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# Long-Term Care Planning Committee

## December 6, 2016

### Meeting Minutes

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**State Agency Members Present:** David Guttchen, Office of Policy and Management (OPM); Kathy Bruni (DSS); Beth Leslie, Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities (OPA); Erin Leavitt-Smith, Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS); Margy Gerundo-Murkette, State Department on Aging (SDA); Donna Ortelle (DPH); Amy Porter, Department of Rehabilitation Services (DORS); Michael Santoro, Department of Housing (DOH); Robert Smith (DDS)

**Legislative Members Present:** Representative Mitch Bolinsky

**Others Present:** Melissa Morton, (OPM)

#### **Review and Approval of Minutes**

David Guttchen called the meeting to order at 10:04 AM.

D. Guttchen requested a motion to accept the minutes of the September 13, 2016 Planning Committee meeting. A motion was presented by Michael Santoro, seconded by Amy Porter and passed unanimously by the Committee members.

#### **Updates and Announcements**

**Donna Ortelle** informed members that the Department of Public Health (DPH) is expecting nursing home workers to strike this March as their contracts come up for renewal. DPH has formed a workgroup to prepare in the event that a strike occurs in 2017.

**Robert Smith** reminded members that the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) is holding a public hearing today on the agency's five year plan. The first session is this morning in room 1A of the Legislative Office Building and the second session will be held today at 4:00 P.M. in the same location.

**Margy Gerundo-Murkette** announced that the State Department on Aging (SDA) received a \$50,000 grant from the National Council on Aging to assist inmates being released from prison connect to needed benefits with a focus on Medicare enrollment.

**Presentation: Department of Developmental Services Community of Practice:** Robin Wood, DDS, [presented](#) on the DDS Community of Practice Initiative. Highlights of the presentation are below:

- Community of Practice started in 2013 as a partnership between DDS and the Developmental Disabilities Council through a small grant. CT was one of five states to start the initiative which has expanded to sixteen states.
- Focus is on Life Course Planning. Creating a person-centered plan that takes into account the needs and goals of the individual receiving services and their family members. Supports should be provided in three categories: (1) discovery and navigation; (2) connecting and networking; and (3) goods and services.

- Goals: (a) integrate Life Course Planning into all state services; (b) use common symbols and terminology across state departments and programs; (c) think creatively about how to provide supports in each of the three service categories; (d) increase utilization of assistive technology and respite services; (e) begin positive behavioral health strategies at an early age and reinforce through the lifespan; (f) implement person-centered planning in all programs; (g) and replace the term “benefits coordinator” with term “asset coordinator” to encourage families to think about a range of supports and not just state services.
- Robin Wood reviewed various [tools](#) developed to assist individuals, families and teachers with Life Course Planning.

**Presentation: State Department on Aging, No Wrong Door (NWD) and Veteran’s Directed Home and Community Based Services (VD-HCBS) Program**, Margy Gerundo-Murkette, State Department on Aging (SDA), provided a brief overview of the history of SDA’s evolving role in the development of a segment of the state’s No Wrong Door system of services and supports starting back in 2007 with the creation of the Aging and Disability Resource Centers and the addition of the VD-HCBS program. Mary Gerundo-Murkette invited staff from SDA and the VA Connecticut Healthcare System to [present](#) an overview of the initiatives.

#### SDA No Wrong Door Initiatives

Patricia Richardson, SDA, presented on the SDA’s role in the development of Connecticut’s NWD. Highlights of her presentation are below:

- SDA’s NWD is funded through a federal grant from the Administration for Community Living to do the following: (a) help develop and provide person-centered counseling training to professionals; (b) test and implement the national State and Governance and Administration NWD Management Tool to track a state’s progress towards operating a fully-functional NWD system of services and supports; (c) collaborate with the CT-Tech Act program to promote utilization of Assistive Technology; and (d) Continue the work of the NWD through the Area Agencies on Aging, the Centers for Independent Living and other community partners.
- Patricia Richardson clarified the role of the Department of Social Services (DSS) versus SDA in regards to the development of the NWD. DSS receives funding from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to create the infrastructure for the NWD. DSS is responsible for the following components of the state’s NWD system: (a) public outreach and coordination including the development of online access to supports and services called My Place CT, (b) streamline processes including the implementation of personal health records, (c) create and implement a standardized functional assessment tool, and (d) rebalance the utilization of Medicaid funds to decrease the number of nursing home beds and increase the number of individuals receiving long-term services and supports in the community.
- SDA and DSS are coordinating efforts to develop the statewide NWD.

#### Veteran’s Directed Home and Community Based Services Program

Susan Gill, VA Connecticut Healthcare System, presented on the VD-HCBS program that is operated in partnership with the five Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and the SDA. Highlights of her presentation are below.

- VD-HCBS is a self-directed home and community-based services option targeted to veterans with high functional need. Veterans receive an individualized budget and are responsible for managing that budget and acting as the employer of record.

- The five AAAs provide person-counselors to assist veterans on the program. Additionally, two of the five AAAs hold the billing and claims agreements with the VA Healthcare System.
- The program is funded by the federal Veteran’s Administration.
- The VA CT Health Care System has experienced a cost savings of over \$600,000 through implementation of this program which has allowed veteran’s to avoid more costly nursing home placement.
- The following health outcomes compared with the prior six-month period have been documented: (a) emergency room visits decreased by 17%; (b) length of stay in an inpatient acute care setting decreased 42%; and (c) inpatient admissions decreased by 44%.
- VD-HCBS will be available to more veterans as it becomes an option through the new VA Choice program.

**Other Business**

None.

**Meeting Schedule for 2017**

Tuesday June 6<sup>th</sup>  
Tuesday September 12<sup>th</sup>  
Tuesday December 5<sup>th</sup>

All meetings will be at 10 AM. Meeting locations will be made available as they are finalized.

A motion to adjourn was made by Robert Smith and seconded by Kathy Bruni. The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 AM.