Meeting Minutes

LTCC Meeting date: August 10, 2023

Start & End Time: 10:00am – 12:00pm

Location/Format: Hybrid in-person and WebEx Meeting w/ Dial-In Option; PA Office of Administration, Health and Human Services Delivery Center, 2525 North 7th Street, Harrisburg, PA 17110

Council Members in Attendance

Commissioner Mike Humphreys (Katie Merritt)*

Maureen Weigl, Deputy Adjutant General for Office of Veterans Affairs

Representative Patty Kim (Chuck Miller) *

Representative Steven Mentzer (Annemarie Robey) *

Senator Judy Ward (Greg Beckenbaugh) *

Travis Davis (DMVA)

Secretary Debra Bogen (Jeanne Parisi) *

Secretary Val Arkoosh (Jen Hale) *

Secretary Kavulich (Steven Horner) *

Secretary Michael Carroll (Danielle Spila) *

Eric Beittell, Ender's Insurance *Long-Term Care Insurance Representative*

Janice Cameron, Chair, Southeast Regional Council on Aging *PA Council on Aging Representative*

Shona Eakin Voices for Independence *LTSS Consumer*

Mark Gusek, LIFE – Northwestern Pennsylvania *LTC Managed Care Representative*

Karen Buck, SeniorLAW *Consumer Advocacy Representative*

Angela Reynolds, YWCA Greater Pittsburgh *Caregiver Representative*

Kathy Cubit, CARIE *Caregiver Representative*

Tim Ward

Teresa Osborne, AARP Pennsylvania *Consumer Advocacy Representative*

Vini Portzline, Center for Independent Living of Central PA *LTSS Consumer*

Michael Sokoloski, BAYADA Home Health Care *Homecare Representative*

Kathleen Gillespie, Clearfield County Area Agency on Aging *AAA Representative*

Margie Zelenak, PALA *Assisted living/Personal Care Home Representative*

Katie Dotto

David Maola

Adrienne Peters-Sipes, PA Bar Association *Elder Law Section Representative*

Mark Baylis, *Pennsylvania State Veterans Commission Designee*

Megan Stedjan, *Nonprofit Skilled Nursing Facility Representative*

*Attended on member's behalf

Not In Attendance

 Senator Maria Collett, Minority Chair Aging & Youth Committee (Tom Holroyd)

Robin Wiessmann, Executive Director/CEO, PA Housing Finance Agency (Danielle Rudy)

Nicole M. Anders, Program Director, Inglis Day Program *Adult Day Center Representative*

Samella Hudson-Brewton, *Senior Community Center Representative*

Commissioner Jeff Engleston, *County Commissioners Association of PA Representative*

Nancy Hodgson, PhD, RN, *Academic Research Representative*

Shane Nugent, *For-Profit Skilled Nursing Facility Representative*

Missy Shupe, *LTSS Nurse Representative*

Kimberly VanHaitsma, PhD, *Academic Research Representative*

Matthew W. Yarnell, *Consumer Advocacy Representative*

Heshie Zinman, *Consumer Advocacy Representative*

Discussion Items and Summary

Welcome & Roll Call

Kevin Hancock (Executive Director, LTCC) provided a brief welcome, and Gabby Szymanski (Executive Assistant to the Secretary of Aging) took roll.

PDA Updates and Meeting Minutes Approval

Steven Horner (Deputy Secretary of Aging) provided the following updates:

- **2023-2024 State Budget:** The recent passage of the Budget represents a huge win for Pennsylvania's older adults. Highlights include:
    - $5M to the Help at Home Options program
    - $1M annually in non-competitive grants to PA's Senior Centers

Q: Will there be an increase in available hours for the Options program? Also, will self-hire be added to alleviate the length of the Options waiting list?

A: There are some wait lists due to lack of providers and there is variance among the AAAs and with contracting. We are looking at a consumer reimbursement model for some AAAs, we're trying to promote that more because that will expand the ability to provide services.

- **Property Tax Rent Rebate:** HB1100 provides for expansion and cost-of-living adjustment to the PTRR program for the first time since 2006. Highlights include:
    - Increases the minimum rebate from $650 to $1,000
    - Increases annual income cap from $35K to $45K
    - Grants access to 175,000 newly eligible older Pennsylvanians
    - Expands the benefit for the 400,000 older adults who already qualify

- **Medicaid Unwinding:** the Administration for Community Living (ACL) recently determined that 3.8M people nationwide have been disenrolled from Medicaid.
    - Many of the individuals may still be eligible for Medicaid, but they're losing coverage because they won't return forms or the state unfortunately has made some errors.
    - ACL has asked that we continue as a state to work together to communicate with these individuals that are going to be redetermined.
    - To help inform individuals who have lost Medicaid coverage. please continue to use our PA link line, it's 1-800-753-8827. Additionally, they can be referred to the AAAs, PACE, LIFE, PENNIE, etc.

Q: PA MEDI and DHS have updated the unwinding document for Medicare beneficiaries. I would like to request that the updated document be shared with the Council so that can be distributed more widely. We're starting to hear about procedural terminations and unfortunately the Medicare population, it's a very complex messaging and process and Medicare beneficiaries are getting, I think lost in the messaging.

A: Yes. Margot, can you post it up there? We will share it. Thank you, Kathy.

Commonwealth Updates

PA Department of Human Services

Jen Hale, Director Bureau of Policy and Regulator Management Office of Long-Term Living

- Update on the OLTL Listen and Learn sessions

    o Opportunity to hear feedback from participants, family members and caregivers on all the OLTL programs and potential areas of improvement
    o In person sessions as well as 3 virtual sessions, total of 160 participants
    o Feedback summary:
        - Service coordination:
            - concerns with lengthy response times
            - uninformed and inadequately trained service coordinators in some instances
            - overall turnover rate of service coordinators
        - Transportation coordination for LTSS:
            - inadequate training of transportation providers
            - delays in issuing and obtaining transit passes in some instances
            - Issues with reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses
        - Home modifications: delays in getting modifications prevents accessing affordable housing
        - Virtual service delivery: The pandemic allowed for greater flexibility in receiving services through a virtual method and participants in those sessions expressed some of the major benefits of receiving those services virtually.

Q: How do you think that some of the feedback from the listening sessions will translate into contract requirements or agreement requirements for the Community Health Choices program?

A: The OLTL is looking at all the summary of comments and evaluating things that we are able to do in the immediate future and things that may take some more long-term planning. So, I do think that some of the feedback will definitely be included, if not immediately, definitely a plan for the long term.

Minutes Approval

Upon recognition that the minutes from the previous meeting had not yet been approved, Kevin Hancock opened the floor to the committee for approval. Margie Zelenak moved to approve the minutes from the June 8th , 2023 meeting, and Teresa Osborne seconded.

Commonwealth Updates Continued

PA Department of Health

Jeannie Parisi, Deputy Secretary of Quality Assurance

- Revised regulations for nursing facilities went into effect on July 1st
  - So far, we've already seen an increase in complaints by 20% over our average last year
  - We suspect most of these are from staff, but they will be investigated as usual
  - 50% of our inspections in July included citations for failure to meet staffing ratios
  - Over the next couple of months, we will get plans of correction from these facilities and see what improvements they have made
  - We are looking to include fiscal staff to help us implement the regulations effective October 1st.
  - I encourage people to continue to send questions to the resource account. As we continue to get new questions as these regulations take effect, we will continue to update the guidance.

Update on the Master plan for Older Adults

Kevin Hancock, Special Advisor, and Gabby Szymanski, Executive Assistant, Dept of Aging

- **Subject Matter Experts:** There are a lot of representatives from the Commonwealth on today's call. They have been identified by their departments to be subject matter experts supporting this effort in the development of the MPOA.
  - The SMEs will be working with the LTCC and PDA to provide content and background on initiatives brought up by the stakeholder engagement/collected data.
- **Stakeholder outreach:**
  - 4 regional town halls (Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Harrisburg, and Altoona)
    - Purpose is to introduce the MPOA to regional stakeholders and to also provide an opportunity for stakeholder testimony
  - 122 in-person listening sessions scheduled across the state
    - Designed to support the ability of stakeholders to provide in person suggestions for what they think should be included in the plan.
    - Slated for August and September
    - We are anticipating exceeding our goal of hosting 130 in-person listening session, with one in every county.
  - 8 virtual listening sessions in August and September
    - Intended to gather feedback from stakeholders who would be unable to attend a listening session in person.
  - Needs Assessment: survey developed by our academic partner the University of Pittsburgh. Howard Degenholtz will provide an overview of the needs assessment later in the meeting.
- **Stakeholder feedback:** 2200 comments from multiple collection methods compiled into one database. The LTCC will have access to the raw data, as well as summaries prepared by the MPOA team.

- o Feedback was collected in 8 domains: Housing, Transportation, Civic Participation/Employment, Outdoor Spaces & Buildings, Communication & Information, Respect/Social Inclusion, Social Participation, and Health Services/Community Support.
  - o We received the most feedback about Transportation, Housing, and Health Services, in that order.
  - o While we received a lot of feedback about LTSS, we are also receiving a lot of poignant feedback about everyday life
- **Plan name:** The plan does not have a name yet. We are using the name "Master Plan for Older Adults" because it was so named in the Executive Order.
- **Framework:** AARP 8 domains of age-friendly communities developed by the WHO and adapted for the US by AARP to support the idea of advancing livable communities for older adults.
  - o 8 Domains of Livability (outlined in "stakeholder feedback" section) take into consideration all aspects of an older adults life and how to elevate the health, well-being and quality of life for older adults and people with disabilities, no matter where they live.
    - Outdoor Spaces & Buildings: places to gather in and out of doors
    - Transportation: all levels of transportation, incl. Sidewalks and crosswalks
    - Housing: adaptability, affordability and availability of housing, especially for older adults aging in place
    - Social participation: how to address sadness and isolation for older adults and find pathways to meaningful community connections
    - Respect and Social Inclusion: a sense of belonging in a person's community, and intergenerational relationships
    - Work and Civic Engagement: how to be or remain active in the workforce and civic life in a meaningful way
    - Communication and information: having information one needs to stay in community and age in place
    - Health and community supports: affordability and access to appropriate supports for older adults as they age

Q: As we're looking at social participation, are we bearing in mind those that have memory issues, so for example, Alzheimer's, dementia and those challenges there in terms of social participation given loss of memory, loss of language?

A: It's of particular importance for social participation to consider the unique needs of individuals with cognitive impairments and how they might be addressed a lot more specifically for older adults. I'm hoping that we can elevate the relationship between cognitive impairments including Alzheimer's disease and dementia and also in some cases individuals with intellectual disabilities and the unique opportunities and requirements for community engagement and and fun social activities.

Q: I just was wondering under the transportation segment, had anyone mentioned accessible Uber or Lyft the transportation yet?

A: We haven't received anything specific to accessible Uber and Lyft, but we have heard about accessible like public transportation in general.

Q: First, what can the plan do to elevate financial and economic security? We know that older people are often thrust into poverty for health and other reasons for the first time in their lives. And second, I think it's critical that we emphasize rights in the plan, especially to live free from abuse and neglect.

A: There is there's a relationship with barriers and poverty tied to all 8 of these domains, but it still is absolutely something that we would want to see elevated through this through this process. And regarding rights, I would argue that that rights also touch on all eight of the of the domains: social inclusion, yes, but also rights to housing, rights to transportation, rights to communication and information.

Karen Leonovich, Director of Policy and Programs, and Brenda Appel, Project Manager, Pennsylvania Association of Area Agencies on Aging (P4A)

- Listening Session Logistics Overview
    - **AAA Role:** P4A has been assisting with setting up the listening sessions across the state through each AAA (there are 52 that serve the 67 counties.)
    - **Training:** We worked with PDA to develop a facilitator training using the 8 domains to ensure consistency at each listening session
    - **Collection methods:** comment sheets distributed to audience and AAA staff note takers; information is returned to PDA for data analysis
    - **Ongoing support:** P4A is coordinating ongoing sessions with the AAAs themselves in case they have any questions or lessons learned or best practices that they're finding
- Participation Statistics
    - 128 scheduled (as of this morning, up from 122) and 14 have occurred so far
    - 350 participants

Howard Degenholtz, PhD, University of Pittsburgh School of Public Health
- Needs Assessment Update:
    - **Purpose:** to provide quantifiable data to augment the stakeholder engagement being done through PDA/the AAAs, and to serve as a benchmark as the project progresses
    - **Methods and usability:**
        - Phone, web, and paper surveys: phone survey targets older adults only, web and paper distributed through partner organizations
        - Designed to be mobile-friendly, also has a feature to provide feedback to the survey team via email
        - Questions are designed to provide descriptive, concrete measurements of *what people do* in each of the 8 domains, and what barriers they face
            - Actionable: Use the data to identify modifiable factors in the built and social environment.
            - Replicable: repeat the survey down the line to see if there have been measurable changes in the community.
    - **Survey instruments:** we used and expanded on the following existing survey instruments.

- Consumer Assessment of Health Providers: currently used by OLTL to track/monitor CHC program
- PROMISE system: physical and emotional well-being score we can compare to national norms
- Demographics: drew from CDC
  - **Timelines:**
    - The web survey will close on September 30th
    - The telephone survey, which just launched, should take about six weeks, with a target of 900 interviews
  - **Data:** data from the web survey is being aggregated into a dashboard on Qualtrix. There have been 451 responses so far.
    - It's just raw data, but cost appears to be a significant barrier, as well as transportation needs, poorly maintained sidewalks, and lack of AC
    - There is an idea to combine the datasets from the telephone survey and the web/paper survey, but that will depend on the quality of the data.

Q: Is this survey being distributed to/capturing data about people living in long-term care facilities?

A: We are not excluding people from long term care facilities, but we don't have long term care facilities currently in the distribution. While it's not a significant amount of effort to do that, that wasn't the primary target for this survey because the issues are different, the interventions are different, because of the role of the provider in terms of structuring both the built environment and the social environment.

Q: I'm not sure the age friendly model is the right model for a nursing home residents but I want to know what people on this group think and what direction you want to give us and and you know Kevin and and his team at PDA to incorporate that into this process.

A: We want the nursing facility residents to be represented as leading agents in the development of the Plan. And we've already scheduled a listening session to take place in the nursing facility. So we want the nursing facility population to be absolutely represented as part of this, using the same survey format. In a lot of cases people choose to move into a facility because they're not living in an age funding environment and the supports that they need are not available. So we can, we can follow up on this, but my recommendation will be to use a somewhat different version of the survey instrument that's designed specifically for those living in a facility.

Q: Kathy thanks very much for the comment about including quality nutrition and dehydration.

A: We did receive, we have received comments already relating to nutrition and food security and insecurity as part of this process and I think it's something that's touched on in in the survey as well.

Q: Do we have a strategy for increasing racial and ethnic diversity in the survey itself for the district distributed survey?

A: We're hoping that our partners through agreeing through the distribution will will help address what has not been as diverse a response as we would like for sure. So we're very open to any suggestions for and for any groups that that may not be as well represented as we would like to be part of part of this as well.

Long Term Care Council Responsibilities for the MPOA
Workgroups:

- There will be 8 workgroups, one for each domain. Anyone on the LTCC can be a part of as many of the workgroups as you wish.
- You will receive a survey next week for you to identify which work groups you want to be participating in, and whether you wish to be a leader of those work groups
- Our representatives from community-based organizations and state agencies who are participating in this call will be supporting groups that are relevant to their jurisdictional areas as well.

Kickoff and review meetings:
- We will be scheduling a kickoff meeting in September and multiple review meetings for each of the work groups in October to go through this data and how to identify and articulate what goals and objectives that that will end up being part of the plan.
- It will be fun.

Adjournment

Kathy Cubit moved to adjourn the meeting, and Margie Zelenak seconded the motion, closing the meeting.