

Aging Advisory Council Meeting
STEP Offices, Conference Room C
February 14, 2018

Members present: Linda Hess, David Heiney, Joseph Sohmer, Ray Humphrey, Barbara Barger, Paulette Seitzer, Leslie Houser, Nancy Watson, Commissioner Jack McKernan and Sharon Cashwell

Members absent: Carolyn Bullock, Lois Stryker, Rochelle Keefer, Commissioner Jeff Snyder

Staff: Frederick Shrimp

Meeting started at 1:00pm

Ray Humphrey reviewed the minutes. David Heiney made a motion to approve that was seconded by Linda Hess and approved unanimously.

Mr. Shrimp explained changes to the OPTIONS (Block Grant) services that went into effect on January 1, 2018. The most significant change allows care managers to start services without doing a level of care assessment. Previously, everyone requesting in home services other than meals on wheels, had to participate in a level of care assessment. If the person was nursing facility clinically eligible (NFCE), they had to be referred to the independent enrollment broker (IEB) and apply for the Aging Waiver. Only after they were determined ineligible for the waiver could we provide services. If the person was not NFCE, we could begin services, but the level of care assessment still had to be completed. Now we can perform a care management assessment to develop a care plan and begin services. If the care manager thinks the person is NFCE and might be financially eligible for the Aging Waiver, they make a referral to the IEB for the Aging Waiver. However, they can begin services and assist the person through the enrollment process. This change enables the older person to receive services quickly, have assistance completing the Aging Waiver enrollment process and the older person is transferred to the Aging Waiver for service if found eligible.

Mr. Shrimp reviewed new policies that were required with the new OPTIONS aging program directive. A wait list policy explaining how a waiting list would be handled if STEP needed to use one. A cost cap exception policy to explain when and how STEP would decide to exceed the cost cap of \$765 per month on the cost of in-home services. A Cost Sharing Revenues Policy explaining how STEP would invoice, record and spend funds received through the mandated cost share plan. A consumer reimbursement policy explaining how STEP would reimburse consumers for services they paid for themselves under an approved care plan. Paulette Seitzer made a motion to approve the policies as written for submission to the Department of Aging for approval. Linda Hess seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Shrimp reported that STEP had reclassified the casework positions to be able to pay more and hopefully stop the revolving door of continuous hiring of caseworkers because

caseworkers were leaving to take jobs that paid better. We have had 6 caseworkers leave in the past two years.

Mr. Shrimp reported that in a recent monitoring of STEP's older adult protective services program, the Office of Aging received a green rating with an overall score of 94%. The Department of Aging is now using a green, yellow and red rating system with green being the highest rating.

Mr. Shrimp announced that a Health, Fitness and Nutrition Center Coordinator position is now open. Autumn Noll has decided to resign. Autumn had been a leader in helping STEP change to exercise and activity programs to help us toward our vision of "centers for healthy aging".

Mr. Shrimp reported that due to the turnover in casework positions and we still have two open and three new caseworkers in training, the Office of Aging will underspend this year's funding since we do not have enough caseworkers to get enough people into services to spend available funds. We will be preparing a budget amendment for review at our next meeting.

Mr. Shrimp reported the governor's proposed budget will keep funding levels for AAAs at the same level with a request for a little over 2 million dollar increase for protective services funding due the increase reports of need and investigations the past three years.

Mr. Shrimp reported Community Health Choices began in the southwest counties of Pennsylvania on January 1. All people in waivers or nursing facilities chose or if they did not choose were assigned an MCO to manage their care. AAAs are providing service coordination under the 6 month mandated period but still unknown what MCOs will do at the end of that mandated period.

Mr. Shrimp reported a \$150,000 grant has been given by the First Community Foundation toward the Loyalsock Center project. An application is being prepared for \$300,000 in funding from DCNR. It appears likely we can receive the DCNR grant if we have obtained matching money. STEP is waiting for a decision by the Lycoming County Commissioners on an application for \$150,000 in Act 13 funds.

Mr. Humphrey asked if we knew how often the lighter fare meals at the centers are being requested. Mr. Shrimp agreed to get that information for the council.

The meeting adjourned at 2:20 PM on David Heiney's motion and second by Leslie Houser.

Submitted by:

Reviewed by:

Frederick Shrimp
Aging Director

David Heiney
Secretary