



State of Illinois
Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor

Illinois Department on Aging
Charles D. Johnson, Director

Older Adult Services Advisory Committee

Workforce and Caregiver Work Group

Date: January 14, 2008, 11 a.m. – 12 p.m. conference call

Attending: Chair Susan Real (ECIAAA), Darby Anderson (Addus Health Care), Michele Austin (WADI), Donna Copeland Hill (NEIAAA), Betsy Essex (Governor's State University), Benita Johnson (CCSI), Peg Keeley (AARP), Darby Morhardt (Northwestern University), Scott Musser (AARP), Evelyn Nabors (Community Mental Health Council), Patricia O'Dea-Evans (Northwest Community Hospital), Wilma Schmitz (AAA of Southwestern Illinois), Jeremy Schroeder (SEIU Local 4), and Sarah Stein (Age Options).

IDoA Staff in attendance: Janice Cichowlas and Betsy Creamer

Opening Remarks

Susan Real, newly appointed chair, welcomes all. Ms. Real has been with the East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging for 22 years. During that time, Ms. Real developed and implemented the Title IIIIE Caregiver Advisory Program in east central Illinois. Ms. Real is also a charter member of the Illinois Department on Aging's Family Caregiver Program Advisory Committee and is a caregiver to her 83-year-old mother.

Family Caregiver Priority Objectives 2008

Objective #2 – Collect family caregiver data through the federal state public health survey was dropped for the final OASAC Report to the Governor. This objective may be revisited during 2008.

Working Caregiver Event

Wilma Schmitz, AAA of Southwestern Illinois, reported on progress made in planning the event during the Governor's Conference on Aging in December 2008. Wilma met with Rose Lober-Hamilton, Office of Training and Development, on December 7, 2007. The target audience for the event will include Illinois employers concerned about caregiving issues. One goal is the creation of a Caregiving White Paper to address the needs of working caregivers; best practices; legislative initiative; and resources. Wilma is connected with the National Family Caregiver Association. The association is interested in helping with the event. The Family Caregiver Alliance is also interested. Wilma reported that another resource is John Paul Marosy of Boston (affiliated with NFCA and consultant to large companies), who has chronicled best practices in the area of caregiving in the workplace. The event is planned for Wednesday, December 10, 2008. Suggested keynote speakers include Susanne Mintz, NCFA, NCFA roster of speakers, and Sandra Day O'Connor. Suggested sponsors include Boeing and Walgreen's Drug Store. Jan Cichowles offered to obtain a contact rough from Robyn Golden.

A Working Caregivers Event committee was formed to assist Wilma with identifying and recruiting major employer contacts. This newly formed committee consists of Wilma Schmitz (AAA of Southwestern Illinois), Jamie Hersh-White (CDOA), Sarah Stein (Age Options), Donna Copeland Hill (NE AAA), and Pat Odea-Evans (Northwest Community Hospital). Wilma will report on the Committee's progress at the February conference call.

Workforce Update

Darby Anderson reported on the status of HB 4144 in increasing homemaker rates in Illinois to increase wages paid to employees who provide homemaker services and to provide health insurance coverage. Amendatory veto changes the effective date to July 1, 2008. Furthermore, there are scheduled increases in the state minimum wage. This will have an impact on the workforce throughout long-term care. Wage compaction occurs (when minimum wage increases, their wage is essentially becomes lower).

Darby Anderson reported the need to obtain workforce information from other social service programs and their funding needs. Betsy Creamer offered to send a copy of a study compiled by Rance Carpenter (Department on Aging) on the impact of minimum wage for senior centers, nutrition programs, etc. Another suggestion was to work with the Coalition on Aging now that it has reconvened its membership and meetings.

Darby Anderson also reported that additional information will be obtained from his colleague, Mike Brown, who will be attending a National Symposium on Strengthening the Home and Community-Based Direct Service Workforce on May 8-9 in Baltimore Maryland.

Limited English Speaking Concerns

Susan Real announced that Director Johnson had recently received three letters on the need to enhance sensitivity training for case managers and homecare workers regarding the needs of limited-English speaking clients and their caregivers. Letters were received from the Elizabeth O'Grady (Coalition of Limited-English Speaking Elderly), Fran Hankin (Alzheimer's Association) and Darby Morhardt (Northwestern University, Feinberg School of Medicine). Work group members requested that copies of the letters be forwarded to them for review. Susan Real announced that an invitation would be extended to the authors of the letters to discuss the concerns further at the February 11 Workforce and Caregiver Work Group Conference Call.

Illinois Department on Aging Family Caregiver Program Advisory Committee

It was announced that the next meeting of this group will be March 26, 2008.

Next Workforce and Caregiver Workshop Conference Call.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Workforce and Caregiver Work Group will be conducted via conference call on February 11, 2008, 11 a.m. - 12 noon. Meeting notice and agenda will be sent via e-mail prior to the next meeting.