



Dane County

Minutes - Final Unless Amended by Committee

Area Agency on Aging - Legislative / Advocacy Committee

Consider:

Who benefits? Who is burdened?

Who does not have a voice at the table?

How can policymakers mitigate unintended consequences?

Wednesday, September 25, 2019

9:00 AM

AAA/ADRC, 2865 N. Sherman Ave., Room 108
Madison WI 53704

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A. Call To Order

Staff & Guests present: Cheryl Batterman, Marcia Hendrickson, Caitlin Miller, Howard Thomas, and Angela Velasquez

Chair Olson called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

Present 5 - ESTHER OLSON, JILL MCHONE, TED BUNCK, ANNA LEZOTTE, and JODIE CASTANEDA

Absent 3 - FAISAL KAUD, JIM SCHMIDLKOFER, and CAROLE L. KRETSCHMAN

B. Consideration of Minutes

[2019](#) MINUTES FROM AUGUST 28, 2019
[MIN-210](#)

Attachments: [2019_0828_AAA Leg-Adv Committee Mtg](#)

A motion was made by MCHONE, seconded by LEZOTTE, that these minutes be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: 5 - OLSON, MCHONE, BUNCK, LEZOTTE and CASTANEDA

Absent: 3 - KAUD, SCHMIDLKOFER and KRETSCHMAN

C. Action Items

1. ADVOCACY SUPPORTING FEDERAL, STATE & COUNTY PROGRAMS

[2019](#) MENTAL HEALTH MEDICARE COALITION FLYER
[ACT-149](#)

Attachments: [MH Medicare Coalition flyer](#)

[2019](#)
[ACT-150](#)

WISCONSIN MEDICARE MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS BY
COUNTY

Attachments: [Wisconsin MH Profs by County Map](#)

AAA Manager Cheryl Batterman has participated in two national conference calls as part of the Medicare Mental Health Workforce regarding the Mental Health Access Improvement Act of 2019 (Senate Bill 286 and HR Bill 945), which seeks to expand coverage of mental health services under Part B of Medicare. Specifically, the bill would amend the Social Security Act to increase access to mental health services by permitting Licensed Professional Counselors and Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists to be reimbursed by Medicare. The Medicare Mental Health Workforce is seeking local stakeholders to write letters of support for the legislation.

A motion was made by BUNCK, seconded by MCHONE, to recommend the AAA Board send a letter supporting the passage of Senate Bill 286 and HR Bill 945 to Dane County's congressional delegation. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: 5 - OLSON, MCHONE, BUNCK, LEZOTTE and CASTANEDA

Absent: 3 - KAUD, SCHMIDLKOFER and KRETSCHMAN

Kaud arrived at 9:20 a.m.

Present 6 - FAISAL KAUD, ESTHER OLSON, JILL MCHONE, TED BUNCK, ANNA LEZOTTE, and JODIE CASTANEDA

Absent 2 - JIM SCHMIDLKOFER, and CAROLE L. KRETSCHMAN

D. Presentations

None.

E. Reports to Committee

1. 2020 AAA BUDGET PRIORITIES

Olson reported McHone and she attended a news conference on 24 September 2019 during which Dane County Executive Joe Parisi announced \$200,000 will be appropriated in the 2020 budget to fund two full-time mental health professionals as part of a pilot project to assist non-Medicaid eligible older adults. The staff will work with Senior Focal Point case managers to help keep seniors who experience chronic mental illness living independently. Olson, McHone, and Dane County Legislative Liaison Carrie Springer met with Parisi this month to advocate for this mental health priority, which ranked No. 2 on the list of unfunded needs identified by Focal Point Directors, and three additional priorities on the list – Case Management Services, Nutrition Site Management, and RSVP Driver Services Program. Parisi is scheduled to release the total 2020 budget by 1 October 2019. If any of the three remaining priorities remain unfunded, advocacy efforts will begin with the Dane County Board of Supervisors.

2. ADRC GOVERNING BOARD

Olson reported the ADRC and AAA are planning an outreach event: "Make Time for Joy! A Celebration of Caregivers." It will be held on 16 October 2019 at Lussier Family Heritage Center, and will help caregivers connect with resources, professionals, and other caregivers. The ADRC is also planning the "Southern Wisconsin Veterans Conference" on 19 November 2019 at the Alliant Energy Center. The event, which will offer speakers and resources, is open to residents of Columbia, Crawford, Dane, Dodge, Green, Grant, Iowa, Jefferson, Juneau, Lafayette, Richland, Rock, and Sauk counties.

3. COUNTY/STATE/FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Batterman reported she recently distributed the 2019-2021 Dane County Legislative Agenda to committee members and thanked them for their work in proposing changes to allow for better advocacy for older adults. All of these changes were incorporated in the agenda.

4. WISCONSIN AGING ADVOCACY NETWORK

Olson reported the Governor's Task Force on Retirement Security and the Governor's Task Force on Reducing Prescription Drug Costs are seeking members. Olson reported she was one of five or six WAAN members who attended a news conference this month that included Sen. Patrick Testin, Rep. Ken Skowronski, the Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources (GWAAR), and the Wisconsin Alzheimer's Association to announce new polling showing broad bipartisan support for two pieces of legislation related to caregiving – the Credit for Caring Act and the Caregiver Advise, Record and Enable (CARE) Act. The Credit for Caring Act would create a nonrefundable individual income tax credit for people caring for a member or members of their family. The CARE Act seeks to improve the way family caregivers are supported when their loved ones are admitted into a hospital and would ensure they receive the critical information and instruction they need to effectively care for their loved ones at home. Olson asked committee members to contact their elected officials to offer support for both measures.

5. STATE'S AGING ADVISORY COUNCIL

Olson reported GWAAR Advocacy & Public Policy Coordinator Janet Zander and she shared a proposal with Governor Tony Evers' staff seeking to raise the Council's influence in the state decision-making process. A desire to establish a comprehensive long-range state aging plan, an endeavor that has been undertaken in California, Colorado, and Massachusetts, is one of the initiatives driving the desire to elevate the council's profile. Olson reported there are Council openings for representatives from the Latinx and LGBTQ communities. Olson reported she was advised by Dane County Corporation Counsel to try to determine if any older adult groups are using the name "G-Force" prior to using it on apparel to be worn by individuals who join a proposed group that would attend meetings and hearings to advocate for senior issues.

6. CHAIR & STAFF REPORTS

[2019](#)
[RPT-291](#)

2019 LEG-ADV COMMITTEE WORK PLAN: QTRS 1 & 2

Attachments: [2019 Leg-Adv Comm Work Plan QTRs 1 & 2](#)

Batterman welcomed Jodie Castaneda, NewBridge Madison Team Lead Case Manager for the South and West locations, to the committee. She replaces Kari Davis, who left NewBridge.

Batterman provided an overview of the Committee Work Plan for the first two quarters of 2019.

Batterman reported the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has revamped its Medicare Plan Finder, which has resulted in potential obstacles for case managers ahead of the open enrollment period that begins on 15 October 2019. A CMS representative provided an educational presentation about the new Plan Finder for case managers on 13 September 2019 and recorded more than two pages of feedback provided during the session. Efforts continue by AAA staff to make the conversion process as smooth as possible to ensure Dane County older adults are enrolled in Medicare Part D plans in 2020.

Batterman reported the House of Representatives Education and Labor Committee this month approved the Dignity of Aging Act to reauthorize the Older Americans Act (OAA) through 2024. HR 4334 would increase funding for vital programs that serve nearly 11 million aging Americans. On the other hand, the Senate Appropriations Committee funding bill contains level funding for OAA-funded programs.

Batterman reported preparations continue for an event at the State Capitol with the intent of educating state lawmakers about the impact of the Elder Benefit Specialist (EBS) Program and securing increased state funding. Daniel Idzikowski, Program & Policy Coordinator at Milwaukee County Department on Aging, GWAAR's Janet Zander and Kate Schilling, and Wisconsin Association of Benefit Specialists Legislative Committee Co-Chair Tiffany Scully are working with Batterman to stage the event. A form has been distributed to each county to collect data and anecdotal evidence of the program's impact. The effort was spawned by Batterman's realization during Aging Advocacy Day in May 2019 that state lawmakers and staff appeared to possess little knowledge about the EBS Program when participants shared the WAAN Issue Brief calling for increasing State funding to ensure continued access to legal advocacy services for Wisconsin's fastest-growing population. The State hasn't increased its funding of the EBS program in the past 22 years. Wisconsin Counties Association also plans to feature the EBS program in its magazine.

AAA Aging Program Specialist Angela Velasquez reported she recently learned about the U.S. Department of Agriculture's proposed rule change to eliminate categorical eligibility, which would take food assistance away from millions of families currently participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) – including more than 118,000 Wisconsinites, many of them older adults. Velasquez emailed Megan Vander Wyst, FoodShare Outreach Manager for Madison's Second Harvest Foodbank, to learn more about how the rule change would impact older adults in Dane County and will share what she learns with committee members.

Velasquez reported AAA in December 2019 will become the first public agency in the state to pilot Trualta, a web-based program that provides caregivers with 5- to 10-minute

training sessions. There are longer training sessions for those caring for a person affected by dementia. Trualta will be offered in conjunction with the Caring for the Caregiver Program Grants in 2020.

Batterman reported she met recently with a U.S. Census Bureau Field Representative, who shared that older adults fall into 12 of the 16 groups of people the Census Bureau has identified as the most difficult to count. Batterman is working with Focal Points to educate seniors about the importance of participating in the census, which is used to determine federal and state funding levels. AAA uses census and American Community Survey data as part of funding formulas for the Case Management Program and Senior Nutrition Site Management. Residents will receive a letter encouraging them to complete the census form online and Batterman will encourage Focal Points to provide internet access for older adults without it. Velasquez and Bunck, who recently attended a meeting of the Dane County's Complete Count Committee, are working with Batterman to spearhead AAA's "I Count Team", a group dedicated to education and marketing efforts aimed at increasing participation in the 2020 census.

Velasquez reported efforts continue to seek funding from the City of Madison for the Senior Nutrition Program. Most of the other cities and towns in Dane County contribute to the program.

F. Future Meeting Items and Dates

NEXT MEETING: WEDNESDAY, 23 OCTOBER 2019, 9 AM @ AAA/ADRC

G. Public Comment on Items not on the Agenda

None.

H. Such Other Business as Allowed by Law

Lezotte reported the Governor's Task Force on Caregiving is scheduled to meet today in Milwaukee. Lezotte, who raised concerns about the potential creation of a caregiver registry during the August meeting, will keep committee members apprised of the task force's activities.

Kaud reminded the Committee and AAA staff of the importance of educating seniors about the cost benefits of purchasing maintenance prescription drugs by mail and reading explanation of benefits forms from healthcare providers to look for incorrect coding that can cause inaccurate charges.

I. Adjournment

A motion was made by KAUD, seconded by BUNCK, to adjourn. The motion carried by the following vote:

This meeting adjourned at 10:36 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Howard Thomas, AAA Clerk III.