

MINUTES
Utah Commission on Aging
December 10, 2008
12:00 – 2:00 pm

Commission Member Attendees:

Norma Matheson
Maureen Henry
Nels Holgren for LM Church
Michael Deily for David Sundwall
William Cox
Rob Ence
Gary Kelso
Mark Supiano
Helen Thatcher for Kristin Cox
Shauna O’Neil
Kent Alderman

Representing:

Chair
Executive Director
Utah Department of Human Services
Utah Department of Health
Utah Association of Counties
Advocacy Organizations
Long-Term Care
Higher Education
Workforce Services
Area Agencies on Aging
Legal Profession

Other attendees:

Lorna Koci, Utah Food Bank
Lynn Samsel, LDS Welfare Services
Fran Wilby, Goodwill Initiatives

The meeting was called to order by Norma Matheson, Chair.

1. Welcome and Lunch

The minutes from October 21 could not be voted on, as there was not a quorum present. They will be e-mailed to all of the members for a vote.

2. 2-1-1 Information & Referral and Community-Based Care Committee

Lorna Koci reported that 2-1-1 took 87,072 calls from July 2007 through June 2008. This year, the expectation is an increase of approximately 18%, or 100,000 calls. Most types of calls fall into the categories of health care, housing, and food. These make up about 35-40% of the calls.

Government services also falls into one of the top five categories of calls. Approximately 80% of the calls come from Salt Lake County. There is outreach to the rural communities to make them aware of 2-1-1. The last few months have seen an increase in the number, as well as severity, of the calls, due to the current economic situation.

2-1-1 is performing quality control by follow-up to see if the caller received the service or services that they needed, as well as how well the 2-1-1 referral service worked. So far, the results have been very positive.

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The new Red Book is now available for a cost of \$40.00. It covers Salt Lake, Summit, Tooele, Davis, and agencies in Weber County that serve Davis. It is translated into 140 languages. Classes are taught to organizations on how to use the Red Book. Of the 87,072 calls last year, 10,000 were VITA-related. 2-1-1 is looking to expand its hours during February to help with these calls.

The Senior Resource List is available online at www.211ut.org. Lorna stated that they are working on new programs, such as, the Dispute Resolution Council and disaster planning. She also gave an update on the Senior Services Program within 2-1-1: for-profit organizations are now included in the 2-1-1 database for a fee; an ad campaign was launched last September; a Special Needs Registry was developed, in conjunction with Homeland Security, for individuals who may require special assistance from emergency services personnel during a disaster or other emergency.

The Utah Food Bank delivers over 2,000 food boxes a month to Salt Lake County. Services for Seniors is contracted by Salt Lake County Aging Services; services include mowing lawns, clearing driveways and minor home repairs.

There was a new coalition formed earlier this year, the “W.D. Goodwill Initiatives on Aging Coalition”, a group of non-profits that serve seniors. The coalition will bring together all of the parties that deliver services to the aging. A Steering Committee has been created and is meeting regularly for planning purposes. The purpose of the coalition is to provide training for staff, to increase the connection with the student asset pool at the University, provide a resource center and a directory, provide grant opportunities, and host quarterly meetings.

3. Overview of Culture Change in Long-Term Care – The Eden Alternative

Gary Kelso began the discussion by prefacing that the environment that provides long-term care services to the elderly needs to undergo a radical change, understanding that there are many variables to be dealt with, from reimbursement to limitations within the environment. The realization is that the baby boomers expect and will demand more. The concept of culture change has been looked at as a vehicle to reinvent the long-term care profession and how services are delivered. Culture change is a process and an attitude that addresses how to reinvent a profession that has been centered around institutional delivery of care. The profession originally imitated hospital care; by evolving comes the realization that this is not what the elderly necessarily want.

The challenge is how to take an institutional model and change it, or reinvent a human habitat environment. The Eden Alternative became a road map model of choice. The Eden Alternative is the brainchild of Dr. Bill Thomas, a medical director and physician in a nursing home. He realized that the institutional medication method was not dealing with the challenges that the elderly have; he took a step back and realized that there are three plagues facing people who are taken out of their homes; 1) loneliness, 2)

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helplessness, and, 3) boredom. He felt that if these three plagues of institutional care could be addressed, everything else that must be done could fall into place within this new atmosphere. Gary stated that a coalition has been formed with those providers who have a similar vision; that being, creating a human habitat where life revolves around close and continuing contact with plants, animals and children; in Eden vocabulary, “a true Human Habitat is a Garden...”

Gary recently held an Eden Certified Associate Program training for 52 stakeholders. The program is designed as a journey of culture change to break down the institutional barriers that the staff is used to, especially at the executive level. The concept provides a home versus a work environment. Gary has contracted with Eden to come back for more trainings.

4. 2009 Activity/Structure Proposals

Maureen Henry sent a proposal to all of the Commission members requesting that she reduce her work hours to half time effective January 1, 2009. There are two reasons for this request: 1) funding for the Commission will end June 30, 2009, and it is unlikely that funds will become available until the economy turns for the better, and, 2) Maureen has been accepted into the PhD program offered through the University of Utah’s Hartford Center of Geriatric Excellence.

Mark Supiano explained that, with some level in reduction in Maureen’s work schedule, there will be cost savings to the Commission’s budget. There will be some carry-over funds available, due to decreasing support for the AA and sharing the AA position with the Center on Aging. The Center on Aging will most likely have funding to support Maureen at a half-time level after July 1, as well as the AA. The following two caveats apply: 1) The Utah legislature will need to pass the omnibus bill that includes a three year extension of the sunset for the Commission to July 1, 2012, and, 2) We will need to be certain that we will be able to carry forward the savings that have accrued in the Commission's budget to date, and that will increase if this motion passes, within the University's budgetary rules. The operating budget for the Commission is roughly \$180,000/yr; starting July 1 the budget to support the activities would be approximately \$55,000/yr.

Action Item: Motion

The following motion was e-mailed to all members of the Commission:

“The Commission on Aging approves a reduction in the effort of its Director, Maureen Henry, to between 50 and 75 percent full-time equivalent effort beginning January 1, 2009.”

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The motion passed.

5. Status Report

Maureen explained that if the Commission does not continue, any leftover monies would have to be returned to the state. Maureen provided a sunset report last October to the Health and Human Services Interim Committee; at that time a vote passed to extend the Commission for a three-year sunset. This action will be put in the Omnibus Sunset Bill, which will be voted on during the next legislative session. Maureen stated that she has not heard any opposition to the Commission continuing on this basis.

In November, there was a town meeting, photo exhibit, and roundtable forum at the Salt Lake County Chambers promoting and answering questions raised by the Deseret News aging articles.

There was also a stakeholder meeting for the geriatric loan forgiveness proposed legislation; for almost each of the health care professional groups a representative attended. The consensus of the group was to run a bill that would create a program within the existing Rural Loan Forgiveness and Nurse Educator Program. Funding is not expected this year; when the budget improves, the stakeholders would push to get the program funded. There will most likely be deep budget cuts made within the aging programs.

Maureen congratulated Nels Holgren on his appointment as Director of the Division of Aging and Adult Services.

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

The next meeting will be on February 10, 2009.