

The



Monday Update

May 2006

Published by the
Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council,
1033 S. Washington, Lansing, MI 48910
www.michigan.gov/ddcouncil

Oral Health Directory pinpoints dental services

Dental services for people with developmental disabilities can be hard to come by. Dental care can be expensive, and dental services offered to people with low or little income are scarce. A number of dentists will not take Medicaid patients.

Even people with disabilities who can afford dental care may find few dentists willing to work on a person because of his or her disabilities, or the dental office may be inaccessible.

These problems must be realized and dealt with on many levels and by many individuals and agencies. That may be

why healthful and complete dental care for people with disabilities is still not a reality.

In the meantime, there are resources that can help people locate dental services in their area...if available. One source is the Michigan Oral Health Program Directory, produced by the Michigan Department of Community Health's (DCH) Division of Family and Community Health. It is a listing of about 60 offices that provide dental services. Most are public services.

The directory is free from DCH by mail or the Internet. Each directory page lists local oral health programs by agency, address and phone number, area served, services provided, etc. Listings are cross-referenced by county. The Oral Health Program at DCH is constantly updating the directory.

Only a few agencies are specific

Also listed are the types of patients and coverages (Medicaid, reduced fee, etc.) the agency accepts. Just a few agencies specify people with disabilities: "Special Needs Patients" for the Children's Hospital in Detroit, and "Handicapped" for Community Dental Center in Ann Arbor and Lenawee Dental Clinic in Adrian.

However many facilities do list such categories as "Medicaid" or "Low income." Two of the directory's 20 pages contain contacts for statewide programs, such as Donated Dental Services in Jackson. They have listings of

private dental offices located throughout the state. There are two, toll-free numbers to call. For the five counties around the Detroit area, call 800-263-4067. Outside that area, call 866-263-4067. One of the target populations are those who are “permanently disabled.”

If you are seeking dental services in your area, the Division of Family and Community Health recommends first contacting your local health department, Michigan Department of Human Services office, or calling them toll-free at 888-988-6300.

Download the directory

The Oral Health Program Directory is available at the DCH website: www.michigan.gov/oralhealth. It is a PDF file. There are a number of other interesting documents at the website, including the “Don’t Wait Until It Hurts” brochure.

The directory is also available by mail. Call the program offices at 517-335-8388, or write to them:

Sheila Semler, PhD
Oral Health Coordinator
Division of Family and Community Health
Michigan Department of Community Health
109 W. Michigan Ave.
Washington Square Building, 4th Floor
Lansing, MI 48913

Dr. Semler’s email is: semilers@michigan.gov.

Linking people with dental services doesn't stop with the directory. Dr. Semler and the program are members of a statewide Oral Health Coalition. "We have over 200 members," she says, "made up of private practice dentists, medical professionals, and educational institutions." This group is intent on getting the Michigan State Plan for Oral Health in operation. The plan contains as one of its action steps, it says, the assessment of "oral health access for developmentally disabled population." This is the only reference to consumers, but that can change.

Dr. Semler notes that she has never seen consumers or their family members at Oral Health Coalition meetings and they are missing an opportunity to improve the presence of people disabilities in creating a force made of those who use the services. "The coalition needs to hear your concerns so they can be placed in coalition and state plans for improved dental care for all." Contact Dr. Semler for information on the Oral Health Coalition and how you can participate.

The state plan is also available from the same sources as the directory.

Voting accessibility may include a ramp and a wide door

People with disabilities who choose to vote this year at their polling place rather by absentee ballot may encounter

barriers of all sorts. But if they do choose to travel to their polling place, voting in person can be a valuable experience. The catch may be just getting in the door and casting that ballot.

Each month this year the DD Council's Public Policy Committee is targeting an area of this election year for special attention. For May, the focus is on voter accessibility. The Council recommends that if accessibility is a concern, a voter should visit his or her voting place to be certain it is accessible.

Having access is the law

Every registered voter has the right by law to access his or her polling place. The law – PA 92 of 2004 – says your city, village or township clerk must make the polling place accessible. Plus, says the act:

....."accessible" means the removal or modification of policies, practices, and procedures that deny an individual with a disability the opportunity to vote, including the removal of physical barriers as identified in section 261(b) of the help America vote act of 2002, 42 USC 15421, so as to ensure individuals with disabilities the opportunity to participate in elections in this state.

Call the clerk and ask if the site is accessible. If you can, you may wish to visit the polling place, just to make certain. For first time voters, a visit to the polling place would be a good way to check the place out before

election day. Be sure to call ahead to make sure a visit is alright, specially if it is in a school.

Before you visit your polling place, you can look at the Michigan Secretary of State's website on Internet at www.michigan.gov/vote. There, if you are registered to vote, you enter information about yourself – name, birth month and year, and zip code. This yields information on your polling place. Included in the information are upcoming elections, phone and address and the wheelchair handicapped symbol showing the place is accessible.

Access the Internet at your library

There is a lot of other useful information at this site, including learning about initiatives on the ballot for November's general election and how to vote by absentee ballot. If you do not have access to a computer and the Internet, you can call your local library where they may have both.

Besides the web site, you can phone your local (county/city/township) clerk and ask about accessibility. His or her number is in the telephone book. And, again, after that if you want to make very certain about the location, arrange with your clerk to visit.

Berrien RICC collaborates On another successful conference

Members of the Berrien Regional Interagency Consumer Committee (RICC) and collaborators held their fifth annual Connecting Your Community conference on March 9 and the turnout was excellent!

The subtitle of the regional one-day event is “Linking People with Information, Resources, Supports, and Services.” Kathy Ellis, Berrien RICC chair, says it’s the gathering’s wide information scope that makes it such a success. “Over 450 people attended the conference,” she says. “We had a total of 19 individual sessions throughout the day.” People came from Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties.



There was a wide variety of one-hour workshops to keep people busy. Among the topics were:

- On the Job Safety
- Career Ladders
- Real Job Expectations
- Building Your Financial Future
- Prepping for College
- Recreational Activities
- Self-Advocacy

The event was held at Lake Michigan College in Benton Harbor. In addition to the college and the Berrien and Cass RICCs, sponsors were the Berrien Intermediate School District, Community Connections of Southwestern Michigan, and the Michigan Disability Rights Coalition.

Partnering and shopping

Also featured was a career fair and community coalition building opportunities with many agency and community partners offering information on everything from quitting smoking to leader dogs to Social Security to the Salvation Army. Area small businesses from local high schools and consumers demonstrated and marketed their products and services from a series of micro enterprise booths.

Another reason for the conference's popularity was its registration fee, just \$10. That included refreshments and a lunch.

Ellis says the luncheon keynote address was another popular attraction. “Randy Graise was our speaker and held the audience’s attention throughout his talk. He shared his inspirational ‘you can’ attitude and his blend of ‘how to’ strategies.” She says Graise is a noted self-advocate and founder of RanDel Enterprises in Southfield.

For more information on this very successful conference, contact Ellis at Community Connections, 1-800-578-4245, or email her at kellis@match.org.

Be a mentor? See a mentor? Robin Saylor says ‘Yes!’

Robin Saylor of Grand Rapids is well known as a strong self-advocate and a tireless worker for change for all people with disabilities.

So it is no surprise that her work mentoring to people with disabilities is doing just fine and she can point with pride to those she has helped.

Saylor says she got a slow start mentoring as she learned the art of outreach. “Anyone who wants to be a mentor has to be willing to get the word out, let people know they can come to you.”



Robin Saylor is interviewed by Capitol Correspondent Tim Skubick during the Council's February Legislative Reception.

What is mentoring? "A mentor helps people who have a goal to learn things," notes Saylor. "If a person wants to learn about the transportation system in their area, or learn how to cook, or what housing facilities are out there, they talk with a mentor.

"A mentor is a person who has experienced those things and can help them learn. A mentor helps a person break down their goals into manageable objectives." Her mentoring colleagues in the area are largely affiliated with transition services, such as those in schools. She believes she may be the only independent mentor in the Grand Rapids area.

The mentor meets the client on a weekly basis, either in person if that's possible, or by phone. Progress toward a

goal is reviewed and next steps are discussed during the meeting. The experience is a two-way street: the client must do much of the work of moving toward his or her goal.

Saylor operates Sunrise Mentorship Ministries, a service she founded with a partner. She is located at Fountain Hill Center for Counseling and Consultation in Grand Rapids. She promotes her mentoring services by getting out in the community – RICC meetings and advocacy gatherings and conferences – and by writing letters and articles.

She also collaborates with groups such as the RICCs, the Hope Network, Disability Advocates of Kent County, and the Arc of Kent County. For the most part, agencies are aware of Saylor's services and refer their clients to her.

A coach and a listener

In an initial interview, Saylor determines if the client actually wants to change something about his or her life and be willing work at it. She describes her role as “kind of a coach, but also a listening ear as to what is happening in their lives.” The program relies on using not only Saylor's resources, but those of the client as well.

The relationship with a client lasts as long as needed, rather than a set number of meetings. From this process, Saylor notes, has come some successes.

A good example of mentoring is the woman who was “very, very isolated and is now coming out into the community. She was lonely and felt she had nothing to offer. Now, she understands she is an important part of the community and has a future there. She now knows she can take responsibility for herself.”

Another example of Saylor’s mentorship is the individual who was extremely lonely and did not know where to turn for help. “I worked to help her understand she does have options and she seems to have a much better outlook on life. She is discovering her own worth and is looking ahead.”

A degree in divinity

Saylor is a native of Grand Rapids and graduated from Ottawa Hills High School. She is a sociology graduate of Michigan State University and attended Western Theological Seminary in Holland where she earned a Master’s degree in divinity. Out of college she worked as an advocate, mainly in volunteer situations.

Saylor founded Sunrise Mentorship Ministries last year initially to “reach out and mentor adults with disabilities over the age of 30 who wish to make significant, permanent changes in their lives.” Since then she has expanded Sunrise’s scope to “include any adult with disabilities who may want a mentor to help them with anything from educational assistance and social life to career planning and self-awareness.”

She says her drive to help and change initially came from dissatisfaction with the unbending system. “As a Christian with a disability, I have spent my whole life trying to find a place in God’s world.

“So, I asked myself, ‘Ok, you’re dissatisfied. What are you going to do about it?’ I like to think that when I saw a need for change and could work toward it, I could be pretty diligent and not let go, be sidetracked or take ‘no’ for an answer. Generally, people haven’t heard the last of me if they’re not listening.

Resolving struggles and focusing

“That can be good and bad. I’ve also found that diplomacy works just as well most times. I would come across as a juggernaut and sometimes that would get things done, and sometimes not.” Saylor says with “the help of parents, ministers and fellow (Central Reformed Church) congregants,” she’s resolved many of the struggles in her life and focused her energy on helping others.

Being cordial and welcoming are now a part of Saylor’s mentoring lessons. She says future plans call for “going into the churches and help them to see that people, whoever they are, need faith in their communities. People with disabilities have talents and energy to bring to a church and the churches should recognize that.”

For more about her mentoring program, contact Saylor at Sunrise Mentorship Ministries, 616-456-9195.

Council committees and work group meeting minutes

Education Work Group Minutes

Feb. 21, 2006

Attendance: Jane Spitzley, Karen Massaro-Mundt, Glenn
Ashley, Carolyn Das

Phone: Andre Robinson

1.) Approval of December 17 Minutes

Carolyn moved, Andre seconded, to approve the minutes.
They were approved.

2.) Announcements – None

3.) Education Summit and Universal Education

Jacque Thompson will be sending Bob Higgins, who is
Director Of School Safety for the department.

The meeting/mini-summit/retreat will be Friday, March 31
from 10:00 to 3:00 pm, at Lansing Community College

We agreed to bring in the Core planning team, ET
Advisory Council, ET network leaders,. This will help
build grassroots advocacy, and give them a sense
that they are part of something larger. This would
make a total of about 35 people.

Beginning briefly with Referent Group process.

Ask Bob to report on how MDE sees moving forward on it.

Then talk about our recommendations on moving it forward.

Finish with some planning for the October Summit.

The ET Advisory Council passed a Call for Action on Universal Education.

Carolyn moved that we approve sending a letter with recommendations for action to the State Board. Jane seconded the motion.

A draft letter was reviewed, and some wording changes made. The motion carried. It will be presented to the DD Council at the March 14 meeting form their approval.

4.) Presentation at the DD Council March 14 meeting.
11:00-12:00 Universal Education update. Presenter: Mark or Carolyn

Action Item – approval of letter to the State Board of Education

1:00-2:00 Positive behavioral supports – a solution to the problems of seclusion, restraint, suspension and other punishment.

Presenter: Lauri Stein, Mark, someone else also?

2:00 to 2:30 Grantee presentations:

Early Childhood Inclusion – Esther Onaga and Rosalind Kirk.

Everyone Together – Lauri Stein

Carolyn is checking with Mark and Lauri. Glenn will check with grantees.

5.) Development of Plan Recommendations for 2007-2011 plan.

- **Improving Education Outcomes for Minority Students**

National Center for Urban Education is working on these issues, recently had a conference on disproportionality in Special Education. They have tool kit and a web site.

The draft will be sent to the ED WG members for comments and suggested changes.

- **Assistive Technology (AT) One-Stops**

ISD AT Coordinators usually have other responsibilities.

Teachers and parents get to IEP, and AT issue never comes up.

When people want information, it is available. The problem is that they don't know to ask the question. They don't know its out there.

Assessments are important for getting the right equipment.

Schools assume it costs a lot of money, but is usually not the case.

Partners provided info on AT, but need a strategy to get info broadly known.

Suggest meeting with MDRC, UCP, Karen to try to define a project that addresses the info gap. Lisa Bardach, from Communicating Solutions, would be a good resource. 734-973-9670. LBardach@excite.com.

Karen and Carolyn have worked with her.

Jane has already talked with Kathryn at MDRC, and taken the WG info to her.

Too often communication devices just are used to express needs like bathroom and food. People have many more things they want to say.

- Dissemination of Community Based Instruction Materials

Glenn will talk with Barb about a draft.

How does it tie to Universal Education?

6.) Updates

- State Board of Education. Karen, Darlene and Lauri were at the state board meeting, and gave public comment about moving UE forward. All 3 presentations were different. A brochure had been planned to be sent with packet. Mike Flannigan did show it to the board, but it was not distributed.

- 7.) We have cancelled the next regular meeting scheduled for March 21. We need a meeting in the first 2 weeks of April to approve plan recommendations, which would replace the April meeting.

Some WG members' schedules have changed and the third Tuesday is no longer a good meeting date for them.

Family Support Work Group

March 15, 2006

Members Present: Lori Goike, Jackie Igafo-Te'o,
Carolyn Allston-Smith, Tracy Vincent

Guests: Pam Hall

Welcome and introductions were done.

Jackie motioned to approve the February 15, 2006 minutes. Lori seconded. Motion approved.

Announcements

- A recruitment letter is being written to invite individuals to join the FSWG. A suggestion was to send two letters, one to individuals and one to organizations. It was also suggested to create a follow-up letter to those individuals who have not attended a meeting in a while.
- ASD Workgroup Update by Jackie
 - o The subcommittee that Jackie is on came to a consensus on six levels of classifying interventions with best research practices. They need to figure out where they want the cut off at, for example at level 3 or level 4. By the end of the next couple of meetings they will have created a grid that contains the interventions and where they fit. They will recommend that these interventions be reviewed every two years.
- Family Restrooms
 - o An article called Gaining Access: A Different Approach was distributed to members. The

FSWG will start advocacy work on this issue. The group's focus is new construction. We not only need to make sure that restrooms are accessible, but that the person is able to maneuver in and out of the restroom easily.

Planning for the Future Project

The group reviewed the draft plan language of the Planning for the Future project. Several changes were made. Tracy will forward the second draft to members.

Plan for 2006 Family Gathering

The Hold the Date flyer was sent out in March. Activities have been finalized. Group members will be calling several organizations for donations.

Health Issues Work Group

Feb. 21, 2006

Members present: Chair Theresa Arini (phone), Karen Massaro Mundt, Mary Marin, Linda Melaragni, RoAnne Chaney (phone)

Guests present: Linda Potter (UCP), Bonnie Sumbler (Message Makers)

Staff present: Terry Hunt

Members reviewed the minutes and made no changes to the draft mailed with the meeting notice.

Members reviewed the Medical Services Administration (MSA) DVD titled “Faces and Value of Medicaid”. This DVD focuses on the importance of Medicaid, but primarily uses professionals to tell the story. In our video we primarily want consumers to tell their stories about the value and importance of Medicaid. A narrator will be used as needed.

Linda has employed a man who is identifying an array of potential consumers for our video, including:

- child receiving CSHCS services and lives in Allenson
- man with Spina Bifida who lives in his own apartment in Sault Sainte Marie and is working in the community
- man with Tourette Syndrome

Linda noted that many consumers do not understand how their services are funded, so before taping, she will develop an outline for the narrator that includes background about services and supports funded by Medicaid.

Status of work plan

1. Care coordination: Terry will check with Cheryl to schedule regular communication with project staff.
2. Educate consumers, etc.: Our video addresses this strategy.
3. Monitor policy: Our video addresses this strategy.

Members discussed our August 25 meeting where we focused on creating an opportunity for consumers to

identify perceived value of services and/or gaps in services.

Mary reported that consumers are asked to rate the quality of managed care health plan services. Sue Moran is the DCH staff person responsible for this survey. Mary will attempt to get a copy of the existing survey tool. We will get this to members.

The Long Term Care report contains specific recommendations, including a means for consumers to report on services and offer suggestions for improvements. RoAnne will forward the report to Terry who will forward it to the group. Members suggested perhaps a future HIWG project might include a DD Council grant to develop or adapt a prototype for the state to receive input from consumers regarding community supports.

5 year plan input:

- Medicaid's low reimbursement rate discourages provider participation and this affects access
- at a national level, seemingly unrelated events impact the budget for health care – such as Katria and the war
- as a matter of policy, our country has not focused on care coordination or prevention of illnesses
- poverty is a barrier to access to health care and opportunity to follow through with doctors recommendations (e.g. inadequate transportation, child care, etc.)

- physicians/health care providers lack understanding of impact of disability on a person's life

Work group has limited minority membership. Invite DDC MC Committee chair or leadership to advise.

Multicultural Committee

March 13, 2006

Present:

Ada Linderman (phone); Phillip Simmons; Andre Robinson (phone); Mae Golden (phone) Pam Hall; Pat McSherry; Terrie Hylton (chair); Mitzi Allen; Angela Zamora; Vendella Collins; Terry Hunt; Jacqui Day; and Rick Van Horn.

Call to Order by Chairperson Hylton at 1:15 p.m.

February, 2006's meeting minutes reviewed. Golden suggested a change the sentence "In reviewing evaluations, Golden said there was only negative evaluation." The word "one" is substituted for the word "only." Approved as corrected.

Additions to, and approval of, this month's agenda. Hylton wished to add under "Old Business," an item "C" – Update on translation, plus an item "D" – Review dates for the August diversity coordinators' training, and an item "E" – What is going on with grants. Allen wished to add items

“C” to “New Business,” – Health Fair, and item “D” – Diversity focus. Approved.

Introductions:

Welcome to newcomer Ada Linderman, diversity coordinator from the Newaygo RICC, and guest Phillip Simmons from the Michigan Department of Economic Growth’s Waterford office.

Old Business:

- Van Horn described the renewal of an offer from the Arc of Michigan to provide space for an independent Multicultural Committee website. The Arc had made this offer last year and the issue was tabled by the Committee. Van Horn said he understood there would be direct access to the Committee site and no cost to the Committee. Members directed Van Horn to contact the Arc for details.

- Allen discussed the excellent booklet from the West Virginia DD Council titled “A Reporter’s Guide to Reporting About People with Disabilities.” It was distributed at the Committee’s diversity coordinator training session and has attracted the attention of various advocacy groups around the state. Does the Committee wish to create its own version? Members agreed to look into doing a similar booklet for Michigan.

- Allen reported that the process of having the Council’s printed materials translated into Spanish and Arabic

continues. She also raised the issue of people responding to the brochures and information sheets by calling the Council office. How does staff respond? Allen also said staff will be getting software that will translate queries in Spanish or Arabic into English and back again.

- Hylton asked members about a date in August for the follow-up diversity coordinator session. Those coordinators who did not attend the first session in February are encouraged to attend in August. At that meeting, the Committee will get updates from coordinators and learn of their outreach plans for the next year.

In the meantime, Allen suggested, the Committee should contact the RICC diversity coordinators and offer help in preparing the outreach portion of each certification packet. She also suggested holding the follow-up coordinators' meeting during the Annual RICC retreat on September 12-13, instead of a separate function in August. Costs of such a meeting were discussed. Hunt said travel costs, if the meeting were held in August, would be covered.

Hunt, organizer of the September RICC retreat, suggested having coordinators present at the retreat and attend back-to-back presentations as part of the session. Since each RICC can bring three people to the retreat, they can choose to include the coordinator as one of their three. Allen said the follow-up session for the coordinators should not be optional.

Hunt pointed out that there is an activity in the UP that same week as the retreat so that may reduce attendance from the north. Hylton said coordinators from the UP could decide which gathering to attend.

Allen said that there still needs to be a separate session for the 25 coordinators who did not show at the February training. Coordinators who were there would need a separate session that would include the follow-up information.

Hylton volunteered to do both the initial session for new coordinators and the follow-up session the next day at the retreat, but that an August session also looked attractive.

Thus, Hylton called for a vote to hold an August training session for those who did not attend in February. An August date must be set. Passed.

Then Hylton called for a vote to hold a follow-up workshop at the RICC retreat in September. This will be required of coordinators. Passed.

Hunt suggested offering the workshop to UP coordinators as part of the planned UP conference that second week in September, or holding the August meeting in the northern lower peninsula. One UP coordinator attended the February training in Lansing. Six coordinators did not.

- The RFP for the Committee's grant project –
"Strengthening Relationships for Diversity" – should be

issued at the end of March. Anyone interested in attending the bidders' conference for this project should contact the grants manager, Cheryl Trommater at 517-334-7023.

New Business

- Discussed the "Diversity Focus" themed articles that accompany each Council meeting notice package and reflect the importance of diversity in the topic of the day for that particular meeting. The list of contributors cannot be located. Articles have been written by Zamora, Allen (two articles and working on Transportation at present) and Hylton.

The upcoming Council meeting months, topics, writers and article due dates are:

May - Leadership – Golden – April 14

July - Family Support – McSherry – June 16

September - Self-Determination – Linderman – Aug. 11

October - Health – Zamora/Day – Sept. 15, and

November – General – Hylton – Oct. 13

Purpose of the articles is to raise consciousness relating to each Council meeting's topic.

- Council Executive Director Collins spoke to the committee and started by thanking members for all the work with diversity coordinator training. She said she and Terry Hunt are trying to emphasize to RICCs the importance of outreach. RICC activities should always include reach out to the unserved and underserved in the

community. Collins asked that the Multicultural Committee make itself available to RICCs as they write their work plans.

It is important, Collins added, that each RICC take a look at its own community and decide what they'd like their community to look like. Then the RICC should tell in its work plan how, in the next 12 months, it is going to work toward the changes its members wish to see take place in the community. For many RICCs, this will be the first steps toward outreach and their goals. A RICC's ultimate goals may not change year to year, but the activities helping it to reach those goals should change.

RICCs may need to call upon the Committee to help with the outreach, relationships, and activity planning, Collins said. Hunt said he would share with the Committee the outreach wording contained in each RICC's work plan.

- Hylton and Allen discussed the Committee conducting a joint grant project with the Council's Family Support Work Group. Allen had attended a work group meeting at which it was agreed to collaborate with the work group. Allen said the grant project would go beyond grandparents raising children with disabilities and cover all parents. What happens when they die? What are the day-to-day requirements of taking care of their surviving child?

Allen said it would be meeting format and be almost like an estate planning session. This meeting would let people know what resources are available, how to set up a power

of attorney, a medical agreement; putting everything in place for the child. The collaboration sees it as a two-year project and budget discussions are underway. The project proposal will be presented at the May Council meeting for funding in 2007.

Updates and announcements

McSherry announced a fund-raiser in Holt for March 25. It's a walk and roll event hosted by the Capital Area Center for Independent Living, Michigan Disability Rights Coalition and the Michigan Statewide Independent Living Council. There will be lots of events in addition to the walk and roll fund-raising. Call the Capital Area Center for Independent Living at 517-241-0393.

Hylton is going to request that the Council make a presentation at the meeting of the National Association for Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns this summer. Anyone interested in presenting can contact Hylton through the Council office. Information may be obtained at the association's website – www.nationalrehab.org.

Day announced a new quarterly magazine – “Adelante” – printed in Lansing. Each article is printed in both Spanish and English. The publication, Zamora said, is all about community services, about moving people forward. The magazine is free but there is a cost to submit an article. For questions, Zamora said, write to: Adelante Magazine, 2513 Dunbar Dr., Lansing, MI 48906.

Public Policy Committee Minutes

March 14, 2006

Members Present

Theresa Squires, Melinda Haus, Andre Robison, Paul Miller, Rick Van Horn, Jane Spitzley, Terry Hunt, Jacqui Day, Dee Florence, Tandy Bidinger, Pam Hall, Mary Sliger

Staff

Tandy Bidinger, Rick Van Horn, Terry Hunt, Dee Florence

Co-Chair Jane Spitzley called the meeting to order at 8:45 am.

Motion by Pam Hall to approve minutes, Jacqui Day seconded.

Melinda Haus is the new Leadership Coordinator. She is housed at M.D.R.C.

Legislative Event Follow Up

The event was a great success this year with nearly 70 Legislators and over 175 RICC members attending. The RICC members liked the new format, especially the keynote speaker, Tim Skubick. If we decide to use buttons for next year's event they should be professionally done. Andre Robinson received a letter from Representative Glenn Anderson commending Andre for

what a good job he is doing as an advocate for individuals with disabilities.

Legislative Updates

Michigan

DCH Budget

There will be a meeting this week to finalize the DCH budget. It is anticipated that there are going to be cuts on both the mental health and developmental disabilities side.

Dental Care Gap

Dental care for adults has been restored but individuals are still encountering great difficulty in obtaining dental services. One of the major obstacles is that fewer than 1,000 dentists –about 15% of all dentists in Michigan are accepting Medicaid. Many of these dentists limit the number of patients they will take. Due to the low reimbursement rates and the time consuming paperwork, it is often less expensive for a dentist to work pro bono and not charge the patient.

A reporter from **The Detroit News** is working on a story about the difficulty of obtaining dental care for adults who are receiving Medicaid. She is looking for stories from individuals who are experiencing these problems. To share your story, call, write or send e-mail to:

Kim Kozlowski

Health/Human Services Reporter

The Detroit News

615 W. Lafayette Blvd.

Detroit, MI 48226

Phone (313) 222-2024

Fax (313)-222-2335

E-mail: kkozlowski@detnews.com

Federal

Supreme Court

The concerns the PPC had over the appointment of Judge Alito and Chief Justice Roberts are starting to come up as issues in cases before the Supreme Court. Now is the time to start monitoring Supreme Court decisions to see if any erosion occurs to the ADA.

Medicare Part D

The paperwork is still quite a “nightmare” for many individuals and pharmacies. Reimbursement is way too slow, many pharmacies are encountering problems with receiving payments.

FRAUD ALERT - Seniors are getting calls at home from individuals posing as someone representing one of the drug programs. Seniors are told they can sign up for the program over the phone and have the premiums deducted from their bank account. The caller then asks for the senior's bank account information. THIS IS A FRAUD; DO NOT GIVE ANY CALLER YOUR BANK ACCOUNT INFORMATION.

Suggestions for future meeting Agendas

- Invite MRS to meeting to discuss concerns, re: employment services

- Invite Shelia Semler to April meeting to discuss “dental issue”.
 - Invite MMAP Program Re: Medicare Part D Concerns
-

Program Committee

March 14, 2006

Present: Don Trout

Staff: Glenn Ashley, Cheryl Trommater, Tracy Vincent

Issue: Welcome, Introductions.

Action: N.A.

Issue: Housekeeping: Minutes of the January 10, 2006 meeting.

Action: January 10 minutes approved by consensus.

Issue: RFP Proposal Package

Action: Draft revision was reviewed. RFP Proposal Package was approved.

Issue: Recruit Diverse Committee Membership

Action: Cheryl was contacted by a RICC member who wants to join the Committee.

Issue: RFP: Review Project Specifications: Relationships for Diversity

Action: Committee reviewed project specifications. For bidders, it was suggested to target to groups that the Council has not worked with before (Tribal Councils, Asian Center, MSU International Center)

Issue: Grantee Update: Community Employment Partnerships

Action: Glenn distributed the newsletters from the employment partnerships, which describe major activities and progress of the grants to date.

Allegan CMH: Creating a business networking program to increase employment of PWDD. They have been recruiting businesses. Representative Caswell brought forth a bill that would require each county to have workshop services available and after meeting with Allegan, he now does not support segregated programs.

Arc of Calhoun County: Working together to get people with severe disabilities in the workforce. They continue to strengthen their relationships with various agencies.

Community Mental Health of Midland: Doing Micro-Enterprises for many years. Concept to give additional attention to struggling and creating new Micro-Enterprises for people with the highest support needs. Have nine people in various stages. All have developed a business plans.

MSU Cross Project Evaluation is producing the *Many Ways of Working* Newsletter.

Issue: Recommendations to the DD Council

- Dissemination Policy
- Preservation Policy and Procedure

Action: The policies went out with the Council mailings. These need to be approved so we can move forward.

Issue: Updates - RFPs

Action: The RFPs for Informed Communities, “Speak Out” Replication, RICC-Endorsed Community mini-grants, Family and Supports Coordinators Meetings, and Alliance with Construction Industry to Increase Accessible Housing are posted on the Council’s web site. The RFP calendar will be on the DD Council website soon

Action: Planning – Projects under development.

***Transportation Work Group
Meeting Minutes***

March 9, 2006

PRESENT:

Paul Miller, Sara Schertenlieb, Eleanor Canter, Katherine Janego
Diane Kempen, Dee Florence, Pam Hall, Tandy Bidinger

VIA PHONE:

Flint: **Mae Golden, Gordon Siwula, Chris Hodgson, Jacquelyn McIntyre, Tiffany McIntyre, David Tyler**

Lapeer: Helen Mitchell, Kathy Wegher, Mary Ann DiMaggio.

Baraga: Mick Sheridan, Patty Putala Janella LaPlante, Sid Meyers, Lola Marachen, David Sereauo, Ben Ramm

Wayne: Hank Johnson, Andre Robinson

Welcome and Introductions

New Business

- a. **Legislative Update:** There are going to be a series of hearings throughout the state in April and May regarding the MDOT Transportation Budget. It is important that individuals with disabilities go to the hearing and testify. If you have never done this before here are a few guidelines; keep testimony to five minutes or less, when you arrive you must fill out a card stating that you wish to testify, also, have your testimony written out and bring extra copies. The TWG is available to assist you in developing your testimony.

Also, MDOT Stakeholders meeting are coming up and consumers are permitted and encouraged to attend these meeting.

- b. **MDOT:** MDOT Director, Gloria Jeff has resigned and Governor Granholm has appointed Kirk Stuedle as the new Director.

Old Business

Lapeer “shuttle grocery policy”: Carol Wegher, Director of Operations for the Greater Lapeer Transportation Authority (GLTA)

sent a copy of the revised draft “shuttle grocery policy” to the TWG.

Discussion ensued. The major concern was over the following

passage, *“Passengers with limited mobility may bring a personal*

*attendant at no charge. **You must pre-arrange your trip, with a dispatcher, if you will be traveling with an attendant.”*** The

questions asked were; how far in advance must the trip be

arranged and will an individual with limited mobility have to call in

every time they use the shuttle? The answer is this; an individual

can call in just before boarding with an attendant, and once

dispatch is notified that an individual has limited mobility and needs

an attendant the information will be entered into the computer and they won't have to call anymore with this information.

Legislative Event: This year there was a turnout of around 70 legislators, the best ever. Guest speakers were added this year. The keynote speaker was Tim Skubick, there were also speakers from the League of Women Voters and Michigan Protection and Advocacy Service. To continue the political campaign theme of the Legislative Event, the Public Policy Committee is putting out a calendar listing activities the RICCs can participate in each month of the year.

MARO Conference: The conference will be held in Traverse City this year. The committee would like to speak at the conference to explain the Voucher programs in Michigan; how started, how they are working, and show the need that vouchers has filled (Baraga had no public transit, now they have the voucher program). Diane, Tandy, and Kathy plan to do a presentation with assistance of voucher grantees.

Success Stories

Genesee: Last month it was reported that Dave Tyler had an incident with a bus lift while riding M.T.A., he was flipped out of his wheelchair and was injured slightly. M.T.A. said they would investigate and file a report. **Update:** Dave Tyler was actually more than a little banged up; he has a broken leg in two places. The M.T.A. Director

was contacted and he discovered that a report was never filed. He is very upset and is looking into why no report was filed.

Baraga: The voucher program is going well and people seem to like it. One individual banked her travel miles and used them to travel to Wisconsin and visit relatives that she had not seen in 16 years!

Lapeer: The progress being made on the "Grocery Policy" is a success story because RICC members are seeing that they are being listened to. It has become much easier to get RICC members involved in the TWG.

Muskegon: 34 people are being served with the voucher program, which is above their target of 30.

Kalamazoo: P.A. 196 – Comm.- Diane is a Board member now.

Lansing: A committee is going to the CATA L.A.C. meeting this month to request holiday service, on a limited basis to begin.