

## **Committee on Aging Minutes March 9, 2018**

**Committee Members participating in person:** Gene Hysjulien, Bruce Davidson, Elaine Keepseagle, Ed Christ, Deborah Melby, Merry Green, and Barbara Danks

**Committee Members participating via telephone:** Mary Ann McCowan

**Ex-Officio participating in person:** Nancy Nikolas-Maier, Aging Services Division

**Presenter:** Sheryl Pfliger, Aging Services Division

**Others participating in person:** Katie Schafer, West Central Human Service Center; Tami Ternes, ND Assistive; Mike Chaussee, AARP; Brian Barrett, APT, Inc.; and Amy Johnson, Aging Services Division

**Others participating via telephone:** Rene Schmidt, Badlands Human Service Center

**Call to Order/ Approval of Minutes:** The meeting was called to order by Gene Hysjulien, Chairperson. Motion to approve the December meeting minutes was made by Bruce Davidson; seconded by Ed Christ.

**Welcome and Introductions:** Gene welcomed Barbara Danks, Region VIII committee member. Committee members introduced themselves and the regions they represent. It was reported that Betty Keegan resigned; she had been on the Committee since 2001. All expressed their appreciation of Betty and her service on the Committee. Committee members are needed from Region III (Devils Lake) and the Spirit Lake Tribe. Application for membership is on-line at:  
<https://www.governor.nd.gov/boards/AppForm.aspx>

Gene shared that he will be representing the Committee on Aging on the Vision West ND Consortium. Their next meeting is scheduled for March 15<sup>th</sup>. Gene will provide an update on the consortium's activities at the next Committee on Aging meeting. Gene is also doing a presentation at the Activity Professionals of ND (APND) meeting on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. Gene will be providing information on the Committee on Aging, as well as sharing his perspective as a former Edgewood staff person and as a family member of a resident at Edgewood.

Elaine Keepseagle shared that she is assisting in teaching and preserving the written Lakota and Dakota language. Discussion was held regarding the possibility of doing a video to demonstrate the enunciation/inflection needed to speak the language. They have been meeting with Head Start and Kindergarten children.

Barbara stressed the importance of intergenerational activities. Discussion centered around a 'disconnect' with younger people not knowing how to converse with older adults.

**Aging Services Division Report:** Nancy Nikolas Maier, Aging Services Division, reported that the current continuing resolution extends the Federal budget until March

23, 2018. Advocacy groups are requesting a \$150 million increase in funding for nutrition programs, a continuation of the Money Follows the Person program (without it states would not be able to continue to support transitioning people home), and increasing the allocation of the Lifespan Respite Program to \$5 million.

The President's budget represents relatively flat funding of most programs and eliminating the Senior Community Service Employment Program. A significant restructuring of the overall Medicaid program is proposed, including repealing the Affordable Care Act's expansion coverage and replacing it with a block grant. It also makes it easier for states to include work requirements.

In conjunction with ND's Lifespan Respite grant, Aging Services will be entering into a contract with NDSU Extension to provide Powerful Tools for Caregivers training. When available, the training calendar will be shared with Committee members.

Regarding the Settings Rule (cannot 'isolate' residents from the broader community), Aging staff will be making site visits to 12 memory care units. Edgewood in Mandan has been working with the Division as a pilot site.

The Governor's Strategic Initiatives include:

- Main Street Initiative – made ND a place where people want to live; engage people in the core of the city – build up rather than out
- Behavioral Health – address mental health and addiction issues
- Reinventing Government – streamline government; embrace culture change
- Transforming Education – current system does not engage students; there are many educational opportunities on-line
- Tribal Partnerships – engage the two governments in working together; currently the Department is working with tribal entities to enroll as HCBS agencies so services could be provided by their staff on the reservations

All staff of the Department of Human Services (DHS) has been attending meetings that address 'embracing culture change', with emphasis on empowering people, improving lives, and inspiring success. The goal is to have a culture to aspire to: work as one, be citizen focused, have a growth mindset, make a difference, and leadership everywhere. DHS agency values include: empathy, mutual respect, and well-intentioned. Staff values include gratitude, humility, curiosity, and courage.

Discussion was held on the social determinants of health and how isolation and loneliness can drive up health care costs. Information was shared on a PBS program, "Super Agers" that emphasized the benefits of walking, staying engaged in education or have a hobby, generally eating well, and staying social. Resources should be allocated where it affects positive change – look at ways to deliver services in a different manner. Several examples were discussed: traditional 'bus' transportation – UBER type services, senior meals – Café 60 model.

**State Plan on Aging:** Sheryl Pfliger, Aging Services Division, provided an overview of the federal requirements for developing a State Plan on Aging. The State Plan on Aging input document was reviewed with comments recorded on the following areas:

Senior Centers: Consider engaging in service projects (Amidon Senior Center-raised funds to help an individual; fund raising for a food pantry, horse therapy, etc.); Café 60 model where participants have several menu choices and can eat at any time; remove 'senior' from the name; maybe brick and mortar are not needed; how can recruiting volunteers be accomplished (churches, banks, etc.); consider a volunteer tree/volunteer exchanges; partner with schools – intergenerational activities; increase outreach efforts

Nutrition and Meals: not coming to sites because of food restrictions; complaints on what is on the menu; need for special diets; cultural differences in food choices - serve buffalo, wild game, fish, etc.; engage dietitian to work with participants to develop menus that still meet federal criteria; community gardens; cultural – autumn harvest including natural berries, wild onions, dry corn, etc., take-out meals

Caregiving: respite care is most needed service; high costs; how do we help people that 'fall through the cracks'; need to encourage people to attend falls prevention classes (Stepping On); people don't pay attention until they need a service – crisis vs being proactive; technology (cameras, sensors, etc.) - concerns about confidentiality; perceived as spying; cost; lack of internet service in some parts of the state; worker shortage

Consumer Information: hard to find information – had to make several calls; lack of education on available services; one-stop shop/no wrong door; educate clinics and hospitals on services

Home and Community-Based Services Programs: very complicated; don't use names of programs – focus on services; is there duplication of services

Written comments and the completed survey document will be accepted through March 15, 2018. The survey document is available on the Department's website at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NQB2NYV> (LINK).

**Discussion on Committee Priorities:** The Committee was in agreement to review data gathered from the input hearings to assist in determining priority areas. This will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

**Other Business – Call to the Public:** No comments noted.

**Next Meeting Date:** Friday, June 8, 2018

**Adjournment:** Bruce moved for adjournment; seconded by Ed; meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheryl Pfliger