

## COMMITTEE ON AGING (CoA) MINUTES

September 8, 2017

**Committee Members Participating:** Gene Hysjulien, Deborah Melby, Delores Rath, Madonna White Bear Azure, Elaine Keepseagle, Bruce Davidson, Mary Ann McCowan, and Merry Green (via telephone).

**Ex-Officio:** Shelley Haugen, Governor's Office; and Nancy Nikolas-Maier, Aging Services Division

**Presenters:** Jane Strommen, NDSU Extension Gerontology Specialist, Max Wetz, Public Affairs Director & Jennifer Henderson, Planning and Housing Development Director, ND Housing Finance Agency

**Others Present:** Sheryl Pfliger, Aging Services Division

**Call to Order/Welcome & Introductions:** Gene Hysjulien, Chair, called the meeting to order. Introductions were made and Mary Ann McCowan was welcomed by the group. Gene provided an overview of a meeting with the Adult Services Committee [County Social Services Directors and Home and Community-Based Services Case (HCBS) Managers] where he provided information on opportunities for interaction/collaboration with the CoA. Although the CoA does not have a specific list of priorities, topics of interest and discussion included:

- Vulnerable Adult Protective Services – need for continued education and training in the referral process, for law enforcement, line staff, providers, legislators, and the need for additional staff
- Nutrition and Healthy Aging – nutrition program/senior centers not utilized by the baby boomers; there are different expectations regarding current senior centers and what would make sense for the boomer generation
- Medicare/Health Insurance – many older adults are living on fixed incomes; what will happen if the Affordable Care Act/Medicaid Expansion goes away; costs of assisted living/nursing homes are high – self pay individuals run out of funds in a relatively short time
- Affordable Housing – need housing that is appropriate, accessible and affordable
- Caregiving and HCBS – need staff to assist individuals in the home; caring for individuals with Alzheimer's and other dementias

Delores added that abuse of opioids and prescription drugs were also a concern. Discussion followed on holistic and traditional healing.

Discussion was held regarding the need for continued education and training for the public and providers on the issues and the need to address the 'silos' that can hinder understanding and provision of services. Gene asked that when committee members attend regional meetings they get input from participants. This information, along with information/education received at the Committee meetings will allow the CoA to prioritize and focus on specific issues, and be more productive as a Committee.

## **Committee Member Updates:**

Williston Region: Deb reported that Crosby is starting a home-based homemaker/home health agency; she will report more on it at the next meeting.

Trenton Indian Service Area: Mary Ann indicated that she appreciated the cultural differences and hopes to share her skills/talents on bringing things together; she indicated that she sees a lot of depressed older adults and that this could easily be a priority topic.

Bismarck Region: Gene reported that he spoke at the Region VII Health and Learning Day event “Laughter is the Best Medicine” at the Bismarck Senior Center in May.

Jamestown Region: Deloris reported on the “Daily Bread Program” where leftover food from nursing facilities and the high school are packaged/frozen for distribution to Community Action. Workshops are planned for Valley City and Carrington.

Fargo Region: Bruce shared information on ‘Final Rule’ regulations for nursing facilities that provide guidance for surveyors, addresses residents rights, etc.

Standing Rock: Elaine reported that she continues to assist elders in getting to appointments, advocates/arranges services, and indicated training for Navigator (Medicaid expansion) will be held in September.

Three Affiliated Tribes: Madonna reported that she is a part of the Tribal Eldercare Workgroup, organized by Chris Burd from Spirit Lake. Some of the topics to be discussed include Community Health Representatives (CHRs), targeted case management, and public health. The group will be meeting quarterly. Both Spirit Lake and Three Affiliated Tribes have applied to be Qualified Service Providers (QSPs). Madonna requested the following also be included in the minutes – her family has shared veggies from their garden with three of the six senior centers on Ft. Berthold; she also shared veggies with the Spirit Lake Senior Center.

**Report on “Building a Culture of a Health in ND Think Tank Meeting:** Madonna provided an overview of the June 21<sup>st</sup> meeting sponsored by the ND Nurses’ Association. The purpose of the meeting was to begin a discussion to improve population health, well-being and equality. Four focus areas were chosen: 1) elderly health, including end of life care, assistance, transportation, access to care, and caregivers (Nancy participated in this group); 2) mental health needs including chronic mental illness, addiction, and poverty; 3) wellness and patient engagement; and 4) rural population (Madonna participated in this group). Each group started development of a draft Asset Map and Culture of Health Framework. Meetings will be held via teleconference throughout the next year to continue developing the framework; plans include a face to face meeting in June 2018. Discussion was held regarding a handout from the Center for Rural Health: North Dakota’s Significant Health Needs as Identified by Community Health Needs Assessments:

<https://ruralhealth.und.edu/projects/community-health-needs-assessment/pdf/1213-north-dakota-significant-health-needs-fact-sheet.pdf>

**Presentation on Circles of Aging Project:** Jane Strommen provided an overview of the Circles of Aging project. Discussion centered on the need to ‘reinvent’ senior centers that appeal to the current and future participants. All acknowledged the ‘difficulty to change’; suggestions to begin the process included consideration of dropping ‘senior center’ from the title, community center vs. senior center starting new activities, tapping into the skills of baby boomers, and marketing the center. The final report of the project can be accessed at:

<https://www.ag.ndsu.edu/aging/posts/CirclesofAgingProjectFinalReport10516.pdf>.

Jane also provided information on demographics of ND’s older population (Source: ND Compass: <http://www.ndcompass.org/>). The topic of ageism was also discussed; information can be found at Frameworks Institute for Aging:

<http://www.frameworksinstitute.org/aging.html>

**Presentation on ND Statewide Housing Needs Assessment:** Max Wetz and Jennifer Henderson provided an overview of specific sections of the recent ND Statewide Needs Assessment that focused on the senior population. Indications are that the number of individuals age 65 and older will increase significantly by the year 2029 (52.4%), with a gains in all but nine of the 53 counties. Senior households will increase by 53.7%, with a higher number being lower-income households (low income increase 26,399; moderate/upper income increase 11,092). Currently 17% of owner-occupied households and 46.3% of renter-occupied senior households spend 30% of more of their income on housing (considered cost burdened). Housing priorities include senior friendly housing options, affordable, accessible, and attainable, with supportive services to allow individuals to remain in their own home/apartment. The full report can be accessed at: <https://www.ndhfa.org/Publications/HousingNeeds.html>.

### **Aging Services Division Report:**

- a) Committee on Aging Budget: The Committee has a budget of \$4,505.00 for the biennium.
- b) Federal Updates:  
Nancy attended the National Home and Community-Based Services Conference in Baltimore, MD. Secretary Price of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services shared the top priority of their department was addressing opioid addiction.

Nancy participated in Older Americans Act Training for New Directors. Sessions were very informative. Percy Devine, Denver Regional Administrator of the Administration for Community Living encouraged participants to send in ideas addressing reauthorization of the Older Americans Act.

Conference sessions provided education and information on a number of topics including the HCBS Settings Rule, managed care, Department of Labor FSLA changes, and Ombudsman Final Rule.

c) State Updates/Legislative Updates

Nancy indicated that initial meetings had been held as directed in HB 1038 to report to Legislative Management on the levels of funding provided for and spent on nursing home services and home and community-based services, and options to increase the number and level of services and funding provided for home and community-based services for the 2019-21 biennium. Nancy asked the Committee for their recommendations/thoughts on the following: 'what are the barriers to home and community-based services' and 'what are the needs/gaps in services'?

**Other Business – Call to the Public:** No additional information.

**Next Meeting:** Scheduled for December 8, 2017 at Edgewood Vista and Edgewood Village, 3124 Colorado Lane, Bismarck, ND.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheryl Pfliger