

DAIL Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
November 8, 2018
Sally Fox Conference Center, Waterbury

ATTENDEES:

Board Members: Ruby Baker, Terry Collins, Kim Fitzgerald, Matthew Fitzgerald, Kenneth Gagne, Joseph Greenwald, Jeanne Hutchins, Laura MacDonald, Nick McCardle, Nancy Metz, Steven Pouliot, Christine Scott, Beth Stern, Lorraine Wargo

Guests: Marie Zura, Lynne Cleveland Vitzthum, Kirsten Murphy, Toby Howe, Mike Firkey

State Employees: Camille George, Liz Perreault, Angela Smith-Dieng, Graham Dewyea and staff from the Assistive Technology Tryout Center.

Motion to Approve Minutes: October 11, 2018:

Approved: Lorraine Wargo

Seconded: Terry Collins

Abstained: Joe Greenwald and Christine Scott

Minutes are approved.

State Plan on Aging (SPA) and Senior Center Survey:

Angela Smith-Dieng, Director of the Unit on Aging

State Plan on Aging-

The Vermont State Plan on Aging (SPA) was approved by the federal Administration for Community Living on September 14, 2018 and has been launched by DAIL. “The plan provides a broad overview of demographic changes and environmental context, includes results of a statewide needs assessment, and hones three major goal areas into key measurable objectives. The three goals focus on 1) supporting healthy aging for all, 2) strengthening core Older Americans Act services for those in greatest need, and 3) bolstering our elder justice system to protect against abuse.” These goals will guide DAIL in the policies and practices put forth by the department concerning older Vermonters. This plan also relies on Older American’s Act (OAA) for funding and the ability to network with communities to accomplish the goals set by the plan, over the next four years.

To track the progress of the goals that have been established in the plan, a Scorecard will be developed using the State’s Performance Scorecard platform and Results Based Accountability framework. The federal Administration for Community Living will also do annual reviews to track the state’s progress.

There is an Older Vermonter's Act Working Group (OVAWG) whose charge is to align with the SPA, and OAA and Choices for Care. There is no expectation that additional funds will be appropriated as part of this process, only that recommendations will be made that will result in an OVA.

Mike Moser, Research Specialist Coordinator of the Vermont State Data Center, is working with Angela Smith-Dieng to help identify the basic data that can paint a picture of the needs and wants of older Vermonters. The data and its sources have been catalogued and Angela will share the information with the advisory board.

All the work of the OVAWG and its sub-working groups (Comprehensive System of Services and Supports, CFC/Long Term Care and Employment & Community Engagement) will be pulled together to create a framework for the recommendations for the OVAWG that will be presented to the Vermont Legislature. All the working groups will meet in advance of the OVAWG's January meeting so that at that time the final framework can be finalized. The OVAWG will meet on a bi-monthly basis through September, 2019, with the written recommendations due to the Legislature on December 1, 2019.

Going back to the Vermont State Plan on Aging, the difference in this 4-year plan versus the last plan is this one is more consolidated and streamlined. This was done to create a better platform to address the issues that had moved to the top of the list of Vermont's priorities. Instead of using this plan as a place to put all the things that would be good to have, it was pared down to goals that were obtainable over the next 4 years.

Senior Center Survey-

A survey, that was created with help from the Association for Senior Centers, was conducted with 45 senior centers across the state. The survey asked about their operations, programming, attendance, funding, their challenges and successes. Of the 45 senior centers, approximately 28 (60%) centers responded. Each center is as unique as the communities they serve. Some centers are using a model where the center doesn't have a brick and mortar home-base but they provide services in different locations within the community. Richmond is one of those towns and they seem to be having success with this model.

When the statewide assessment was done for the State Plan on Aging, affordability to live in Vermont was a huge concern for people as well as isolation and lack of transportation. VTrans is currently working on their Public Transit Policy Plan and DAIL representatives are participating in those meetings to be a voice for our populations that rely on public transportation. If the transportation issues can be better addressed, that will also help people be less isolated. Again, this is a situation where no additional resources are anticipated so it will require the state to think creatively and make the best use of the resources it has.

Since there is very little funding available to senior centers from the State or Federal government, they struggle financially. Most of their budget comes from fundraising, OAA funds distributed to them by the Area Agency on Aging, grants and town budgets. The staffing of the centers is varied as well. Some have paid staff where others operate entirely with the help from volunteers.

The most successful senior centers are those who are able to offer a variety of activities and have participants of a wide age range. The younger people of this age group tend to want to participate in wellness activities and be involved with a center that is fun, warm and inviting. Also, the younger people of this group don't identify themselves as seniors so connecting and drawing them in takes a very diverse, high quality program.

The benefits of having a healthy and strong senior center in a community is that it can provide social activities, exercise, health education, arts and crafts, organized trips, health screenings and communal meals. Participating in any of the offered activities not only helps reduce healthcare costs for low-income and socially isolated older adults but provides all participants an opportunity to have healthy, engaging interactions with peers.

Assistive Technology Center (ACT) Visit:

Graham Dewyea, Director of ATC

The DAIL Advisory Board took a field trip to the ATC that is housed in the atrium area of the Waterbury State Office Complex. There are three tryout centers across the state where people of any age and ability can drop in and try the many different tools the center has on hand. The centers offer free equipment demonstrations, free 30-day equipment loans and information on how to purchase the equipment that a person would like to have. These services are available to organizations and their consumers as well. AT will also go to events and have a table with information about ATCs and can even provide group presentations on what the centers have to offer. The field trip afforded members of the DAIL Advisory Board the opportunity to learn about the ATC and also to see demonstrations of some of the equipment that is available.

Conversation with the Commissioner:

Camille George, DAIL Deputy Commissioner

Budget-

The departments have been given their budget instructions and DAIL was asked to level fund as an initial exercise. DAIL has submitted their budget exercise to the Secretary's office for review, it will then go to the Finance and Management office before it is sent back to DAIL with feedback. The process of building the proposed budget is long and it goes through many different iterations. The Governor's final proposed budget will be presented to the Legislature early in 2019.

DS Payment Reform-

Developmental Services is working with providers on a comprehensive rate study. As part of this, all of the DS providers were asked to submit very detailed information. The working group is looking to provide a more flexible and adaptable process for the ever-changing needs of the people utilizing the program while ensuring transparency and accountability. In mid-December, the results from the rate study should be available and this will help inform the development of the new payment model.

In addition, there is a work group looking at how to improve reporting of DS using the MMIS, the state's system that manages most other aspects of Medicaid. Currently, DAIL is tracking a 200+ million-dollar program on excel spreadsheets. This system is no longer viable when tracking over 3,000 participants. A new system will greatly improve our ability to manage the program.

A third workgroup is looking at which validated, standardized assessment tool will be implemented for DS. The current tool is a "home grown" tool that was developed many years ago. Using a validated, standardized assessment tool will help to ensure equitable treatment of participants. While the final payment model is yet to be determined, one option that is being considered is using some sort of tiered model for payment where funding is linked to the individual's assessed needs. One of the standardized assessments that is being considered is the Supports Intensity Scale (SIS), which was designed for DS and is used in multiple other states. There will be a demo of this tool on November 20 and a recording will be made available to those who can not attend.

Choices for Care and Adult Services are being kept in the loop because various aspects the payment model that DS comes up with may also work for those programs as well.

DAIL Advisory Board Membership-

The DAIL Advisory Board is in need of a member to represent the Southeast area of Vermont. The board could also use a few more people that represent people with disabilities. The Commissioner's office has sent out a recruitment letter asking for applicants.

Choices for Care (CFC)-

Lorraine Wargo asked if there would be a way, in the future, to offer CFC for non-medical needs. There is a large need in the state for people to get help in their homes for non-medical issues. Because these types of services are so important to keeping a person in their home, there has been collaboration in some parts of the state between the Home Health Agency and Home Care Providers. The Home Care Provider (HCP) Association has also been established to provide accountability to this profession.

The topic of CFC will be brought to the board for discussion in the new year.

Miscellaneous-

In the new year, we will invite June Bascom from the DDSD and Megan Tierney-Ward from the ASD to the advisory board to share the results of this year's National Core Indicator survey. This will be the first year that we will have results for Aging and Disabilities. The task is now for DAIL to

determine how to use the results of the surveys (Aging and Disabilities and Developmental Disabilities) in planning and to improve services.

Another related future topic will be to look at all of the DAIL Divisions' scorecards that are tracking various performance measures. Divisions are still working on this so they are not quite ready to share.

Last year, performance measures have changed for Voc. Rehab and DBVI. We will invite them to come and discuss how the last year has gone with the new measures.

The Nursing Home Oversight Working Group is working on a new process for transfer of ownership of nursing homes while also looking at improving quality oversight.

Identify DAB Members to Share Their Perspective at Future Meetings:

Camille George, DAIL Deputy Commissioner

December – Christine Scott

January – Nick McCardle

Cancellations Due to Inclement Weather:

Camille George, DAIL Deputy Commissioner

Safety first when it comes to traveling winter roads! If the DAB meeting has not been cancelled and you do not feel comfortable traveling, please don't. You can always call in or get caught up through the minutes if you miss the meeting. We have sent an electronic copy to everyone for reference on the procedures if a meeting is to be cancelled or modified due to bad driving conditions.

DAIL Advisory Board Updates:

DAIL Advisory Board

Kim Fitzgerald – The Allard Square location has opened which was named after the first Cathedral Square resident who has been there for the last 39 years. The Allard Square location provides 25 section 8 units and another 10 units for a total of 35 units. There were over 300 applicants.

The SASH model has now been replicated in Rhode Island and Minnesota. Kim Fitzgerald will present about SASH at a future DAIL Advisory Board meeting.

Beth Stern – Central Vermont Council on Aging's annual meeting is being held net Thursday in Randolph and Monica Hutt and Ben Kinsel will be guest speakers.

Mathew Fitzgerald – Matt will be speaking at the Vermont Family Network Conference and is honored to represent his family and this board at the conference and have the opportunity to speak about his family’s and daughter’s experiences living with special needs.

Matt Fitzgerald moved to adjourn the meeting, Nick McCardle seconded

Meeting was adjourned 1:24

DRAFT