

Governor's Advisory Council Meeting

SLTC – 1100 North Last Chance Gulch

Meeting Agenda

October 14, 2020

9:00 AM - Noon

Zoom

In Attendance: Laurie Glover, Alex Ward, Curly Burns, Marianne Roose, Peggy Tombre, Gayle Carlson, Barb Smith, Ryan Clark, Roberta Bigback

Guests: Janet Stellmon, SHIP Director; Katy Lovell, Legal Services Developer Program; Carmen Sciabica, Interim State Ombudsman; Patrick Kelley, ADRC Program Manager

Absent: Bob Meyers, Jim Opitz, Gerald Pease

9:00 – 9:45 Welcome and Community Reports – All

Laurie gave an update on Cascade County and the Meals-on-Wheels program have increased the number of deliveries from 350 – 425/day due to COVID-19. More efforts are being made to visit people when dropping off meals. Opportunities, Inc: Local Community Action Program Opportunities, Inc. working to meet increased needs of older people in homes needing supplies while healing. Colleague whose parent is in Northcentral MT nursing home: Social interaction; mental health strain on residents and staff, looking to support mental health outreach/support. Personal observations through public health Assisted Living Facilities have less nursing staff than nursing homes, concern about influenza immunizations getting to ALF residents, due to local health departments being taxed with contact tracing.

Roberta: Still on a stay at home order, doing home delivery 260 meals a day with five drivers (two who are part time). She is personally doing 45 meal deliveries a day. An independent housing unit is shut down and residents cannot get their commodities. Purchases of canned food, buffalo meat, cleaning supplies, masks and face shields, pet food and a couple of heaters have been made. Have lost about two people a day to COVID-19 for the past few weeks. Also, purchased pulse oximeters. Doing a pen-pal program for the elders and they have received mail from all over. They are encouraging them to write back through providing paper, pens, etc. For Halloween fun they are hosting a pumpkin carving, decorating, stay at home poster contest for a chance to win a prize. Roberta's assistant has joined the incident response team to learn about elders before they are hospitalized, and she has also become a certified contact tracer.

Curly: Volunteered at the food bank and learned that the need for food has doubled in L&C County.



Meeting Agenda

October 14, 2020

9:00 AM - Noon

Zoom

Gayle: Tracking closely food distribution and client numbers. Statewide the number of people have actually declined at food banks, since the beginning of the pandemic. 3,000,000 lbs. are now being distributed where normally we do about 1,500,000 lbs. The Farmers to Families program has been a huge help and unfortunately this program ends at the end of this month. Food pantries have been able to stay open though COVID is starting to affect their staff and volunteer pool. Taking about 2-3 months to get deliveries, this is better but still challenging (usually it takes 2-3 weeks for deliveries). Number of seniors served has increased. Looking closely and monitoring potential stimulus packages to help with planning. Another challenge is getting access to the reservations, due to many closed to outside visitors.

Ryan- 1.3% COLA increase in SS benefits. Hidden costs of Coronavirus, people have not been able to manage their chronic conditions. Yellowstone County: LTC facilities are unable to move folks in and this is having a huge impact on families. Hospitals have been unable to discharge patients into rehab units. It was recently announced that St. Johns United and Billings Clinic are opening a new wing.

Marianne- Eureka community center is closed, offering grab in go meals ordered ahead of time. Bread give away available at the center for pick up; donated out of Kalispell-volunteers from the community pick it up. More volunteers are picking up donated logs for firewood; deliver and stack for people. Key club and football team are helping. Nursing home is still not allowing visitors, only window visits. Senior Center has increased communication through Facebook. Today from 2-4 you can call in and order a thanksgiving box from the Center who is partnering with the VFW. Food and heating needs are the main priority. Schools are open. North end of county had 11 active cases. Church food drives/baskets to deliver. Drive through-Community organization hosted a food drive at the high school parking lot. 4H Groups are also doing fun things regarding social interaction; phone trees.

Peggy-Gallatin County: local potato farm (when restaurants were shut down) donated a semi-load of potatoes. Also included canned goods and frozen burger. The Farmer's Market was open with limited vendors. Hospital is offering drive through flu clinics.

Alex-AARP State office is closed. Really good at using the virtual platform. Billings is seeing the greatest increase of COVID cases, the health officer has expanded some of the requirements;

Meeting Agenda

October 14, 2020

9:00 AM - Noon

Zoom

limits of 25 people, seeing more people wearing masks, more work on COVID-19 scams, cyber-crime. People are starting to realize that this is serious and more long term. Memory care facility lost more than 20 people.

9:45 – 10:00 SHIP/MIPPA Programs – Janet Stellmon

Kick-off for open enrollment starts tomorrow Oct 15th through Dec 7th, we currently have 200 SHIP Counselors covering the state. Most are planning to work with folks over the phone. Sending paperwork to them for review of the plan options. Some are setting up meetings when necessary and will be using PPE, wearing masks and using plexiglass dividers and social distancing. Medicare is covering COVID-19 tests, when a vaccine is available it will be covered under Part D, may waive or relax prior authorizations, Part D Senior Saving Model- helps with paying for insulin by capping it at \$35 per month/30-day supply. Savings of at least 66% annually. Some of the rural areas may not be able to take advantage of this due to lack of participating pharmacies in their area. MA premiums – avg. \$21/ MO and PDP premiums \$30.50 per month. Medicare Advantage plans will begin covering folks with End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) January 1, 2021.

Will be closely monitoring where staff are with scheduling; Medicare will be informed to stop sending referrals to avoid over booking the SHIP counselors.

10:00 – 10:15 Legal Services Developer Program – Katy Lovell

Collaborative flyer developed through a partnership with Montana Legal Services, Montana Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence and Adult Protective Services-disseminated through the AAAs with the home delivered meals; plans to do another round of these. We canceled about half of the Legal Clinics scheduled for the year; we were able to offer clinics in Plentywood, Great Falls and Helena. We sanitized stations, utilized masks and plexiglass dividers, practiced social distancing, screened by asking questions and took temperatures, moved staff rather than the people we were serving. Phone clinics have a partnership with U of M law students. Seeing a lot of evictions, seniors are not often protected by the governor's order, due to their income not affected by COVID-19. Working with landlords, though not having much success. Housing is a huge issue in Montana. Staying abreast of various scams. Stimulus

Meeting Agenda

October 14, 2020

9:00 AM - Noon

Zoom

checks memo went out to Ombudsman and Nursing facilities, this money is not counted as a resource for the first 12 months. Most common scams right now is an increase in door-to-door sales people. Shady mail order businesses, where people order something and never get it. See attached handouts.

Ryan asked about some facilities are asking residents to sign a waiver to avoid responsibility. To date approximately 13 states have actually passed legislation to indemnify facilities from any responsibility, we are not one of those states. Ryan is going to get a copy of an example of this waiver and share it with Katy. It was also noted that such a waiver would most likely not stand up in court.

10:15 – 10:30 Break

10:30 – 10:45 State Ombudsman Program – Carmen Sciabica

Resident visits are the core of our program, due to the governor's order we have not been able to go into facilities as we are not considered essential workers. Ombudsman have been communicating with residents and staff via telephone and Zoom and complaints have been handled via telephone and Zoom. A policy was written and distributed to the local and regional ombudsman in September for outdoor and window visits depending on what the facilities are doing. Only few outdoor visits have been done; depends on COVID cases in the communities. Facilities continue to have the ability to restrict visitors, including ombudsman due to infection control protocols. On September 17, 2020 CMS significantly eased the restrictions on visitations but ombudsman can be prevented from coming into the facility due to infection control concerns. CMS did make it clear that facilities are to provide ombudsman with immediate access to resident via telephone or other technology. This CMS guidance only covers Nursing homes. Some nursing homes have taken advantage of CMP grant funds to purchase I-Pads, etc. Assisted Living is regulated by state licensing and they are only following the Governor's order and the July 2020 Emergency Rule.

Meeting Agenda

October 14, 2020

9:00 AM - Noon

Zoom

North Central Independent Living Center is currently advertising for the State Ombudsman position. If you know of anyone who is interested, please direct them to the MT Job Service to apply.

Laurie asked about residents having access to medical care and vaccinations. Suggested licensing be invited to come to a future meeting to talk with us.

10:45 – 11:15 LSR Grant / Alzheimer's Grant work – Patrick Kelley

Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC): Changes due to COVID: New Grants, Change of Plans and Partnerships; extra cash for direct service, 90% of our 56 counties are rural, 82% of those counties are considered Frontier Counties, challenges of getting people to the services they need. Key areas of FOCUS: 1) Provide I&A, \$300,000 grant award with M4A: Create a public Awareness Campaign, Statewide assessment of the AAAs, Position ADRCs/AAAs to meet emerging needs; 2) Alzheimer's and Dementia program initiative. Secured a \$500,000 expansion grant; and 3) Lifespan Respite Covers all ages of caregivers; started the final 3rd year of the 2018 grant. \$600-\$800 respite vouchers for caregivers in a calendar year. Additional ACL funds to expand respite offerings: PPE, Robotic Pets, weighted blankets, educational activities, puzzles and coloring books.

11:15 – 11:45 Preparation process for upcoming legislative session – Barb Smith

Base Budget has gone through, looking at our current needs, most likely request, but may not be approved. HJ50 legislative study on LTC focused on Big Sky Waiver, which is unfortunate. We are trying to address issues with constituents before the legislature convenes. Workgroups starting this month. We are hearing predominantly from disability groups. Mike Batista, AARP and Adrienne Cotton, M4A Director will be on the workgroup to advocate for seniors. We have been trying to get back to the work we were doing prior to COVID-19, which is a struggle. Continue to work with ALFs who are barely regulated and don't have access to needed resources. Almost a fully staffed division. With the upcoming leadership change, Governor's make rules about advisory councils addressing the legislature, either way, can always testify as a citizen. What are we going to do after the pandemic, what will our focus be? Haven't gotten that far.

Meeting Agenda

October 14, 2020

9:00 AM - Noon

Zoom

If you are working/speaking with a local NHs, if they do not have I-Pads and other technology for visiting, we have Civil Monetary Penalty (CMP) grants available for this. CMS came out with new visitation rules, though they may not apply to all Montana facilities as some have too many cases – which is outbreak status. CMP grants have been extended to cover physical equipment to help with visitations, plexiglass dividers. For CMP grants for Nursing Homes contact Shaunda Hildebrand at 444-4209.

Laurie asked if there was any legislation coming up that would affect seniors. One bill is on guardianship: currently if no one comes forward to fill this role it auto enrolls them to APS and this number is creeping up. This increase in workload impacts the APS staff being able to focus on investigations. The bill gives more options than just sending to APS.

SW MT Veterans Home: The community center is near completion, looking at late Nov early Dec. for opening. Grand opening will be in the spring. Beautiful facility, each cottage has 12 single rooms with a private bathroom, mini kitchen and very spacious. Will be adapting to what the veterans want, i.e. mealtimes. This project is 21 years in the making! Laurie asked about how the Lewistown facility is doing; overall doing well, working on preparing the D wing to use as a COVID unit. Not very many cases to date. Montana State Hospital is currently being subsidized by the national guard due to shortage of staff.

11:45 – Noon Other discussion & wrap-up – Kerrie

Healthy Aging Summits – 2015, 2018 & 2021. Most recent mtg. – Healthy Aging Regional Workshop, “Preparing for the Future of Aging” on Oct. 7th.

Mtg. participants included: Regions 8 & 10 SUAs, ACL, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Trust for America’s Health (Age-Friendly Public Health Systems) and The John A. Hartford Foundation (Age-Friendly Health Systems initiative).

Meeting Goals: Start conversations to improve healthy aging and reduce the impact of COVID-19 on older adults and provide a foundation for building partnerships and collaboration across states.

Meeting Agenda
October 14, 2020
9:00 AM - Noon
Zoom

Handout: State Priority Goal Worksheet – *All members agreed to pick their top five priorities prior to our next meeting.*

M4A is hosting Tele-Town Hall Meetings through an ADRC COVID-19 grant. I will send your contact information and you can participate on the calls if you like. *Completed.*

AARP Scorecard – updated every 3-years. Assesses states LTSS systems; identifies areas for improvement; measures progress. Indicators changed, so it's not comparable to previous scorecards. Suggestion for next meeting would bring in AARP to walk us through it. For the full report and a MT Fact Sheet: <http://www.longtermscorecard.org/> [[longtermscorecard.org](http://www.longtermscorecard.org/)]

Upcoming 2021 Governor's Conference on Aging-Butte – Jackie typically starts working on this project in December and is wanting your direction to move forward. The group was good with her starting to work on this.

Jackie wanted to share that our state currently has two 111-year old's.

Remember to get your flu vaccine by October 31st. BOO to the Flu!

Laurie added shingles vaccine, pneumonia, and whatever else you need!

Ryan brought up concerns about our duties and responsibilities written in the bylaws:

- A. The Council serves as the principal body to provide advice and advocacy for affairs on aging in the Governor's Office, State Departments, and other public and private, state and local agencies affecting the elderly as defined by 2-15-2206 and 2-15-232.
- B. The Council serves as the central body for the planning, coordination, implementation and evaluation of the Annual Governor's Conference on Aging, with appropriate input from Area Agencies on Aging, senior citizen organizations and other public and private agencies.
- C. The Council monitors the implementation and other progress of the White House Conferences on Aging objectives for Montana.

Governor's Advisory Council Meeting

SLTC – 1100 North Last Chance Gulch

Meeting Agenda

October 14, 2020

9:00 AM - Noon

Zoom

With new leadership coming in this may want to be reviewed in the near future with the Governor's Office.

Ryan also looked up the White House Conference, which happens every 10 years, the last one held in 2015. This document advises state departments. Laurie and Kerrie stated they would look at this as well. -public & private agencies are separated.

Next meeting in January 2021 to be scheduled soon.