



State of Illinois
Illinois Department on Aging

**Older Adult Services Advisory Committee
Workforce Stabilization Work Group Meeting**

Date: April 20, 2018

Call in: Phone #- 1-888-494-4032 Access Code- 5245-164-319

In Attendance:

Paul Bennett, Next Level Health Partners
Dave Lowitzki (for Terri Harkin), SEIU HealthCare
Phyllis Mitzen, Health and Medicine Policy Research Group
Teva Shirley, Southwestern Illinois Visiting Nurse Association
Louise Starmann, Citizen Member

Department Representatives:

Jean Bohnhoff, Illinois Department on Aging

Department on Aging staff:

Aster Bowden, John Eckert, Kimberly Flesch, Sophia Gonzalez, Jose Jimenez, Lora McCurdy,

Not in Attendance:

Gustavo Saberbein, Help at Home LLC
Susan Hughes, UIC Community Health Sciences School of Public Health

Introductions and call to order

Everyone was welcomed to the meeting. John Eckert asked for a motion to call the meeting to order. Paul Bennett made the motion; Phyllis Mitzen seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

Home Care Aide retention & turnover:

Lora McCurdy shared that the Department has waiver service rate studies in process because of a directive from federal CMS during the 2016 waiver renewal. McCurdy also shared that the Department wants to keep the discussions of this workgroup separate from the rate study work to avoid duplication of effort. The RFP was awarded to Public Consulting Group (PCG), a national firm who has done similar work in Illinois and numerous other states. PCG is currently working on the EHRS rate study and will then follow with the Adult Day Service (ADS) rate study and then complete the In-Home Service rate study. The Department plans to establish some dates for ADS stakeholder workgroups to gather feedback from ADS providers as well as participants. Information will be shared as it becomes available. Some of the Workforce Stabilization members asked why the In-Home Service rate study had been scheduled last and McCurdy responded that the rate studies had been laid out in this order by the Department and

have been accepted by CMS. She also stated that the federal CMS guidance related to “rebasin” of waiver rates could be shared with this workgroup.

A discussion regarding consumer direction was raised including the need for adequate training and supervision of the provider agencies that use the option of preferred workers. Phyllis Mitzen asked who is completing the scheduling in these cases, is it a self-directed model? Lora McCurdy clarified that Aging does not have a self-directed model like the model used by DRS. John Eckert asked if the MCOs are going in to make sure that the homecare aide is following a plan of care. Louise Starmann shared that there are policies in place for preferred workers. Jose Jimenez confirmed that the Department does have policies in place for agencies to have the option of a family home care aide. He shared that the Department is required to conduct quarterly unannounced visits and the monitoring process for these agencies are being revamped. For example, family homecare aide data is being gathered prior to monitoring visits to target these types of cases. Jimenez shared that the Department is also looking at strengthening the policy, and other requirements, including the definition of who is “family”. Bennett suggested that the Department look at measures for monitoring, as frequent calls may not be the best way to monitor a family home care aide due to the loyalty that a participant would have to the family member. Jimenez responded that the challenge is that participants do not turn in their family member for many reasons including the fear it may escalate to an APS case. Lora McCurdy shared that that the Department implemented the Critical Event reporting automated reporting system in July that includes Service Improvement Program (SIPs), access and delays in service reports and that reviewing the data may be a way to see how many of these include preferred workers. Starmann suggested that the SIP information may not be honest data.

Care Coordination retention & turnover:

Phyllis Mitzen asked everyone to return to the original topic of retention and turnover for Home Care Aides and Care Coordinators and what the workgroup’s next steps should be. For example, what information does the group need to make recommendations to OASAC and the Department? Paul Bennett asked if there had been a concern besides the salary. Teva Shirley shared that her CCU is struggling to get applicants for both the CCU and the Adult Protective Services (APS) side. She reported that her agency tends to get applicants that are recent graduates and do not have experience. She shared that she had two new employees that came and left within two weeks to better paying jobs and currently has two vacancies. Louise Starmann shared that APS and CCU employees may be burned out due to high caseloads and low reimbursement rates. Lora McCurdy shared that the FY’19 Department’s Proposed Budget includes an additional \$5.5 million for Person-Centered Planning to help CCUs meet these new requirements. Starmann additionally suggested that perhaps the Department should look at the technology being used by the Department to make it more efficient and streamlined for Care Coordinators. Jose Jimenez shared that the Department has added the Participant Search Screen (PSS), a new standalone system that can be used to find the status of a CCP participant. The Department also recently implemented a new initiative to keep track of post-screens in NFs, SLPs and the community; and allows the CCUs to submit this information electronically. Paul Bennett shared that the MCOs have found PSS to be very helpful. Jimenez shared the importance of knowing where the participant is and their Medicare/Medicaid status. The BEAM unit has had reduced calls and APS is able to use the system to look at which waiver services are being received by the participant. Teva Shirley asked about the PCP work and McCurdy

shared that the automated Critical Event reporting system is being updated to be more user friendly based on the feedback received from the 12 regional meetings that have been conducted with CCUs, APS staff and providers.

Paul Bennett brought up that retention for the Care Coordinators could be increased by offering tuition reimbursement in a form of a waiver. He shared that tuition reimbursement was offered in his previous job at the UIC CCU. It was questioned where the money for the waiver/tuition reimbursement would come from. Bennett shared that perhaps it could be featured into the salary and charged back to the employee if they left prematurely. Phyllis Mitzen asked everyone to look at what else is being offered to help motivate and retain people who want to help people in human services. A discussion regarding caseload to worker ratios was raised and it was shared that the new RFPs that have been put out by the Department include a requirement that agencies do not have more than a 200-participant caseload per worker. Data for downstate has shown that a ratio of 100 or less participants shows improvements in care coordination. Mitzen brought up the issue of the agency pressure that to pay the workers they must provide billable services. Louise Starman asked if the Department has talked to the Executive Directors regarding the actual cost of having a Care Coordinator versus the reimbursement rate and if other forces of revenue are being received (such as a grant). A discussion on care coordination salaries was initiated. Teva Shirley shared that a new Care Coordinator in her area earns about \$40,000 but \$50,000 is the amount that is needed. Bennett shared that a MCO Care Coordinator with a social work degree earns between \$55,000-60,000 and is paying about \$70,000 for nurses. Mitzen shared that CCUs would not be able to retain workers by offering them \$35,000-40,000 especially in the current labor market.

Action Items and Future Meeting Dates-

Phyllis Mitzen asked again what the next steps for this workgroup should be. Paul Bennett suggested research for homecare workers and Care Coordinators and other options or incentives besides salary would be helpful. Mitzen brought up the topic of consumer choice within professionals. Paul Bennett discussed consumer choice among CCP and MCOs and how HFS requires MCOs to discuss the service cost maximum under CCP and increases client service plan offered by MCOs.

Mitzen shared that the goal of the workgroup should be to have a preliminary report to share at the joint OASAC/ICoA May meeting and a final report for the August meeting and reminded everyone that this group is an advisory group to OASAC. Bennett suggested to look at best practices on homecare worker retention and explore the topics of tuition and adequate supervision and training. McCurdy asked that if someone from the workgroup can take the lead with the research and recommendations as the Department is swamped with numerous other required activities. The group will meet next Friday at the same time.

Meeting ended at 11:02am