

Meeting Minutes: SW DHHS Advisory Committee Meeting

Date: 7/19/2019
Minutes prepared by: Marie Koehler
Location: Mankato DHHS Office

Attendance

- Marie Koehler/DHHS
- Calla Kevan/DHHS
- Sarah Maheswaran/DHHS
- Mike Goodlander/DEED
- Lisa Dembouski/Gustavus Adolphus College
- Howard Rosten/SMILES
- Jacqui Shasky/Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Roberta Johnson/DEED- Guest
- Jennifer David/Interpreter
- Jenna Murphy/Interpreter

Absent

- Krista Blood/MN Hands and Voices

Agenda

- Call to Order, Introductions, Welcome/Calla Kevan
- Guest Speaker Blue Earth County Public Health/Molly Hodge and Sue Nelson
- Acceptance of March 5, 2019 Meeting Minutes/Calla Kevan
- Southwest DHHS Update Report/Calla Kevan
- DHHS Update Report/Marie Koehler
- TED and MR Update/Sarah Maheswaran
- MNCDHH Update/Marie Koehler
- Service Gaps and Needs in the Southwest Region/Member Input
- Date of Next Meeting

Next Meeting

Date: Tentative date is Friday, October 4

Time: 10:00 - Noon

Location: TBD, possibly a joint meeting with the SE AC members - Owatonna

Agenda items: (submit proposed agenda items to Calla Kevan)

Meeting Notes

Call to Order/Introductions/Welcome New Members/Meet Calla

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. Members were welcomed.

Guest Speaker Blue Earth County Public Health (Molly Hodge and Sue Nelson)

Molly is a licensed social worker and care coordinator and Sue is a public health nurse and the program coordinator with Blue Earth County's Public Health nursing program. Molly and Sue discussed different services that Blue Earth County Public Health offers. They have 18 different programs and serve all ages from birth to senior citizens. They discussed their process starting with receiving a referral, conducting a free assessment, determining eligibility, and identifying recommendations and resources to meet the client's needs. Their assessment tool does address hearing loss, but it is the responsibility of the staff conducting the assessment to tease out more information about the person's hearing loss and to document their observations. To be eligible for services from public health, consumers must be 65 years or older, meet the criteria for "need" and income guidelines. Their approach is person-centered services that would best fit the consumer's specific needs. The plans they develop are flexible and staff function as advocates for the consumers while working within the rules of the public health office. Their goal is to have seniors live independently at home as long as they can before placement in nursing homes. Molly and Sue shared some of their experiences working with Tony Davis and the individuals he worked with when he was employed by DHHS. They asked the members about Medical Assistance coverage for hearing aids and members shared their knowledge and experience. Molly and Sue said that their program can pay for assistive listening devices since an "evaluation" is not required for these devices. Molly and Sue suggested that DHHSD staff present at one of their quarterly meetings and conduct a technology demonstration.

Their talking points for the presentation as shared by Molly and Sue:

- I. BEC Public Health services all ages i.e. Maternal Child Health, WIC, Disease Prevention & Control (H1N1 example), and adults over 65 years+.
- II. Public Health's role with Adults 65+
 - a. Assessments at no cost to any BEC resident regardless of finances
 - b. Home and Community Based State programs to assist with cost of in-home services if eligible for lower income BEC residents (EW, AC, and ECS).

Acceptance of March 5, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Howard made a motion to accept the meeting minutes, Jacqui seconded the motion. The minutes were approved as written.

Southwest DHHS Update (Calla Kevan)

Calla shared that she is now working out of the Rochester CareerForce Center. With the resignation of Sara Kreiling in mid-May, she has been serving the entire southern region. She did two trainings for MSAD's Transition Program, manned a booth at the Deaf World event, was a panel member for the SW Area Agency on Aging, recently presented to a group of caregivers, and has continued working directly with consumers assisting them and making referrals.

DHHS Update Report (Marie Koehler)

Marie shared that many of the division's Redesign plans have come to fruition including:

- Hired a Communications Coordinator (Rosa Ramirez) who has redesigned and branded most of DHHS fact sheets, brochure, etc. The brochure is now available in Spanish, Hmong, Somali and English.
- Hired a centralized Information and Referral Specialist, Eric Nooker. Now any consumer/stakeholder can contact the division via one voice, one VP or one email address, receive immediate assistance and be referred to the correct staff person/region. This streamlines and simplifies the process.
- DHHSD's newly revised and updated website is now available featuring more captioned videos (many that are done by individuals who are Deaf, features hard of hearing people addressing hearing loss issues and contains more of the division's fact sheets and publications. It is definitely more user friendly, with fewer clicks than the last website! The new DHHS flyers were passed out and examples of the fact sheets were shown to members.

TED/MR Update, Sarah Maheswaran

TED Legislative Update

Sarah shared that due to recent legislation, TED staff are able to expand their service provision including: 1. Provide interconnectivity devices, which are secondary devices that can be connected to a telecommunication device to help enhance communication. Examples include streamers and blue tooth devices. 2. Assist consumers with filling out forms to see if they qualify for telephone and internet discounts, such as Life Line. 3. Pre-screen and educate TED consumers about technology options they might benefit from beyond telecommunication devices. A work group has been set up to determine an implementation plan for these changes, which must be implemented by October 1, 2019.

Personnel

Interviews will take place soon to fill the TED vacancy in Mankato. Brandi Sandberg was hired as the new TED Administrative Assistant mid-May.

iPhone/iPad Pilot 2

The second pilot, which lasted 3 months and recently ended, included 17 consumers who were expected to do bi-weekly check-ins and respond to surveys. Sara will compile this data, write a report and share it with the Department of Commerce -Telecommunication Access Minnesota program.

TED Video

A new TED video that is available on the DHHS website was mentioned to the members. This particular video focused on consumers with hearing loss. Sarah hopes to develop other videos on TED services for people with speech disabilities or physical disabilities.

Feedback regarding Minnesota Relay, including CapTel

Members did not have any feedback to share related to Minnesota Relay.

MNCDHH Update (Marie Koehler)

MNCDHH Updates

A document identifying the 2019 MNCDHH legislative activities was shared with members. Flyers for the Collaborative Conference at Breezy Point were given to members. Marie shared that there is a formal search committee to fill the Executive Director's position. The position is currently posted on the state's website. Interviews will hopefully occur this summer. There was a discussion about the Commission's committee to recruit new Board members and Calla identified vacancies in the southern and northern region. Lisa asked about the ability to join meetings via videoconferencing due to her work schedule. Other members said that it is difficult to consider being a board member due to their day jobs. Lisa suggested that if meetings were streamed, MNCDHH and DHSSD should consider scheduling their meetings on the same day. Members would not have to take as much time off from their jobs.

Service Gaps and Needs in the Southwest Region – Member Input

- Lisa mentioned the shortage of staff in the Mankato DHHS office, which DHHS staff acknowledged. They are actively working to fill this vacancy.
- Additional gaps mentioned during the public health presentation includes how many seniors cannot afford hearing aids (too expensive) and concerns from some members that MA does not offer the highest quality hearing aids.

Other

Roberta Johnson, DEED guest and supervisor of Mike Goodlander, shared that this meeting would be Mike's last time as an Advisory Committee member due to increasing work load in his area. We all thanked Mike for his service for the DHHS Advisory Committee and encouraged him to remain in touch with us and reach out for needed resources and information.

Date for Next Meeting

A tentative date of Friday, October 4 was identified for the next meeting. Members expressed an appreciation of and desire to meet jointly with the SE advisory committee. A decision will be made in the near future and shared with members.

Meeting adjourned at 12:08pm.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND INPUT!