

PENNSYLVANIA  
DEPARTMENT OF AGING  
**LONG-TERM CARE COUNCIL**

EST. 2015

## Meeting Minutes

LTCC Meeting Date: August 11, 2022

Start & End Time: 10:00 a.m. to 11:06 a.m.

Location/Format: Hybrid in-person and WebEx Meeting w/ Dial-In Option; PA Office of Administration, Health and Human Services Delivery Center, 2525 North 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Harrisburg, PA 17110-Hiltop Conference Room 115.

## Council Members in Attendance

Nicole Anders, Adult Day Center Representative

Mark Baylis, State Veterans Commission Designee

Eric Beittel, Long-Term Care (LTC) Insurance Representative

Sen. Michele Brooks (Designee: Joan Bradbury) \*

Janice Cameron, PA Council on Aging (PCoA) Representative

Maria Collett, Senator (Designee, Tom Holroyd)

Representative Gary Day (Designee: Shannon Walker)

Shona Eakin, LTSS Consumer Representative

Glenda Ebersole, Executive Director LTCC

Samella Hudson-Brewton, Senior Community Center Representative

Insurance Commissioner Mike Humphreys (Designee: Katie Merritt) \*

Acting Secretary of Health Dr. Denise Johnson (Designee: Megan

Barbour, Senior Advisor to the Secretary of Health)\*

Diane Menio, Caregiver Representative

Teresa Osborne, Consumer Advocacy Representative

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

Rep. Steve Samuelson (Designee: Charles (Chuck) Miller)\*

Missy Shupe (Wyatt), LTSS Consumer Representative

Adrian Peter Sipes, PA Bar Association, Elder Law Section Representative

Acting Sec. of Human Services, Meg Snead (Designee: Jennifer Hale)\*

Mike Sokoloski, Homecare Representative

Megan Stedjan, Nonprofit Skilled Nursing Facility Representative

Robert Torres, Council Chair, Secretary of Aging

Kimberly VanHaitsma, PhD - Academic Research Representative

Lon Wible, Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Representative

Robin Wiessmann, PA Housing Finance Agency Executive Director/CEO (Designee:

Danielle Rudy)\*

Margie Zelenak, Assisted Living/Personal Care Home Representative

Heshie Zinman, Consumer Advocacy Representative

\*Attended on member's behalf

## Council Members Not in Attendance

Sec. of Transp. Yassmin Gramian (Designee: Danielle Spila)\*

Mark Gusek, LTC Managed Care Representative

George Hartwick III, County Commissioners Assoc. of PA Representative

Lydia Hernandez-Velez, Consumer Advocacy Representative

Nancy Hodgson, PhD, RN, Academic Representative

Robert Marino, Caregiver Representative

David Nace, MD, LTSS Physician Representative

Shane Nugent, For-Profit Skilled Nursing Facility Representative

MG Mark Schindler, The Adjutant General (Designee: Travis Davis)

Matt Yarnell, Consumer Advocacy Representative

## PDA Staff in Attendance

Stephanie Cole, Special Assistant to the Secretary

Jack Eilber, Deputy Communications Director

Karen Gray, Communications Director

Steven Horner, Deputy Secretary

Sasha Santana, Executive Secretary

Daniel Myers, Legislative Director

## Committee Members & Guests in Attendance\*

Caroline Beohm

Austin Cawley

Katie Dotto

Jen Ebersole

David Golin

Mike Grier

Jeff Iseman

Rebecca May-Cole

Elizabeth McCloud

Lindsey Price

Sam Primak

Barbara Raymond

Matt Seeley

John Taylor

Margot Troutman

Louis Wolkenstein

\*\*Only the attendance of members and guests who logged into the meeting via the WebEx platform can be captured unless the individual indicated otherwise.

## Discussion Items and Summary

### Welcome & Approval of Meeting Minutes

Secretary Torres opened the meeting with a welcome to members and attendees and made the following announcements:

- Secretary welcomed Daniel Myers as new Director of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs for PA Department of Aging (PDA), replacing Director Carolyn Green.

### Approval of Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Tom Holroyd and seconded by Lon Wible to approve the June 9, 2022 Council minutes. The minutes were unanimously approved.

## PA Student Loan Relief for Nurses (SLRN) Program Update

### PA State Grant and Special Programs, PHEAA – Elizabeth K. McCloud, Vice President:

Background of program:

- SLRN program was created September 2021 as part of the Nursing Workforce Initiative, \$5 million in funding.
- Provides student loan relief to nurses in PA during the pandemic and to provides incentive to continue to remain employed in those positions.
- Conversations with legislative staff provided guidance on policy structure and payments.
  - Structure provided loan payments of up to \$2,500/year beginning in 2020, maximum of 3 years, total of \$7,500 loan relief per nurse.
  - Qualified nurses - living and working in PA, licensed, etc...
- Due to overwhelming response the legislature granted an additional \$15 Million to the program.
- Application opened from January 1<sup>st</sup> – March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021
- Over 21,500 eligible nurses applied.
- Received additional funds of \$35 Million from June 2022 budget for total funding of \$55 Million.
- Additional funding will benefit approximately 1/3 of the applicants. To fund every applicant the cost would be \$160 Million.

2022 Updates:

- All applicant data entered
- Process is randomized selection, by PA regions, and awarded proportionally.

- Determination notices will be sent to applicants within the next few weeks.
- 2 Types of Verification:
  - All applicants will be verified through employer.
  - Loans verified through student loan servicers
- Goal is to send payments to loan servicers by September 2022.

**Q:** Is there a breakdown of applicants from different settings? (i.e., long-term care settings, skilled nursing facilities, etc.)

**A:** No breakdown available at this time. Will provide an update later this year when the data is available.

## Healthcare Group Sponsor Apprenticeship Industry Partnership

### Grants and Statistical Development – Sam Primak, Workforce Development Analyst:

- Senator Collett’s Covid-19 Nursing Workforce Initiative – Announced in 2021
- Focus on funding for apprenticeships and industry partnerships, impacted communities with an additional emphasis on mentorship.
- Funding through American Rescue Plan Act to support and retain nurses across the commonwealth.
- Goal to blend apprenticeship and industry partnership models, to create nursing pathway apprenticeships.
- Businesses have option to partner and form an industry partnership to build group apprenticeship program which will serve multiple employers.
- Local workforce development boards will bring together partners to support the model.
- Apprenticeship and training office will be releasing notice of grant availability to support the convening of nursing pathways,
  - Specifically targeting low-moderate income communities.
  - Emphasis on nursing occupations through group sponsorships.
  - Highly encouraged LTCC members to reach out to their boards to apply
- No exact timeline available of when the grant will be released as it is still in final development
  - Information is anticipated to be available within the next two months.
  - Once information becomes available, will provide LTCC an update.

**Q:** How will this impact the Veteran Home staff?

**A:** It is specific to nursing occupations, leaving it up to the boards to establish guidelines. Will provide information to DMVA contact. Information and email address also recorded in the chat.

**Comment:** Currently, the DMVA is not working with the local workforce boards but will be connected through Sam.

**Q:** Is there information that can be sent to discuss program for nursing facilities and its members? Specific to basic information to the apprentice program.

**A:** Limited information available prior to grant being posted. Once posted, can provide more information.

# Commonwealth Updates

## PA Department of Aging (PDA) - Secretary Torres reported on the following updates:

- **Financial Exploitation (FE) Taskforce web page resource** – Web resource page was launched on June 15, World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.
  - Elder Abuse Awareness online training was also launched.
- **Financial Exploitation Specialists** – Approved hiring of two investigators and an attorney to build a financial abuse specialist team to serve as a shared resource, for AAA network, to assist with FE of older adults.
- **Protective Services (PS) Elder Abuse Hotline** – Process improved, by implementing in-house call center with Blair County AAA being the designated agency receiving calls and taking reports.
- **Administration for Community Living (ACL) Letter** - Drafted a letter to ACL on making permanent flexibilities extended during public health emergency and will be meeting with ACL to discuss further.
- **Elder Initiative at William Way Award** – In June PDA was recognized with the Elder Initiative’s Founder’s Award for LGBTQ Health Equity for our work in supporting LGBTQ seniors. Secretary Torres thanked Heshie Zinman for his efforts and work surrounding LGBTQ.

## PA Department of Aging – Daniel Myers, Legislative & Intergovernmental Affairs Director

Provided overview of FY 2022-2023 budget summary on American Rescue Plan Act funding appropriated for long-term care initiatives.

## Pennsylvania Department of Aging (PDA) – Karen Gray, Communications Director

### Financial Exploitation Awareness Update

- **Phase One:** Launch of [www.aging.pa.gov/FE](http://www.aging.pa.gov/FE) on June 15.
- FE Task Force – Education and Outreach workgroup
  - Chaired by Jennifer Ebersole and Karen Buck. Thanked them for their leadership on this effort.
- Reviewed the different content on the web page.
- **Phase Two:** Development of original resources including:
  - A social media toolkit and video resource library.
  - Short videos clips to build education and awareness.
  - Real life and relatable stories/podcasts will be available for consumers.
- **Phase Three:** Development of Paid Media Outreach
  - Will launch in November and utilize TV, video, digital, paid social media, etc.
- **PA Link to Aging and Disability Resources Campaign**
  - Launched on August 7<sup>th</sup> and will run through mid-October.

- Campaign is aimed at older adults and individuals with disabilities, aged 18-64, as well as their loved ones.
- Promotes availability of resources and supports.
- **PA MEDI Campaign:** PA's Medicare enrollment benefits counseling program
  - Rebranded in 2021, formally known as APPRISE.
  - Medicare education and decision insight.
  - Open enrollment runs from October 15 - December 7, 2022
- **ADRD**
  - Resource web page - Website launched and links to DOH Act 9 at [www.aging.pa.gov/adrd](http://www.aging.pa.gov/adrd)
  - Web-based training available to all – learning management system page.

**Q:** Older veterans often turn to county veterans' service officers for help. How will the county VSOs be integrated to access this assistance?

**A:** PDA meets with Department of Veteran's Affairs on a quarterly basis to compare notes on our initiatives. They discuss topics such as pension poaching. PDA continues to coordinate efforts to help expand the level of education.

**Representative Samuelson:** In regard to FE, noted he has been in contact with seniors who are dealing with issues related to FE. They need assistance and education with legal issues and their rights.

**PA Department of Human Services (DHS) – Jennifer Hale, Director of the Bureau of Policy and Regulatory Management for DHS' Office of Long-Term Living (OLTL), provided departmental updates as follows:**

**Budget Updates:**

- Nursing facility budget adjustment factor and assessment were reauthorized through June 2026.
- Includes budget funding for a 17.5% rate increase for nursing facilities effective January 1st of 2023.
- Includes a minimum fee requirement for nursing facility rates in the community health choices program through 2025.
- Nursing facilities must devote 70% of their rate to resident care and reported through cost reports.
- Penalties will go into a new fund for nursing facility, quality, improvement activities.

**LIFE Program Updates:**

- Will receive a 3% rate increase, starting January 2023.
- Additional requirements in Act 54 – Independent enrollment broker (IEB) responsibility to provide informational materials.
- IEB must provide a statement that eligible individuals have the option to enroll in the LIFE or CHC program.

- Must continue to provide training on the life program.

**Q:** When can we have an update for the state budget that includes additional home and Community based programs for people with physical disabilities and seniors living at home, CHC and OBRA waivers and Act 150?

**A:** Will provide additional information at the next meeting in October.

## Open Session

**Secretary Torres:** The next LTCC meeting will take place on *Thursday, October 13, 2022*.

### **2022 Remaining Meeting Dates:**

- October 13
- December 8

## Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:06 am.