July.
  - TED has begun implementing some changes to "modernize" the program. Such as updating the website with an on-line application, new and improved database, tracking and evaluation of outreach activities, and proposals to change the statute. Suggested changes include distribution of interconnectivity and up-to-date devices, distribution of multifunctional safety devices and language that allows TED staff to introduce and educate consumers on assistive technology options. The TED report can be found on the DHS website, and we can send the link in the minutes. [TED Legislative Report https://mn.gov/dhs/assets/2018-01-modernizing-TED-report\\_tcm1053-323922.pdf](https://mn.gov/dhs/assets/2018-01-modernizing-TED-report_tcm1053-323922.pdf)
  - Nancy and Tony are trying a new more proactive approach to working with assistive living coordinators and housing complex managers. They are scheduling their presentations at their building and holding "introductory" meetings with consumers needing assistance related to their hearing loss. Last month they presented to a group of 50+ consumers at a two tower housing complex and they were able to meet with consumers at the same site. Next month, they will be presenting at two different assisted living buildings in Northfield and meeting with 7-9 consumers on that same day. The coordinators are aware of individuals that could benefit from our services and promoting the presentations along with a sign-up sheet for individual meetings.
  
- General DHHS Updates
  - DHHS Metro partnered with staff from Senior Linkage Line (SLL) to create a video of Panel Members who were deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing and late deafened. These individuals shared their personal stories and perspectives. The video was recently viewed by **220** SLL staff and volunteers; it will soon be posted on the DHHS website and DHS You Tube site.

#### MNCDHH Updates:

- Anna spoke about education and the collaborative groups. The groups will have a steering committee to help decide the direction of their work. The Collaborative Conference will take place every two years based on feedback.
- Emory spoke about Age-Related Hearing Loss and the development of his training that is almost ready. The group is creating materials to increase acoustics and hearing loops in other facilities.
- Anne discussed Text to 911 gathering we hosted in the area. We will be doing a few others with MADC, HLAA to explain the feature. We had Dr. Christian from Gallaudet who helped with the development of this product present on the information. She also discussed all of the resources and video logs available on our website. Please take a look at what information is available there.

- Jessalyn hired to do Community and Civic Engagement. She will focus on Voters Outreach, Lobby Day, Legislative Training and providing support to the community. She is currently attending the Partners in Policymaking course. This course is a national program. As a result of graduation, she will work on developing a curriculum that is available for D/DB/HH leaders and will offer the 8-month class in August of 2019. She is also working on collaborating with DHHSD- Regional offices to cement a stronger relationship between both and share resources with the team and community members.
- Mary talked about the potential Legislative agenda plan. She will work on commission bill changes, TED study, endorsement of MSAD and other organizations and she introduced Sarah Walker who is a contracted to work with us as our Lobbyist. In the absence of Beth, Mary will take the lead on Legislative agenda, working with Sarah and consultants from past years. We also added John Lee Clark as a DeafBlind consultant to our team. He will go with Mary to the capitol.
- We hope to have a new office manager later this month.
- Jason Valentine was re-elected as the Chair of the MNCDHH board.

## OTHER

Why so many vacancies? (Bruce)

- There are a lot of technology changes, a lot of less walk ins. People use VPs, email, texting for communication and quick access.
- State program, MAD (MN Analysis Division), they are studying services and different models of which is best for our program. We have the TED program, MH, Grant contracts, DHHS, a lot of ground to cover and need to establish best model to implement and that will be determined by the new Director of the DHHSD. Rough estimate would be in May-June for new director to review.
- Bruce Hodek is currently supervising regional offices, fully aware of impact and things running thin with everyone but is optimistic about the future.
- Another study – menu of service – has observed that each office has different priorities. Most vulnerable consumers are senior citizens, deaf blind and deaf plus.
- Vacancies will remain vacant until new director is hired. Study is being determined about positions and need for them. Do we need to have a building to work from? Can we work from home or county office? Do we need an OASI? Do we need many managers? Various models are being looked at and considered, director can determine which route to go.
- MNCDHH acts as our advocate – they can fight with the legislation about the budget but try to work together with legislation.
- DHHS has legislative funds set up for a standalone website, website is supposed to explain process of what is happening in division. State MN.IT has been holding things up with the website. They finally informed us this week that they will design the website and we will need to provide content. We will be seeking feedback from AC members eventually. We got approval to have a separate DHHS website from DHS but we still need to comply with rules as well as making it accessible for all consumers. This is a

frustration because while we have the funds, it is providing a gap in communication with the community about what is happening with the division.

#### Division Updates:

Bruce Hodek

- Advisory Committees are an important arm in providing feedback, support and networking. Need one rep from each AC to represent as a representative for MCDHH. If you hear issues, complaints, concerns, the representative can share with the Commission. Jessalyn Ackerman-Frank would like to attend AC meetings and have town hall meeting so everyone can come together to discuss topics for the community, how to work with DHHS, education, voters, etc.
- Education collaborative – a lot of discussion about this. Some school districts bypass the interpreter laws and will hire a language facilitator. Supply and demand, and quality and control. Need a new strategy with the commission because ignoring the problem will not solve the problem. VRS can “steal” community interpreters, which hinders the need in communities and education. Commission is aware of the interpreter struggles and shortages, and they are working on trying to resolve the issues.
- Mental Health area – legislation is doing a study to see the pros and cons. Claire, assistant commissioner – have to wait for the department to agree on a decision to get approval from report to release the information. The question is to charge for MH services. If so, billing will require more paperwork for consumer to receive MH services. This would put consumers at a disadvantage because staff will have to serve less consumers in order to keep up with paperwork.
- Plan to do a study about services provided by the county in each of the 87 counties, and do outreach. Have set up about 10 questions for consumers to answer to share their experiences. Goal is to have more training provided to the counties to explain hearing loss, and to obtain resources for working with consumers who have hearing loss. Goal is to build a rapport with the counties and to work together. Plan is to have the kick off in March.

#### FUTURE MEETING DATES:

- Friday, June 1
- Friday, October 5 for Joint AC Meeting
- Friday, December 7