

# Advisory Council on Aging and Disability Services

*Creating choices for elders and adults with disabilities in Seattle-King County*

Mailing Address: PO Box 34125, Seattle, WA 98124-4215  
Office Address: Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 5<sup>th</sup> Ave, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Tel: 206-684-0660 TTY: 206-684-0274 FAX: 206-684-0689  
www.adsadvisorycouncil.org

## MONTHLY MEETING June 13, 2008

### MEMBERS PRESENT

City of Seattle	King County	United Way
<input type="checkbox"/> Vacant	<input type="checkbox"/> Vacant	<input type="checkbox"/> Vacant
<input type="checkbox"/> Barbara Hurst, Secretary	<input type="checkbox"/> Vacant	<input type="checkbox"/> Lorna Stone
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Diane Snell	<input type="checkbox"/> Julie Peterson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thelma Pegues
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dr. Pierre Loebel	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Silversity Madrazo, Member-at-large	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dr. Jonathan Wanagat
<input type="checkbox"/> Councilmember Tim Burgess, elected official	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kaylene Moon	<input type="checkbox"/> Don Moreland
<input type="checkbox"/> Marie Cook	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rose Finnegan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Phil Pitruzzello
<input type="checkbox"/> Houston Brown,	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Art Mussman, V Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Michael Miller, AC Chair
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dr. Robert Gross	<input type="checkbox"/> Kate Slaminko	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Midge Levy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jacqueline Deer-Lord	<input type="checkbox"/> Cathy VonWald	<input type="checkbox"/> Amy Astle-Raaen

**Excused Absence** Houston Brown, Council Member Burgess, Julie Peterson, Kate Slaminko, Cathy VonWald, Lorna Stone, Don Moreland, Amy Astle-Raaen

**Guests** Toni Lysen, Liz Mercer

**ADS Staff** Pamela Piering, Rosemary Cunningham, Doug Ricker, Gigi Meinig, Selina Chow,

**United Way Staff** Linda Woodall

**King County Staff** Linda Wells, Linda Peterson

## MINUTES

**Michael Miller, Chair**, welcomed Advisory Council members and ADS staff to the meeting. He asked those present to introduce themselves. Then he introduced the guest speakers.

## **PROGRAM: MEDICARE POLICY UPDATES**

### **Speakers:**

**Liz Mercer** is the Regional Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) Trainer for King and Whatcom Counties. She provides training and technical assistance to SHIBA Volunteers and agencies. Prior to that, she managed CHAP, a program in King County that assists low-income people to access health care such as Medicaid and Basic Health. She has a Masters Degree in Organizational Management, and particularly enjoys the challenge of helping people understand complex systems, like Medicare and Medicaid.

Contact information: Liz Mercer

Regional Trainer- King & Whatcom Counties

SHIBA -Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors Helpline

Wash. State Office of the Insurance Commissioner

206-368-7197 [lizm@oic.wa.gov](mailto:lizm@oic.wa.gov) and [www.insurance.wa.gov](http://www.insurance.wa.gov)

**Toni Lysen** is the Washington State Lead for the CMS Seattle Regional Office of External Affairs, which encompasses Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Alaska. Toni is responsible for establishing new and supporting existing relationships with Medicare providers, beneficiaries, their advocates, and health care organizations. Previously, Toni was appointed a member of the Washington State Legislature, and has served over 20 years as a healthcare, aging and human service policy and outreach specialist for two Members of Congress. Additionally, she taught high school, elementary school, Head Start and volunteered for the Seattle-King County Dispute Resolution Service. She is a graduate of Seattle University and enjoys hiking, camping and skiing with her six children and their families which include nice grandchildren.

Contact Information: Toni Lysen

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Region 10

Office of External Affairs, Washington State Lead

206.615.3802 and [toni.lysen@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:toni.lysen@cms.hhs.gov).

### **LIZ MERCER'S PRESENTATION**

Liz described SHIBA as an organization which provides free, unbiased, confidential insurance information. The organization trains volunteers to give information on insurance, Medicare and other health care coverage. Services are available in almost every county in the State of Washington and are connected to a national network. Consumers calling the Help-Line at 1-800-562-6900 receive an assessment of health coverage needs, eligibility determination for programs, education about options, insurance policy comparisons, referrals to other agencies and programs on behalf of the consumers. SHIBA partners with community agencies and offers training technical assistance, publications, and presentations. You may visit their website at [www.insurance.wa.gov](http://www.insurance.wa.gov).

SHIBA is an invaluable resource for consumers making decisions about the complex Medicare D prescription drug program. The SHIBA website offers a Drug Plan Finder though [WWW.Medicare.gov](http://WWW.Medicare.gov). The site makes it easy to compare plans.

## **TONI LYSEN PRESENTATION**

Toni touched on a number of aspects in the vast Medicare system. She began by giving us some statistics. Medicare has grown 130% since 1966. Of the 50 million enrollees, 24 million are children. 90% of enrollees receive drug coverage either through Medicare D or employer paid insurance. The total cost of Medicare is 632.4 billion. In the near future, the monthly premium is expected to rise from \$96 per month to \$136 per month. For low income enrollees there are two programs QMB, and SLMB which pays for the medicare premiums. These programs may be accessed through the State of Washington. Medicare offers a low income subsidy (LIS) for part D prescription drug coverage.

Toni gave us an update on a number of new programs offered by Medicare. Most of the new programs focus on preventative services such as vaccines (for shingles, pneumonia, flu), cancer screening, diabetes self management, smoking cessation to name a few. This change in focus from a passive payer of acute health care to prevention is due in part to spiraling health care costs and the realization that quality of life depends on preventing and managing chronic disease.

The Advisory Council received instruction on how to access the online Medicare personal health care system through [www.MyMedicare.gov](http://www.MyMedicare.gov). Toni took us through number of screen shots.

As part of the Medicare quality improvement initiative, CMS changed the provider payment system to eliminate fraud and increase quality care. In the future, providers of Durable Medical Equipment must be certified before Medicare will pay for equipment. Medicare will no longer pay hospitals for "Hospital Acquired Conditions" that were not present on admission. For example if someone breaks a leg, but acquires a hospital infection, the care for the infection will not be paid for by Medicare. Doctors are also included in the quality assurance programs, and Medicare will require specific reports. Medicare is also streamlining the number of contractors that pay for Medicare services. The CMS quality initiatives may be accessed online. The web site [www.MyMedicare.gov](http://www.MyMedicare.gov) offers hospital, home health and nursing facility comparison data and much more.

### **Question & Answer**

*Question:* Will companies continue to repair Durable Medical Equipment?

*Answer:* It is anticipated large companies will become certified and continue to bill Medicare. Because the paperwork and cost to certify is expensive, small companies may choose not to become certified. Toni suggested he ask the repair company if they plan to become certified.

*Question:* It's difficult to access a parent's Medicare account since it's password protected how can I help my mother?

*Answer:* Work with your mother, as long as she gives you her password you can access her account.

*Question:* How is the vendor's reimbursement determined?

*Answer:* Rates vary across states. Generally rates are based on the skill level of the physician, local wages, malpractice insurance and even representation in Washington DC.

*Question:* Was the legislation 3101 to increase the reimbursement passed?

*Answer:* We will know July 1<sup>st</sup>. There is a concern if the reimbursement does not keep pace with the economy doctors and healthcare providers will not take Medicare putting patients at risk.

Final Note: The power point presentations may be accessed at:

<http://www.agingkingcounty.org/advisory-council/minutes.htm>

## **BUSINESS MEETING**

### **Minutes**

**Action Taken:** It was moved, seconded and passed that the May 9, 2008 minutes be approved.

## **COMMITTEE AND TASK FORCE REPORTS**

### **Update King County Budget**

Linda Peterson, the director of the Community Services Division gave a brief presentation about the projected King County budget for 2009 and beyond. It is expected King County will see a \$68 million dollar shortfall in 2009 and possibly greater shortfalls in the future if the economy continues to languish. Linda explained the main reasons for the budget shortfall include lower interest rates, lower property-tax collections and reduced sales tax revenues. King County Executive, Ron Sims vowed to do all he can to find efficiencies and reduce costs. However, the first priority is to protect people's safety and health, which leaves the majority of the budget earmarked for safety and criminal justice.

Traditionally human services receive less funding priority. The King County budget director Bob Cowen proposed that discretionary (general fund) spending on public health and human services be cut one-third in 2009 and suggested many programs may be phased out by 2011. Ron Sims is working with Governor Christine Gregoire, the legislature and the region's leaders to find permanent solutions to the funding issues. Options to reduce costs include lowering salaries, reducing the number of County departments, issuing across the board cuts, or bidding out services.

Senior centers face imminent cuts, and according to Linda, will be prioritized based on whether they are located in rural/unincorporated King Co vs. urban communities. They may face an RFP as early as 2008 with fewer dollars available. Linda asked Advisory Council Members to call her or Linda Wells if there are issues King County should know about.

Advisory council members expressed concern that senior center budgets were at bare bones right now and will find it difficult to manage if less funding is available. Many senior centers offer programs, which increase the health and well-being of seniors such as the exercise and the nutrition programs. Pam emphasized that senior centers encompass complex layers of funding and programs, which make them a success, on the other hand funders want to avoid duplication, gaps and working at cross-purposes. Senior Centers located in the City of Seattle face similar funding shortfalls. To assure efficiencies senior centers, parks and neighborhoods need to strengthen their partnerships to avoid duplication and gaps in service.

## **Mayor's Council for African American Elders (MCAAE)**

George Dicks, supervisor of the Geriatric Psychiatry Service clinic at Harborview Mental Health Services represented the MCAAE. The Mayor's Council on African American Elders is a 12-member council appointed to serve in an advisory capacity to the Mayor, City Council, and the Seattle Human Services Department in matters affecting older African Americans. One of the goals of the MCAAE is to recruit people from diverse backgrounds. Members include individuals with expertise in aging, health care, mental health, social work and skilled care administration. George stressed the promotion of common interests and collaboration in legislative advocacy efforts. For more information, the MCAAE web address is [www.seattle.gov/mcaae](http://www.seattle.gov/mcaae).

## **City Council Report – No Report**

**Sponsors Meeting** - No report.

**Planning & Allocations Committee** – Rose Finegan reported that 2009 revenues for are expected to be flat at best and in the case of King County dramatic cuts are expected for senior centers and day health. The committee's *preliminary recommendation* is to carry forward the 2008 discretionary allocations into 2009. The committee targeted Volunteer Transportation for an increase in funding of \$36,000. This increase will raise the volunteer mileage reimbursement rate from \$.35 to \$.45 per mile so as not to lose volunteer drivers due to higher gas costs.

The committee also *recommended* a flexible distribution of funds between the congregate and home delivered meals to meet the needs of vulnerable, underserved clients as addressed through the upcoming competitive bid process.

The planning and allocation Committee will convene in December to address any impacts resulting from City of Seattle and King County budget cuts in aging services. The committee pledged to prepare a request for financial support for senior centers from service clubs such as Kiwanis and Rotary.

*Motion:*

***It was moved and seconded to accept the preliminary recommendations of the Planning and allocations committee.***

**Outreach and Advocacy/Health Care Task Force** - No report

## **Universal Design**

Art Mussman announced that he would attend the Universal Design and technology conference sponsored by the University of Washington on June 25 in Skamania. He expects the conference will offer a number of strategies and technologies for aging in place.

## **Legislative Forum**

Doug Ricker gave an update on the Legislative Forum, to be held on September 17 at the Tukwila Community Center. The committee began to develop the agenda. It is expected an advocacy training will be part of the program. Legislators will be available during lunch to meet with constituents.

## **Director's Report**

### *State Council on Aging*

Pam reported the Governor attended the State Council on Aging retreat and appeared engaged and interested in aging issues. Cindy Zehnder the governor's chief of Staff proposed the creation of 4-6 forums throughout the State to explore aging readiness across employers, business, and infrastructure such as housing and transportation. These forums may lead to an aging summit in the spring of 2009, with a focus on how the demographic changes will effect state government, business, healthcare and other sectors.

### *Discretionary Funding*

Pam gave an update on the discretionary funding by explaining ADS was unable to give a cost of living increase to service providers in 2007, however, by 2008, there were under-spent funds and a enough SCSA to provide a 2.5% increase to contracted discretionary service providers.

### *Prevention*

Pam stressed the importance of prevention, health promotion and early intervention, which is seen by many on the State and Federal level as the key to health and lowering healthcare costs. The ADS Pearls program already has captured attention on the Federal level as an evidence-based program that works. Dr. Snowden, Medical Director of Geriatric Psychiatry at Harborview, one of the early pioneers of Pearls and Pam will present information about Pearls in Washington DC. Locally, King County Care Partners Medical Director gave a well-received presentation at a W4A statewide conference in Leavenworth.

*Next Advisory Council Meeting* will be Held July 11. The program topic will be Elder Abuse. Council member Burgess expressed interest in the topic and will attend the next meeting.

## **Final Announcements**

Linda Woodall invited everyone to a hunger summit sponsored by United Way at the Shoreline Community Center on June 24<sup>th</sup>. Lunch is included.

Kaylene Moon gave an up date on a community meeting in DesMoines she attended.

Toni Lysen announced the next CMS broadcast is targeted to employers asking them to consider time off for employee caring for family members as they age. She asked if we might consider coordinating this topic with her for the legislative forum in September.

Toni Lysen also announced the National Caregiver Initiative broadcast is scheduled for June 25 from 10 – 11 AM at the Regional office at 6th and Blanchard. Please RSVP Toni if you wish to attend.

Meeting adjourned at 2:10 PM

**NEXT REGULAR MEETING**

**Topic: Elder Abuse**  
**Friday, July 11, 2008**  
**Noon – 2:00 PM**  
**4060 Conference Room**  
**Seattle Municipal Tower**  
**700 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue**  
**Seattle, WA 98104**  
**(206) 684-0660**  
**[www.adsadvisorycouncil.org](http://www.adsadvisorycouncil.org)**