



State of Illinois
Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor

Illinois Department on Aging
Charles D. Johnson, Director

Illinois Long-Term Care Council Meeting

Date: June 12, 2007

Location: James R. Thompson Center, Chicago, Illinois

Co-Chairs: Nancy Flowers and Michael Gelder

Members attending: Diane Coleman, Rebecca Harshbarger, Martha Holstein, Hal Kaufman (Medicaid Fraud), Suzanne Kerrigan, Myrtle Klauer, Wendy Meltzer, Sally Petrone, Mel Pino (Medicaid Fraud), Pam Edelmann Sall, Julie Sampson, Dave Sutor and Tami Wacker (for Michael O'Donnell).

Guests attending: Avalon Gordon (I.C.B.C. intern), Neyna Johnson, Duane Northrup, Jean Summerfield, Tami Wacker and Judith Williams,.

Introduction and minutes of the February 26, 2007, meeting were approved.

Discussion Summary:

I. Presentation by Duane Northrup, Champaign County Coroner and member of the Death Reporting Task Force.

- On July 1, 2007, 12 counties will participate in a new pilot study. These 12 coroner offices will be reporting **all** nursing home deaths to their local coroner office. The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) did not collect data to have the total number of deaths reported to local coroners. The goal of the pilot is to gather statistics and trends.
- Sometimes the coroner does not know where the deceased has come from- whether resident comes from a hospital, nursing home. If there is no trauma, suspicious or they die from natural causes, the hospital does **not** have to report. By law, every un-intended death must be reported. Coroners can only access resident records by a court order. IDPH can access **all** records.
- Funeral homes are not required to notify coroners if they suspect something suspicious. If Criminal suspicion, the coroner may call the local police authorities. Toxicology reports are difficult to determine the proof of cause. Various circumstances of a case will determine triggers, whether or not to report. A toxicology report picks up widely used drugs. If a coroner requests it, the test can run from \$1500 – 2000.
- **Important to know:** The ombudsmen can and should contact the coroner office to initiate an investigation, if they suspect foul play, neglect, or abuse.

II. Presentation by Harold Kaufman and Mel Pino, Investigators, Illinois State Police, Medicaid Fraud Unit at Tinley Park

- IDPH is not trained to look for what police look for during a facility and resident complaint investigation. Surveyors definitely need more training. They also need to be more “skeptical” when conducting surveys and complaint investigations.
- Two areas that Kaufman felt were worth noting and exploring. A huge gray area is “negligence”. The second area that needs attention is “hospice”. It is not monitored and he’s seeing a lot of suspicious activity in this area. He also suggested that ombudsmen should/must continue to look for patterns and common features that pertain to the residents who are **still** alive.
- The Medicaid Fraud Unit receives approximately 135 complaints per month. Investigator Kaufman and Pino, both agreed that it would be beneficial to do training with the ombudsman program and IDPH in the future.

III. Work Group Reports

Ombudsman work group: Wendy Meltzer – Ombudsman Committee of three (3), violates the Open Committee Meeting Act. The Council needs to post it on the Illinois Department on Aging’s (IDoA) Web site and change the bylaws to “committees” vs. “workgroups”. These concerns will be brought up with IDoA’s Legal Counsel.

Pioneer and Cultural Change work group: Myrtle Klauer - The Illinois Pioneer Coalition (IPC) meets monthly. The upcoming summit will be held at the Springfield Crowne Plaza on October 16 – 17, 2007. IPC is working on obtaining a not for profit status and establishing more regional pioneer coalitions.

Legislative Advocacy work group: Sue Kerrigan, Pam Sall and Julie Sampson

Increase funding for the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP) and Personal Needs Allowance (PNA) -- Sue Kerrigan reported that she met with Rep. Kevin Joyce on increased funding for the LTCOP. Disseminated sample letter to Senator Emil Jones for review. Sally Petrone visited Rep. Franks and explained reports and data compiled about the LTCOP. He appreciated the pro active work that Sue (a family member) is doing. He is aware and supports the need and for increased funding for the program and need to increase the PNA.

Recommended Strategies:

- Upset the PNA bill didn’t pass? Let the legislators know!
- Put together a LTCOP legislator’s packet
- Get feedback
- Encourage all to make local contacts
- Story for the press – “What the impact of the loss of funds on the program will be,” I.E. staff reductions; service reductions; etc.

- The LTCOP needs to sustain their contacts and activities and “press” diligently for the program. The program must pitch to reporters how devastating the loss of funds will be and how it will significantly impact the program. Lack of funding is the reason why the PNA bill died.

Michael Gelder stated that the State needs more revenue (tax increase). No new \$\$ = No new programs. Pennsylvania uses State lottery funds to help the elderly, and the Department gets a little \$\$ from the lottery for the Senior Helpline. This Council should consider exploring Medicaid match for the program. There are a lot of issues and political complexities that make securing increased funding difficult.

Pam Sall - HB 652 passed both houses. 1000’s of letters were sent and there were many co-sponsors for this bill. Community Care Program (CCP) clients will now receive services on the weekend. Major priorities for the LTCOP Council for 2007 - 2008 are increase in state funding for the LTCOP and increase the PNA

IV. Highlights from the 2-Day Strategic planning meeting with the Regional Ombudsmen:

William “Bill” Benson facilitated this planning meeting with partners of the ombudsmen program on June 7 - 8, 2007 in Champaign. Overarching goal is to examine the current status of the program and identify strategies to continue meeting federal mandates while maintaining the highest quality services for the long term care residents. The strategic plan shall be launched in January 2008.

Two major points gleaned from this meeting — if no increase in funding for FY08, the LTCOP Standards must be revised and program services reduced and prioritized and local programs will lose valuable staff as a result of reduced or limited funding. Everyone was encouraged to contact their local legislators on the future funding.

V. Presentation by Jean Summerfield on Money Follows the Person (MFP)

A fact sheet on the program was distributed. From 2007 through 2011, at least 7,300 older adults and adults with disabilities will transition to the community, of whom 3,357 will be included in the MFP. The State will focus on individuals who have been in long-term care for at least 6 months up to 2 years. The University of Chicago has been hired to do an evaluation component.

VI. Meeting adjournment

Meeting adjourned with the next council meeting scheduled for November 14 at the Springfield Northfield Inn.

Minutes prepared by Neyna Johnson