

**NY Connects State Long Term Care Advisory Council Meeting
Upstate Meeting Minutes
June 11, 2008**

I. Welcome and Introductions – Michael Burgess- Director, NYS Office for the Aging

- Referred the group to the minutes from the March 11 LTCAC meeting.
- Referred the group to the public education items that were on display in the room – consisted of various ‘give-aways’, such as pens, note pads, mugs, bags, etc.
- Informed the audience of the upcoming Community Empowerment conference, scheduled for November 12 and 13 at the Saratoga Hilton and City Center.
- Informed the audience that NY Connects would be presenting its second annual Excellence in Leadership award to Chrystal Abers from Cattaraugus County.

II. NY Connects Program Update – Thea Griffin - Director, NY Connects NYSOFA

- Informed the audience that NY Connects has reached the 2 ½ year benchmark.
- NY Connects is at various levels of implementation across the state. In Year 2 the focus has been on the stabilization and enhancement of program operations.
- Discussed the delivery of I & A, public education and Long Term Care Councils and provided an overview of the number of counties that were operational and conducting these core functions.

III. Expanding Home and Community Based Long Term Care Services –

A. Money Follows the Person Grant and Nursing Home Diversion Grant - Bruce Rosen – Director, Nursing Home Transition Waiver and Project Director, Money Follows the Person, NYSDOH (POWERPOINT MADE AVAILABLE)

Q: *In regards to the Nursing Home Diversion Grant, who will provide housing once residents are transitioned? Where will you find staff and providers?*

A: *The legislature has provided \$5 million for rental subsidies. Housing will also be available through the Section 8 program, money used in the past, and the TBI program. Community Transitional Services – when the consumer moves from the nursing home to the community their security deposit will be covered, as will the cost of furniture, moving and the cleaning of the home. Rental subsidies will cover the costs of ongoing rent. The Department of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR) can save 30%+ of the consumer’s income (the consumer will be responsible for non-essential items). Environmental modifications can be provided through Access to Home monies. The issue of staffing continues to be an ongoing problem. The Office of Long Term Care is currently looking at the workforce shortage.*

Q: *Can staff from the Nursing Home Diversion Grant program provide technical assistance to NY Connects staff?*

A: *The Regional Resource Development Specialists can meet with programmatic staff to inform them of services and to coordinate as NY Connects is growing to discuss what can be done to enhance the programs.*

Q: *Do you have a target for the numbers that you would like to serve?*

A: *There will be no less than 5,000 served in the first 3 years from the date of approval (2007). It is our hope to serve 1,000 in the first year, 2,500 in the second year and 5,000 in the third year.*

Q: *What about nursing home residents that are not on Medicaid?*

A: *Individuals served under this grant must be on Medicaid.*

Q: *If a Medicaid eligible individual needs to go back to a nursing home, the time it takes for them to get Medicaid is now 3-7 months.*

A: *This shouldn't be a problem; it is based on the county's ability to process the Medicaid paperwork.*

Other Discussion:

Q: *Could you provide us with an update regarding the current situation in NYC?*

A: *NYC sent NYSOFA a letter declining participation in program year 2 of NY Connects. Currently, DFTA continues to have discussions regarding the modernization of senior programming. NYSOFA is examining what the options might be with or without the city's participation.*

Q: *Could you provide us with a summary of 3-1-1 in NYC?*

A: *3-1-1 provides I&R on all services in NYC (ie: parking, pothole complaints, etc.). It acts as NYC's portal. The city contracted with 2-1-1 to create a linkage between the 2 numbers, but NYSOFA doesn't view this as NY Connects. Ana Winans added that 3-1-1 is available in NYC, but it is very city-specific to municipal services. They received a designation for 2-1-1 and the number was launched in April.*

Q: *Could you provide clarification regarding the needs assessment as it relates to MDS communication?*

A: *The MDS described the person in the nursing home. The PRI/Screen determines whether or not the person needs to be in a nursing home. We'd like to use a universal tool, but the sticking point is that data is collected in both.*

B. Supporting Caregivers – Gail Koser - Assistant Director, Division of Policy, Management and Public Information, NYSOFA (POWERPOINT MADE AVAILABLE)

Q: Are there consumers on the user survey?

A: Consumers will be a part of the survey.

Q: Are you going to segregate the data from caregivers from other individuals?

A: Yes.

Comments:

- Consumers need an easy way to provide input regarding services or a particular issue or idea.
- There should be open-ended lines of communication.
- Consider having a website and/or a 1-800 number available for consumer input.
- It is important to differentiate between information and assistance. Approximately 46% of callers will either receive a follow up call from NY Connects, a direct linkage, or their family, friends or neighbors will be contacted.
- It is important not to lose site of the children in the LTC system; their parents need to look at this survey. There is a shortage of respite/caregiver and transportation services for provider as well as the money that used to be available through Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.

IV. Experiences in Long Term Care – Maxcine Johnson, Consumer/Albany County LTCC Member

- Discussed the difficulty in obtaining handicap accessible housing with children.
- Discussed the difficulty with transportation – issues with STAR in terms of pick up times.
- Discussed difficulty in finding appropriate services – trying to determine where to go and who to call is very overwhelming.
- Stressed the importance of quality of life for individuals with disabilities.

V. Opportunities and Challenges to Person-Centered Planning and Care – Bruce Darling, Executive Director, Center for Disability Rights

- Explained person centered and person directed care.
- Empower individuals to make own decisions and provide them with viable choices.
- Include consumers and caregivers at the table when policy and programmatic decisions are to be made on their behalf
- Think of terminology and attitudes that impact older adults and people with disabilities i.e. Ageism versus 'ableism'

Q: *Is person-centered planning part of the Nursing Home Diversion Grant?*

A: *The RRSD will be assisted in developing service plans by the consumer – the TBI waiver is already doing this and may want to encourage groups to provide training to the NHD service coordinators.*

VI. Pubic Information and Education – Pamela Polacsek, Advisory Council Member/Public Relations, Saratoga Bridges

- Recognize the importance of name recognition - branding should be a priority
- There should be a consistent and clear message that is promoted to the public
- NY Connects should be recognizable to all
- Understand who needs the message and how you will get it to them
- Don't forget the 'hard to reach' populations – cultural and ethnic populations, rurals, etc.
- Ensure that everyone can reach NY Connects
- Reach out to the professional community – organizations and providers – partners can help to promote.
- Know your community and the ways of disseminating information to people.

VII. Legislative Update and Council Feedback – Laurie Pferr, Executive Deputy Director, NYSOFA

- Laurie provided members with an update on current legislative and budgetary issues

VIII. Next Steps and Closing

- Summary of important discussions from the day.
- Next Council meeting is October 29 at the Beltrone Living Center.