

**Personal Care Attendant Quality Home Care Workforce Council
Special Meeting
Wednesday, February 1, 2012
Old Judiciary Room, State Capitol Building Room 1 - 3
Minutes**

Members Present: (Chair) Dawn Lambert, Gregory McMahon, Michelle Duprey, Imla Eubanks, Patti Clay, Liz Lemiska, Elizabeth Marafino

Guests: Julie Robison, PhD, Melissa Pinnick

- 1 **Call to Order** Ms. Lambert called the meeting to order at 1:05

- 2 **Approval of the Agenda:** On motion made by Ms. Clay and seconded by Ms Duprey, the agenda was approved. The vote to accept the motion was unanimous.

- 3 **Approval of January 4 minutes:** On a motion made by Ms. Clay and seconded by Mr. McMahon, approval of the January 4 minutes was tabled to the March meeting of the council. The vote to accept the motion was unanimous.

- 4 **Recruitment and Retention of Personal Care Assistants:** Dr. Robison discussed research conducted over the past 10 years specific to recruitment and retention of personal care assistants in the State of Connecticut. She discussed details of the Braceland Report (Attachment 1 – Executive Summary) While the report is 9 years old, Dr. Robison suggested that the council look at the methods of research and layout of the report as a possible foundation for a new report. She also mentioned the CPASS report and the 2006 Connect-ability report. Ms. Clay asked for clarification regarding what the council is being asked to do and if there is 100% alignment with any existing data source. She stated that existing administrative data may be a cost effective source for information. Ms. Bohnet, Executive Director of Allied Community Resources, was recognized to speak on the topic of administrative data. She reported that Allied Community Resources produces surveys and collects data on a regular basis and that it would be possible to add additional questions to the existing surveys at minimal cost. Mr. McMahon stated the importance of establishing a good baseline of existing information and asked about an existing searchable database.

- 5 **Review of the Fact Sheet** Ms. Lambert reviewed the Fact Sheet Draft created jointly by the Departments of Social Services and Developmental Services. Ms. Lambert also briefly discussed the correspondence sent by the Department of Social Services (Attachment 2) to employers and personal care assistants. There were no comments.

- 6 **Statue Update on SEIU Outreach** Ms. Pinnick stated that the outreach has provided personal care assistants (PCAs) with a good opportunity to get information so that they can make an informed decision. She also stated that she has received favorable feedback indicating that PCAs appreciate the opportunity to talk about their jobs. Ms. Pinnick declined the opportunity to discuss specifics of the SEIU outreach campaign but added that outreach in general was conducted through 1:1 outreach and through mailings. Since there were many questions remaining, Ms. Pinnick agreed to offer a written explanation of process. She also stated that any complaints regarding SEIU efforts should be directed to her. Mr McMahon raised a specific concern about SEIU outreach

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workers declining to show any ID beyond the 'button' while visiting employees. There was discussion about a 'question and answer forum' for the public. Ms. Pinnick agreed to participate as long as the SEIU is part of the design of the meeting. Ms. Pinnick expressed concerns about a mailing recently received by employers from Allied. Ms. Pinnick raised specific objections to the second page of the document which stated: '...express your hope that they [the employees] will vote "no".'

7 **Discussion- Other Workforce Councils:** On a motion made by Ms. Duprey and seconded by Ms. Clay the discussion on other workforce councils was tabled to the March 2012 meeting. The vote was unanimous.

8 **Public Comments**

Ms. Pat Tyler: Ms. Tyler stated concerns about the manner in which information about Executive Order 10 was communicated to DDS employers and employees. Since the Executive Order referenced Personal Care Assistants (PCA) and DDS employers do not hire any workers with that title, DDS employers did not know that they were directly impacted by the Order until the SEIU started contacting employees. She stated that the State should have notified DDS employers about which employees fall under the classification of PCA. She also stated that SEIU materials are not written in a manner that is easily understood by DDS participants. Additional concerns raised were related to 'who would pay for increases in employee's compensation'. She asked if employers would be able to hire non-union employees and if the SEIU would be able to direct the rate DDS employers pay their employees. She also reminded the Council that the Council is also responsible to the people with disabilities.

She stated the following recommendations:

- 1) Get input from the DD community;
- 2) Postpone process until complexities get worked out;
- 3) Look at states who didn't want to do this;

Cathy Ludlum: Ms. Ludlum clarified that the 25.75 cap limiting the number of hours a PCA can work is not in effect if one buys Workman Compensation insurance. She also stated that she received the 'Do and Don't' document referenced by Ms. Pinnick in the spring. Ms. Ludlum expressed concerns about the frequency of SEIU workers contacting employees during work hours. She stated that some employees are feeling pressured and that the repeated visits are the problem.

Debbie Barisano: Ms. Barisano stated that she worked as a PCA for 10 years and that she is the founder of the Connecticut Association of Personal Care Assistants. She stated that PCAs are being told that the SEIU will increase their wages to \$16.00 per hour. She expressed concerns about employees not understanding the impact of raised wages on the employer's care plan and the limitations of the existing waiver cost caps.

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Carol Bohnet: Ms. Bohnet stated that she is the Executive Director of Allied Community Resources and that their organization developed the 'Do and Don't' communication piece as part of their employer training responsibilities. She stated that the document was recently mailed to employers and that it was part of a repeat mailing rather than something that was just recently developed. Ms. Bohnet also stated that Allied does not tell employees not to talk to the union. She stated that she would return to the office and reinforce this information to her staff.

Adjournment of Meeting: On a motion made by Mr. McMahon and seconded by Ms. Duprey, the meeting adjourned at 3:01.