



— and the facility's apparent unwillingness to address the matter. DAIL was not previously aware of this complaint. DAIL made it clear that DAIL takes the allegations seriously, provided information about the facility regulations, and referenced the Office of Civil Rights which is the regulatory entity to investigate racism allegations. DAIL forwarded the information to Sean Londergan, the LTC Ombudsman, who was grateful for the information.

3. DAIL facilitated, along with VDH, a great technical assistance call with LTC facilities regarding COVID-19 vaccination planning.

#### Adult Day

1. DAIL continues regular technical assistance calls with VDH participation.
2. DAIL published an Adult Day FAQ guidance document on the DAIL COVID web page.
3. To date, six Adult Day centers have notified DAIL of plans to reopen. Two have actually reopened. DAIL is consulting with VDH about whether the reopening plans should be put on hold.

#### CRF

1. \$2M CRF was granted to Adult Day providers.
2. \$100K CRF was granted to DAs to support Eldercare Clinician services.
3. Two CRF grants were issued for Senior Meals. One for \$600K and one for \$565K (Act 154). Grants are being issued through the AAAs for payment to senior meal sights.
4. DAIL received \$700K CRF approval to be used as a one-time stipend for families of children (both minor and adult) with developmental disabilities. Grants are in process.
5. \$375K CRF was approved by JFC to help stand up beds at Burlington Health and Rehab to help with hospital flow. The goal is to free up beds at the hospital for potential COVID surge needs. Grant in process.

#### Other

1. DAIL coordinated an email communication to 3394 Independent Direct Support Workers paid through ARIS. The communication is intended to solicit a response from those who are interested in additional work to potentially help the State address future staffing shortages at LTC facilities. Over 35 workers responded as interested in being included as a resource for crisis staffing needs.
2. DAIL is wrapping up the Vermont State Plan on Aging needs assessment survey. The survey generated 2500+ responses which include information about the needs of older Vermonters and their experience during COVID. Information will be used to craft goals for the next plan.
3. DAIL received AOA approval to hire two positions: ASP Assist. Dir. and Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Deafblind Services Dir.
4. DAIL finalized and disseminated the qualitative consumer experience survey for participants of Choices for Care and Developmental Services to ask about their COVID experiences as it relates to services. Responses are due by 12/31/20.

The state of Vermont is experiencing a significant rise in COVID19 cases right now. DAIL acknowledges the pressures that DAIL and our partners are facing while providing services and keeping people safe.

With the rise in COVID19 cases across the state, the Governor has put forth guidance for all to limit social gatherings to only those who share a household. If a person lives alone, they may join family for holidays. It is important that we all follow the new guidelines and share that message with all networks.

DAIL had met with the Secretary's office to discuss the budget. Again, DAIL is being asked to do a level fund exercise. No other budget information is available right now. Once there is more information, DAIL will share it with the board.

With the recent election, there were minimal changes. Governor Phil Scott was re-elected and there were a few changes in the Senate and House. However, there should be much, if any, change in the leadership team.

Vermont Legal Aid and Medicaid for the Working Disabled (MWD) have met to discuss how to help people with disabilities if they have been receiving unemployment benefits that make them ineligible for Medicaid. The Department of Vermont Health Access and Vocational Rehabilitation have joined that conversation to address this potential cliff.

Amid the COVID19 pandemic, there continue to be staffing challenges. There has not been an increase in the nursing home census but there may be an increase in the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) needed.

The hospitals are still seeing a lag time for placing individuals in a residential care facility when the individual is unable to live at home independently. There is still a need to honor a person's choice in where they are placed. That consideration in addition to new COVID regulations have made the transition to a LTC facility difficult.

#### **DAIL LTC COVID Team- Staffing and workforce issues across the state:**

##### **Monica White, Director of Operations**

The DAIL LTC COVID Team was formed in March, at the beginning of the pandemic. These are some of the things the team has been doing:

- Identifying the need for PPE and providing targeted support when providers are experiencing an outbreak or other emergency need. Melanie Feddersen heads the coordination of PPE.
- The team has provided fit testing for appropriate use of the distributed N95 masks across the state. The team is ramping up for another round of fit testing in the next few weeks.
- Cloth masks have been distributed by delivery and direct mailings to providers.
- The team has been involved with the statewide surge team to identify and coordinate sites for COVID19 patients.
- DAIL established an emergency staffing protocol to help LTC facilities and providers experiencing staffing needs due to an outbreak. The protocol incorporates the Medical Reserve Corps, the State volunteer registry, a list of Independent Director Support Workers who are available for extra work, and a list of private home care providers who are available for contract services.
- DAIL is now working to develop a staffing pool model, similar to Minnesota, for the critical response needs and have been given approval from the Governor's office to move forward with implementing this effort.

#### **Older Vermonter's Act Presentation:**

**Angela Smith-Dieng, Adult Services Director and Conor O'Dea, State Unit on Aging Director**

Angela Smith-Dieng and Conor O’Dea offered information on the Older Vermonter’s Act with a PowerPoint presentation which can be found here: <https://dail.vermont.gov/resources/advisory-board/dail-advisory-brd-2020-items>

This act was signed in October by the Governor. There is an action plan that is due to the Legislature on May 1, 2021. There is a requirement in the act for a *Self-Neglect Working Group* to be formed by July 2021 and that group must generate recommendations to be presented to the Legislature by July 2022.

### **DAIL Advisory Board Updates:**

#### **Advisory Board Members**

Ruby Baker- COVE updates- Through Building Bridges, COVE has been coordinating calls with their community to share information. Many of those calls had been about scam awareness and COVE was asked for more varied and lighter content during the calls. To answer that request, COVE organized a mask photo competition for Halloween, poetry readings, memoir writing workshop, with holiday readings and radio theater coming in future calls.

COVE has identified a hearing aid bill as one of their legislative priorities for the upcoming legislative session.

#### **Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Disorders Update from ADRD Commission and Hub & Spoke:**

##### **Tiffany Smith, Adult Services Division (ASD) and Monica Hutt, Commissioner**

National Family Care Givers Month is the month of November. There are 64,000 individuals who are caregivers for individuals who are aging or disabled. ASD put together a guide for family caregivers on remote supports with links: <https://asd.vermont.gov/help/learn-about-care-respice>

The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) has accepted questions for the caregiver module and cognitive decline module that will capture good data and information for DAIL to use.

The Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Dementias (ADRD) Commission is finishing the annual report for the legislature. The report included Vermont being a dementia friendly state and using the model created by Dementia Friendly America. However, since March, the commission has been focused on the pandemic and the services for those with dementia and Alzheimer’s.

With collaboration between DAIL, VDH, UVM Center on Aging, OneCare, and the Alzheimer’s Association a plan to address the long lag time between the onset of Alzheimer’s and diagnosis is being formed. Early intervention dramatically increases the quality of life for the person with the diagnosis and the family who takes care of them. Some of the progress this group has made during regular meetings over the last year and a half are:

- Recognize the impact the diagnosis has on the entire family and providing services that can help preserve the family caregiver support.
- Begin to increase capacity in primary care to give diagnosis instead of sending to the Memory Care which can take a long time to get in and get the diagnosis.
- There has been an algorithm created called Smart Phrase that helps to make the diagnosis that is built into the Electronic Health System (Epic System) which is available to doctors.
- Encouraging other doctors outside of the UVM Medical system to use Smart Phrase.
- The Vermont Health Learning Network will include Smart Phrase training.

- HAN can launch Smart Phrase through ECHO for training. Dr. William Pendlebury will offer the training.

More info about the ADRD Commission and the Dementia Friendly Vermont initiative here:

<https://asd.vermont.gov/governors-commission-adrd>

**Other Updates:**

ASD used to use Rewarding Work website as a resource for independent employers and caregivers to connect. Now, the Department of Labor (DOL) has made their system available to self-managed employers of State managed services through ARIS (e.g. Choices for Care). Employers can post a job on their site to find caregivers. ARIS provides the employer with the EIN that is needed to access the DOL system.

The DAIL Advisory Board Sub-committee that was formed to review whether the Long-Term Care Ombudsman is operating without conflict. That review will take place prior to the next DAIL Advisory Board meeting in December and recommendation will be made to the full board.

Ruby Baker moved to adjourn; Marie Zura seconded.

**Meeting was adjourned - 12:15**