

## **Committee on Aging MEETING MINUTES – December 14, 2018**

**Committee Members participating in person:** Gene Hysjulien, Elaine Keepseagle, Deborah Melby, Merry McCowan, Delores Rath, Heather Lawrence, Bruce Davidson, Barbara Danks and Craig Knudsvig.

**Committee Members participating via telephone:** Annette Hofstad and William Schott.

**Ex-Officio participating in person:** Nancy Nikolas-Maier, Aging Services Division, Shelly K. Haugen, Governor's Office

**Presenter:** Linda Madsen, Director Senior Medicare Patrol.

**Others participating in person:** Michelle Gayette, Assistant Director, Aging Services Division and Amy Johnson, Administrative Assistant, Aging Services Division.

**Others participating via telephone:** None.

**Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions & Approval of Minutes:** The meeting was called to order by Gene Hysjulien, Chairperson. Gene welcomed all committee members. A motion to approve the September meeting minutes was made by Bruce Davidson; seconded by Deborah Melby.

**Introduction of New Committee Members & Committee Member Updates:** Amy Johnson introduced the new members present, Craig Knudsvig and Heather Lawrence, and also the new members on the telephone, William Schott and Annette Hofstad. Gene asked the current members to introduce themselves, give their background on their involvement with the Committee and add anything they needed to bring to light from their Region.

Nancy Nikolas-Maier gave new members a brief overview of the Committee on Aging and the Aging Services Division. Members of the Committee act as the advisory board for the Aging Division. Nancy stated the Committee's input gives the Division regional perspective and stressed the importance of that perspective for growth of Division needs. Nancy explained the Division spends a little over \$10 Million a year providing meals to seniors, runs the ADRL resource link and has regional staff to conduct home services and discuss potential services available. The Ombudsman and Vulnerable Adult Services (VAPS) programs were discussed. Michelle Gayette, the Program Administrator for VAPS reported there were 2276 VAPS reports made across the state in FFY 18. Nancy discussed the Senior Employment and Local Contact Agency programs and how the Division is working to help older adults in nursing homes return to the home with the services they need to live independently.

Annette Hofstad asked for a definition of her Region. Regions were discussed among the members and it was agreed that a regional map would be sent out with these minutes to the Members for their use. Deborah Melby mentioned that the RAPSA in her

area was no longer there and therefore some of her upcoming seminars were cancelled. Nancy Nikolas-Maier let her know that position has been filled by Nicole Johnson and Deborah could touch base with her to continue to work on those projects. It was discussed there have been recent hires in the VAPs, Ombudsman and RASPA programs across the state, and those new regional maps and contact lists would be emailed out to the members with these minutes.

Amy Johnson discussed with the Members that elections were to be held in 2018, however with five vacancies in Membership those elections were postponed for 2019. The Members agreed this was necessary. The decision was made to update the Bylaws to state the Secretary position for the Committee on Aging would be held by the Aging Services Division, and other necessary updating would be completed and sent out to the membership for approval at the March 2019 meeting. Elections would then be held in the fall 2019 meeting.

**Recruitment of New Committee Members Updates:** Michelle Gayette provided an update on the efforts to recruit new Committee members to fill the current vacancies. The Committee has only one remaining vacancy for the Turtle Mountain Region. Michelle asked the members if there were potential candidates, she could reach out to about becoming a member. Heather Lawrence and Mary McGowan felt they may know a few people that they would talk to and get back to Michelle if they would be interested.

**Speaker/Presentation:** Linda Madsen, Director Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) presented on SMP, who they are and what they do. Senior Medicare Patrol is a grant funded project through the Administration on Community Living. They have had the program since 2006. The program has been in existence since 1997. Senior Medical Patrol educates Medicare beneficiaries, family members and caregivers about Medicare fraud. It is a statewide program consisting of Regional Volunteer Coordinators (RVCs) who cover the state, volunteers and partners with local, state and federal organizations working to empower seniors within the state. Medical identity theft is now one of the top complaints received by the Federal Trade Commission. Linda stresses Social Security Numbers and Medicare numbers should be treated like a credit card number. Do not give out this personal information and help to educate elders why this personal information should never be given out.

Linda went through several scenarios of how the personal information is being extracted through various scams. They send out a Scam of the Month newsletter. Michelle Gayette indicated she receives that monthly newsletter and will start to forward that out to the Committee members. SMP also is on Facebook and those notices of scams are put out on Facebook and are listed on their website. The links for those sites are below:

Senior Medical Patrol Website: [www.ndcpd.org/smp](http://www.ndcpd.org/smp)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/northdakotaseniormedicarepatrol](https://www.facebook.com/northdakotaseniormedicarepatrol)

SMP also notifies the public through the newsletter, their webpage or Facebook when a call from Medicare is a **legitimate** call. Linda states from time to time Medicare does call – but 99% of the time if you receive a call it is fraudulent, therefore it is beneficial to

check their website or Facebook to see if there is any possibility it is a real call from Medicare. The handouts from this presentation will be emailed to the Members with these minutes.

**Aging Services Division Report - Presented by Nancy Nikolas-Maier:** Nancy began by explaining to the members that the Aging Services funding is in two budgets - Aging Services and Home and Community Based Services (which is in the long-term continuum care budget). Heading into the 2019 Legislative Session, Nancy discussed what the budget discussions and initiatives will be. The Older American's Act received a 1% increase from the Federal Government. Nancy stated with talks of a federal shutdown she does not believe it will have an implication on the state programs. Nancy reported the Money Follows a Person (MPF) grant ends December 31, 2018, however there is a push nationally to get a one-year extension passed. That Bill has passed the House and is moving on to the Senate.

Nancy reported the Committee on Aging's budget will remain at \$4500 which isn't a lot but enough to help to cover Committee travel as meeting in person is a more effective platform. No cuts are proposed to any OAA programs which is a positive. With regards to Home & Community Base Services, the governor's budget address mentioned the state wants to grow these services as keeping seniors at home is a preferred choice, so there is a \$6 million increase for those services. The proposed use of those funds is:

- 1) Addition of a residential habilitation and community support services.
- 2) Proposal to add a Senior Companion Program to HCBS for adults with the idea you wouldn't have to be a senior citizen, just an adult, to qualify for that service to help with the isolation of adults.
- 3) Change of the sliding fee scale on SPED programs to keep up with inflation and hopefully keep down the individual financial responsibility for persons on those programs.
- 4) Lowering the functional eligibility criteria for SPED to increase participation.
- 5) They are asking for two FTEs to help with the workload the changes to these programs will generate.
- 6) Rebase of rates and give 1% increase to QSPs, Senior Service Providers and VAPS contracts each year of the biennium.

Nancy stated it is a time of growth for HCBS and she feels this will be something they will really have to emphasize in the legislative session.

The request to increase funding for the guardianship establishment fund and expand the ADRL was not included in the Executive budget request. Michelle Gayette discussed our new partnership with Sanford to try to increase awareness of the ADRL and working with their discharge units to call into the ADRL to find supports when patients are being discharged from the hospital.

**Review of Priorities of Committee, Presentations for 2019, 2019 Meeting Dates and Legislative Participation from CoA:** Gene wondered how the Committee can help with the legislative session. He asked if it was best the Committee stay silent or is there an initiative that they can help support? At this time, Nancy stated there is not

anything specifically needed from the Committee, however if there is something needed for support, we will work through Gene to get that request out to the Members. Gene cautioned Members to know what initiatives we are aligned with and not speak out as a member of the Committee, but as a constituent. Nancy will try to update the Committee of what items in the budget have moved forward and what we are looking to accomplish.

Nancy stated the Bills for the 2019 session are all tied to funding. Our Ombudsman will bring forth legislation on the use of cameras in private rooms in nursing facilities. Other states have passed legislation stating a facility can't keep you from putting a camera in a room, but the facility should know the cameras are there and any roommates, etc. Another piece of legislation will be for a pilot project for HCBS services to be provided by long term care facilities. There is also a Supportive Decision-Making Bill - which allows people to have a supportive decision maker in the room with a patient. Nancy also stated the VAPS bill will contain some cleanup language regarding training on voluntary and mandatory reporting. Mandatory has been missing from that language.

Michelle discussed there will be a change to the VAPS law. These changes include clarifying the program is developed and administered by the Department and removes references to county social service boards; shortening the timeframe for an Ombudsman to investigate and resolve administrative complaints received by discharged residents from nine months to one month (once discharged, the individual no longer meets the definition of resident and one month is sufficient for the purposes); clarifies an individual in the role of Ombudsman is not a mandatory reporter as they are prohibited by federal to report without resident consent; clarifies who is the subject of a VAPS report; attempts to make sharing of information and requesting records from community partners easier; and spells out that a guardian or legal representative may have access to the VAPS records only if they are not suspected of abusing or neglecting the vulnerable adult.

A handout was given regarding our 2019 Priorities and Presentation Topics, and covering our 2019 Meeting Dates as follows:

#### 2019 MEETING DATES

Friday, March 15, 2019  
Friday, June 14, 2019  
Friday, September 13, 2019  
Friday, December 13, 2019

#### PRIORITIES FOR 2019

- 1) Increasing awareness of elder abuse and exploitations (including scams);
- 2) Promoting exercise and physical activity for elders
- 3) Increasing awareness of HCBS, promotion of HCBS services and working toward more than social service offices being able to work with HCBS programs.

- 4) Modernizing delivery systems for meals and coordinate with the regional efforts regarding nutrition to reach those most vulnerable.

In discussion presentations for 2019, Gene tasked the Committee on how Members can take the information we learn from our presentations and share it within their regions. It was decided that in our March meeting the Committee would take time to outline ways in which this information can be circulated. Our Presentation Goals were discussed. William Schott requested that the topic of elder addiction to alcohol and prescription drugs be added to our presentation goals. The Members felt that was a very valid topic we had not yet touched upon and it was agreed we would seek out a presentation on that topic. Therefore, the following presentations were agreed upon for 2019:

- 1) In March, we will have a presentation by Tami Ternes from ND Assistive on how ND Assistive can be utilized as an additional resource to add value to what is already being provided out in the communities for seniors.
- 2) A presentation will be coordinated for VAPS with the program administrator, Michelle Gayette. Michelle has done a co-presentation across the state and she will be speaking with her co-presenter to establish which meeting they can present to the Members.
- 3) A presentation will be coordinated with an HCBS Program Administrator on any legislative changes to the HCBS program and ways regional Members can increase knowledge, and how the Committee can help achieve the goal of more than social services offices working on HCBS programs.
- 4) A presentation will be coordinated on the topic of elder alcohol and drug abuse within our state.

**Other Business – Call to the Public:** Gene asked if there was any other business or topics to bring to the table. No other business was stated.

**Next Meeting Date:** Friday, March 15, 2019

**Adjournment:** Bruce Davidson made a motion to adjourn and Delores Rath seconded that motion. The meeting adjourned at 2:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Johnson