

# DAIL Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

June 11, 2020

## MS Teams Video Conference

### ATTENDEES

**Board Members:** Ruby Baker, Nancy Breiden, Avril Cochran, Jim Coutts, Joseph Greenwald, Jeanne Hutchins, Frances Keeler, Nick McCardle, Michelle Monroe, Delaina Norton, Steven Pouliot, Beth Stern, Cathy Swain, Lorraine Wargo

**Guests:** Lynne Cleveland Vitzhum, Sean Londergan, Lynne Cardozo, Dan Noyes, Theresa Woods

**State Employees:** Monica Hutt, Liz Perreault, Kirsten Murphy, Megan Tierney-Ward, Randy Connelly, Selina Hickman, Bard Hill, Susan Aranoff,

**Motion to Approve Minutes:** May 14, 2020 minutes: Move to Approve: Joe Greenwald  
Seconded: Steve Pouliot

Abstained: Beth Stern, Nancy Breiden

**Minutes are approved as written with formatting corrections on page two.**

### DAIL COVID Updates

#### Deputy Commissioner, Megan Tierney-Ward

- Vermont Department of Health (VDH) along with the Governor and DAIL, has created outdoor visitation guidance for Long Term Care (LTC) residential facilities that began June 19, 2020. ([https://dail.vermont.gov/sites/dail/files//documents/Outdoor\\_Visitation\\_Guidelines.pdf](https://dail.vermont.gov/sites/dail/files//documents/Outdoor_Visitation_Guidelines.pdf))
- Guidance was released on June 17, 2020 for Senior Centers on how to create a plan to begin some reopening activities. ([https://dail.vermont.gov/sites/dail/files//documents/Senior\\_Center\\_Re-Opening\\_Plan\\_Guidance.pdf](https://dail.vermont.gov/sites/dail/files//documents/Senior_Center_Re-Opening_Plan_Guidance.pdf))
- There is still no plan to open Adult Day sites at this time.
- Adult Protective Services (APS) worked with Department for Children and Families (DCF) to create and broadcast a Public Service Announcement (PSA) called “Safe Families” to encourage reporting of abuse, neglect, or exploitation. Both APS and DCF had seen a drop in reports since the beginning of the “stay home, stay safe” order. This PSA seemed to increase awareness and in turn, both DCF and APS saw an increase in reports.

- Developmental Service providers are still working from the original guidance that was given but it is time to do a reassessment of what is considered “essential” for services. What was once not essential initially may now be an essential service because so much time has passed.
- There is a state restart committee that has been formed and the Agency of Human Services is part of that committee. When sectors of the state start to open, those sectors will create a plan that will be reviewed and approved by the state through this committee. There may be times when a solid plan is created but it may have to be put on hold until the state is ready to open that particular sector. All decision will be based on the science that VDH has and the data from the communities. Update: DAIL created a new web page for sector plans. <https://dail.vermont.gov/novel-coronavirus-information/restart-vermont>. To date, plans include:
  - Long-Term Care Facility Outdoor Visitation Plan
  - Senior Center Reopening Plan
  - Area Agencies on Aging Work Smart Stay Safe Plan
  - VT Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired Plan
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)- The board had many questions about PPE. Here are some updates since the meeting:
  - The DAIL LTC COVID team, led by Monica White, confirmed that the State stockpile is for healthcare/long-term care workers to use when other sources are not available.
  - DAIL reached out to provider networks to assess the unmet need for consumers.
  - DAIL ordered about 70,000 cloth masks to be distributed to consumers via identified agencies.

#### **DAIL Legislative/Budget Updates:**

##### **Deputy Commissioner, Megan Tierney-Ward**

The budget for FY2021 will begin with 25% of the SFY20 budget (after BAA) for the first quarter, July 1 through September 30. Departments must have created a budget for the remainder of the FY2021 by mid-August to be implemented for the second quarter, October 1, 2020.

#### **Older Vermonters Act (H.611) Update:**

##### **Representatives Theresa Woods and Dan Noyes**

H.965 - Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) allocation proposal from the House of Human Services has been posted and sent to House Appropriations to be reviewed. This bill can be found:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/bill/status/2020/H.965>

H.611 – Older Vermonters Act is an act that will describe a system of services, supports and protections for Vermont residents 60 years of age or older. The most current action on the bill is that Senate Health and Welfare had the first reading on June 17, 2020 after it passed the House on June 16, 2020. Bill can be found: <https://legislature.vermont.gov/bill/status/2020/H.611>

The State of Vermont has been designated a “Healthy State” and continuing with that designation, work is being done to apply a broad look at how the state can improve quality of life. It is important to look at things such as sidewalks, access to mental health, and employment among many other things. Senior Care Action Network (SCAN) feels the state has good bones but aging must be addressed inclusively across all departments and not just through the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living (DAIL).

It became apparent with the Coronavirus that the state was not prepared to support older Vermonters in a pandemic. This is another piece that will be addressed so the state is better prepared in the future.

**Future Meeting- Format and Topics-**

**Deputy Commissioner, Megan Tierney-Ward and DAIL Advisory Board**

Jim Coutts brought awareness that older, single men tend to have little to no social groups and are particularly isolated. VDH has put some resources about the topic of isolation and depression that is available on their website that may be helpful in addressing this demographic.

Kim Fitzgerald asked about the Governor’s guidance for people 65 and older. If they are living independently, they have the right to make choices for themselves even if it is unadvisable.

Update: On June 16, 2020, Governor Scott announced easing of restrictions for people 65 and older. DAIL subsequently published a [memo to home and community-based providers](#) on June 22, 2020 describing the easing of restrictions and restarting services.

Upcoming Meetings- We will meet again on July 9, from 10:00-12:30. We will not meet in August and will resume in September. July topics include an update on PPE efforts, DS payment reform and conflict free case management.

**Meeting was adjourned 11:44**