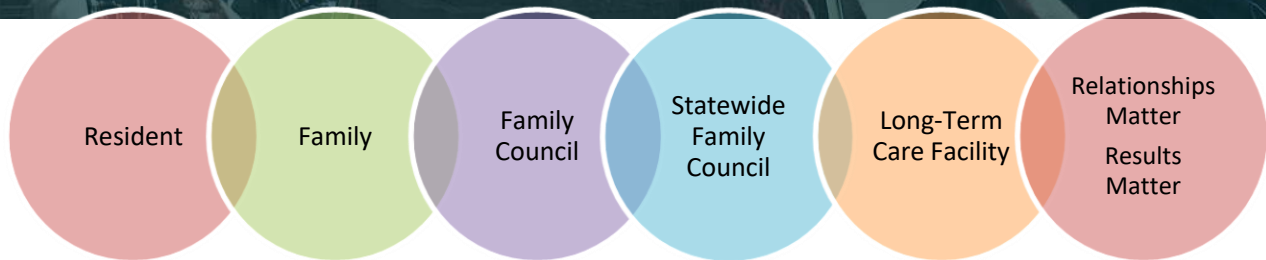


# Connecticut Statewide Family Council



## MINUTES

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2022

A Meeting of the CT Statewide Family Council (CTSWFC) was held on December 20, 2022, via Zoom.

The Meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm by Chair, Amy Badini and all in attendance were welcomed

**ROLL CALL:** Amy Badini Chair, Rick (Frederick) Kaeser Vice-Chair, Robin DeLieto Recording Secretary, Tom Canellakis, Liz Stern and Arlene Lugo

**Motion to amend the Minutes of November 22, 2022: Rick. Second Amy. Motion passed. Motion to accept amended Minutes Rick. Second Tom. Motion passed by those present.**

### NEW BUSINESS:

Rick asked all members to introduce themselves to our guest speaker Arlene Lugo. Arlene Lugo, Program Director for the CT Tech Act Project gave the group a brief background of her experience, how the Assistive Tech Program came into existence, and how it has been funded. Arlene took the screen and shared a PowerPoint presentation providing an overview of the programs, and Partner Agencies. Presentation will be sent to the group. The group periodically had questions for more clarification.

Question 1: Are there income limits?

Answer 1: No fees for anyone for the Demonstration Centers or Lend Program. Financial loans are available for devices not covered by medical insurance. Some are income based.

Question 2: What is covered by insurance and what is not?

Answer 2: Certain adaptive technologies may be covered under the Durable Medical Equipment category of Medicare Part B. There are Waiver Services for devices you can install in your home such as stairlifts.

## CONNECTICUT STATEWIDE FAMILY COUNCIL

If item needed is not covered, there are grants which may cover some or all of the cost. For example, a portable shower was approved for a person for hygiene reasons. Also available are FCC grants for individuals with vision loss or blindness, deafness and low income.

Question 3: What about devices for an individual with MS that can only move their fingers?

Answer 3: Not under that program but maybe under Bridging the Divide Program. It is for people 60 or older for tablets and no cost Hotspots. It provides not only the device but the training and support of the device. Partner NEAT handles the north of the state while UCP does the South. They have a Digital Divide Coordinator. There is a fee for an evaluation but no fee for the demo.

Question 4: Is Age considered a Disability?

Answer 4: Yes, as people age, they have more vision and mobility problems. Smart Home Tech is included to turn on lights, adjust thermostats, Alexa, Show tablet, Google Nest, smart plugs, video doorbells, wearables all can increase independence and fighting isolation.

Question 5: What if your loved one has a roommate? Is this a HIPPA violation? Camera Act?

Answer 5: Some are always listening for a keyword. Need consistent Wi-Fi. Will look into it.

Question 6: When did this start?

Answer 6: She started in 1992 Assistive Tech Act. Originally through the Cares Act but in 2004 it was reauthorized under the Defense Bill. Now the 21<sup>st</sup> Century AT Act have Aging Adults named.

Question 7: How much are they funded for?

Answer 7: \$380K-\$400K per year. Amount is based on population/size of state. Every state has one. In CT, her office is just her and a parttime person along with the Partner Agencies.

Question 8: What are their statistics? How many people have been helped?

Answer 8: Each Service is tracked. She will get information to the Secretary after the meeting for distribution. Can sign up for her newsletter through the PPT. Also, her contact information on PPT. Can call or text her at **860-803-0588**. Contact information: [arlene.lugo@ct.gov](mailto:arlene.lugo@ct.gov). For more information, go to the CT Tech Act Project website: [cttechact.com](http://cttechact.com).

Presentation ended. Arlene Lugo signed off ZOOM.

Discussion continued on benefits. Presentations can be done over an over for Local FCs and at nursing homes. Nursing Homes want to fill beds. Smart Tech in every room would be a selling point.

No New Topics. Moved on to OLD BUSINESS.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

Local Family Council Formation – January Focus. Sent out LTC Admissions flyer out to group with October Minutes for comment. Working on ESP flyer. Would like to schedule Matt & Mags, Nursing Home Assoc. as speakers for January meeting.

Discussion if we currently have a Registry of FC? That we need that information prior to meeting with them. Would like to invite the 12 Resident Advocates in the State (Volunteer under the Ombudsman's

## CONNECTICUT STATEWIDE FAMILY COUNCIL

Office) and the ROs. Mairead's office has on the list to ask Facilities if they have a FC and contact information when they are out to do their on-site visits. Mairead said at our Executive meeting that Matt/Mags could possibly help by having their Nursing Homes members respond if they have a Family Council.

About 207 Nursing Homes in CT. Between Ombudsman's office, Nursing Home Assoc, and those in our group that would like to make calls to facilities to see if they have a FC and their contacts will help to produce a comprehensive list. That will enable to build up our membership for the CT Statewide FC. Need at least 15 members to have a voice.

Discussion that FCs are not the place for a gripe session if people are frustrated with Management or to trouble shoot but are there to support the residents. FCs should enhance the lives of residents in a positive way. Do not need to ask facility to meet. Have right to meet inside facility. Our focus for January is to get LTC Admissions FC flyer and ESP flyers done and to print. We have a new email to be added to our agenda/website. [CTSWFamilyCouncil@gmail.com](mailto:CTSWFamilyCouncil@gmail.com) Email will be monitored by Rick. Want a more positive approach on our flyers. Rather than saying "Concerns" we should stress "support families and resident life". Keep a friendly tone.

Nominations of Officers – Amy, Rick, and Robin are nominated to their respective positions for 2023. Anyone interested in becoming an officer, contact Amy or Rick.

### **Legislative Issues**

Liz and Rick have a presence at 'Nursing Home Group' meetings run by Union 1199. The group is working on 3 topics on their for the 2023 CT legislative agenda: 1.) Unions asking to improve staffing 2.) Enforce existing staffing standards, and 3.) Funding transparency. FC emphasis is on Resident-Centered Care and Quality Care. To achieve higher quality care, need more staff. This group will not really represent us the way we need but good to have presence at this time.

CT currently has best laws in country with Essential Support Person. There will be a special, informal meeting of the CTSWFC to discuss our Legislative agenda on January 17, 2023 at 7pm if anyone is interested in joining to brainstorm.

**Next meeting will be January 24, 2023 at 7pm**

**Motion to Adjourn Amy. Second – Liz. Motion passed.**

**Meeting adjourned at 8:58 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Robin DeLieto, Recording Secretary