

Long Term Care Planning Committee

September 20, 2022

Meeting Minutes

LTC Planning Committee Members in Attendance: Melissa Morton, Chair, Office of Policy & Management (OPM); Stephanie Bozak, Department of Children and Families (DCF); Kelley Kendall, Department of Developmental Services (DDS); Erin Leavitt-Smith, Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS); Amy Porter, Department of Aging and Disability Services (ADS); Michael Santoro, Department of Housing (DOH); Laura Watson, DOH; Senator Ryan Fazio; Representative David Wilson; Senator Tony Hwang; Representative Jay Case.

Others Present: Heather Ferguson-Hull, OPM

Called to order by Melissa Morton at 10:02 AM

Welcome

Ms. Morton offered words of welcome.

Updates and Announcements

❖ 2022 Rebalancing Statistics

Ms. Morton shared that these statistics are in the process of being completed, and that there is additional agency data that will be added. This information will be shared with the committee prior to being submitted to the Connecticut General Assembly.

DSS LTSS Rebalancing Update

Ms. Morton stated that the September meeting is set aside for the Department of Social Services (DSS) to present an update on its rebalancing initiatives, and the array of options that enable residents to remain in the community.

Dawn Lambert (DSS), gave an overview of the department's [presentation](#), remarking that this provides an opportunity to look back at what has been accomplished to date, and to share progress on new initiatives. She added that the work is guided by data, lessons learned thus far, and the Long-Term Care Planning Committee's Long Term Services and Supports Plan. Ms. Lambert noted that many new opportunities have been made possible by American Rescue Plan Funding, referred to as ARP 9817. Money Follows the Person (MFP) was first proposed in 2007, and Connecticut has transitioned more people than any other state, per capita, from facilities to the community: over 7,000 people to date. New programs have been added over the years, including Community First Choice, and new initiatives are being developed. Ms. Lambert emphasized that their work is focused on the importance of opportunities for choice, removing barriers to transitions, and stabilizing people in their communities and there is an absolute emphasis on self-direction. She provided a brief overview of the programs to be covered during today's presentation, and members of her team each presented on their area of expertise. The following is a brief summary of the DSS presentation. The slide deck can be accessed on the [Long-Term Care Planning Committee website](#).

Money Follows the Person-Lauren Carabetta. Ms. Carabetta shared benchmarks, and the data showing the shift of residents (and funding) from institutions to Home and Community Based Services (HCBS). Currently 70% of Medicaid members receiving Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) live in the community, and 30% live in an institution. Two of the ongoing major barriers: obtaining housing and the workforce shortage.

My Care Options- Lauren Carabetta. Ms. Carabetta explained that this program shares HCBS information with people who are at risk for a long-term institutional stay and are not yet Medicaid qualified, specifically targeting Medicare Savings Program (MSP) beneficiaries. The program has 10 full-time Care Coordinators to assist individuals, and it was launched in June 2022.

Presumptive Eligibility- Karri Filek. Ms. Filek said that the goal of presumptive eligibility is to remove barriers to choice and give MSP members access to HCBS information. This initiative would allow people to receive Medicaid HCBS services while they are completing their Medicaid enrollment paperwork. She highlighted resources available to locate information on HCBS, including MyPlaceCT.org.

Supports at Home Option (SHO)- Hye-Yeon Ryu Kim. Ms. Ryu Kim shared that this program is an ARPA-funded benefits expansion (including services such as, respite, caregiver support and assistive technology) targeting MSP participants who are at-risk of short-term nursing home placement with the goals of reducing unnecessary reliance on Medicaid and paid supports, diminishing signs of depression, and to improving quality of life, and avoiding institutionalization. It is being launched in October 2022.

Community First Choice (CFC)-Jose Michael Gonzalez. Mr. Gonzalez reported how CFC enables members to remain in their homes instead of moving to an institutional setting, and that this program has grown dramatically. Currently 5,719 members actively participate in this program, 2,624 of which are also in waiver programs. He shared that there will be a new Personal Care Attendant (PCA) employment network website, in administrative partnership with DDS, that is expected to be fully functional by March 2023. It will provide multiple resources to consumers, including matching consumers with PCAs, and creating an emergency pool of workers. Additionally, Support and Planning Coaches are being trained to assist consumers who employ PCAs. They will provide support to consumers in goal setting and person-centered planning, and coaching on Electronic Visit Verification (EVV), environmental modifications, assistive technology, and CFC in general, with the overall goal of ensuring consumer autonomy.

Racial Health Equity-Colleen Hudson. Ms. Hudson discussed the Trauma Informed Care Racial Equity Lens Initiative and its four focus areas for HCBS provider trainings: Health Equity and Self-Management, Cultural Humility, Implicit Bias and Racial Microaggressions.

Health Information Exchange and Value Based Payments-Kathryn Barnard. Ms. Barnard explained that HCBS providers who achieve the benchmarks of completing health equity trainings and sharing data through CONNIE (the CT Health Information Exchange), will receive a 1% supplemental payment.

CT Housing Engagement and Supports Services (CHESS)-Tamara Lopez. Ms. Lopez noted that housing is a social determinant of health. This program currently provides housing and related supports to 49 Medicaid members (over 2,300 applications have been received to date) who were homeless/at-risk and who have complex needs, both medical and behavioral. She thanked DOH, DMHAS and the Community Action Networks (CANs) for their partnership.

Assistive Technology-Greg Bennett. Mr. Bennett updated the group on an initiative to integrate smart home technology into subsidized housing. He reported that the Request for Applications is being finalized. The technology includes automating of appliances, home monitoring, and the use of smart phones, etc. The goals are to improve quality of life, increase independence, and offset the need for human assistance.

Innovative Services and Support Models-Angelique Pearson. Ms. Pearson shared information about the proposal to add back-up supports and remote services through community hubs to address housing and food insecurity. The Appendix K proposal will be submitted to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) this Thursday. She talked about the upcoming White House Conference on Health and Nutrition and noted that DSS is exploring the possibility of implementing the Program for All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) as well.

Universal Assessment-Michael Peccerilli. Mr. Peccerilli shared information about collaborating with DDS to expand the Universal Assessment, and that it would be submitted to CMS by the end of 2022.

Ms. Lambert thanked her team and reiterated the goal of aligning value-based payments with member-centered goals. She also noted that University of Connecticut, Center on Aging (UConn) is partnering with them to do evaluations, providing third-party transparency.

Rep. Wilson asked that a copy of the PowerPoint presentation be forwarded to members. Ms. Morton shared that the link is in the Teams chat, and that it would be emailed to members and posted to the LTC Planning Committee website.

Commissioner Porter noted that some this work intersects with that of ADS, and she requested a presentation to her agency with more detail, regarding assistive technology, and partnering with senior centers on remote services, among other topics, so that the agencies can coordinate their efforts. Ms. Lambert replied that they had been in communication with some ADS staff but would set up a meeting.

Rep. Case shared that one of his constituents had become homeless and did not have information about supports. He asked if information about DSS's initiatives were being shared with senior centers. Ms. Lambert replied that information is available on MyPlaceCT.org, and that they could share information out to senior centers as well. Rep. Case noted that not all seniors have access to the internet, so sharing information with senior centers and coordination with the CANs is very important.

Michael Werner (Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity and representing the Long-Term Care Advisory Council) expressed his enthusiasm for the presumptive eligibility initiative, as that was an issue that had arisen on the Senior Fraud Task Force. Ms. Lambert explained that it is in the data collection phase, and any proposal would go through the Office of the Governor and the Legislature.

Member Updates and Announcements

None offered.

Long-Term Care Advisory Council Comments

Michael Werner (CWCSEO) stated that the LTC Advisory Council will be meeting on September 22, 2022 and they will be covering various topics, including hearing from the Homemaker Companion Task Force,

the Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia Coalition, an update regarding funds that were appropriated for a Senior Center Coordinator, and the new Community Ombudsman Program. They will also be hearing from the Department of Banking and updates about Adult Day Services funding.

Other Business

No new topics were raised.

2022 Meetings

Ms. Morton confirmed the final committee meeting date for 2022:

Tuesday, December 13th -- 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM – Microsoft Teams

Ms. Morton asked for a motion to adjourn. Rep. Wilson made the motion, and Commissioner Porter seconded. All members in favor.

Full meeting recording can be accessed here:

<https://youtu.be/XyDNUm9LtI0>

Meeting adjourned at 11:34 AM