



Strategic Action Planning Group on Aging

Meeting Minutes – May 2019

Participants: Christian Itin (chair), Maureen McDonald (vice chair), John Zabawa, Sarah Elliott, Steve Child, Karen Brown, Karin Stewart, Gabriel Kaplan, Hayley Gleason, Jayla Sanchez Warren, Jim Riesberg, Jim Collins, Tony Tapia, Chris Lee, John Emerson, Sarah Elliott, Dave Norman, Steve Grund, Mindy Gates, and Jean Nofles

Not in Attendance: Coral Cosway and Kathleen Hall

Public Participants: Lindsay Parsons (Boulder County AAA), Stuart Feinor, Sharon Adams (CDPHE), Rena Soller (Colorado School of Public Health), Ashley Taeckens (Knoebel Institute on Healthy Aging), Bob Brocker (Colorado Senior Lobby), George Maxey (Commerce City Council on Aging), Maida Pearce (Senior Hub), Andrea Kuwik (Bell Policy Center), Eva Veitch (Region 10 AAA), and Ed Leary (Osher Lifelong Learning Institute)

Action Items:

- Jarett Hughes to amend April minutes to include reference to discussion about home care workers, SEIU, and Washington state legislation
- Janice Blanchard to keep SAPGA updated on work efforts within the Governor's Office
- Jarett Hughes will follow-up with Colorado Respite Coalition in coming months to keep updated on work effort and potential pilot with TCARE
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Meeting Notes

Welcome, Roll Call, and Approval of Minutes

- Meeting called to order by Christian Itin at 12:01 pm
- April minutes approved
 - o Jarett Hughes to add mentioned of SEIU and Washington state legislation
- May agenda approved

Public Comment

Janice Blanchard, Senior Advisor on Aging, gave a brief update to SAPGA on the following priority areas:

- Lifelong Colorado: Governor's Office, AARP, and other stakeholders are working on how to move the project forward and exploring funding options.
- Aging Summit: Discussions for this event are still in the early planning phase. There are a lot of conferences going on in Fall of 2019 so the planning committee is unsure about whether to hold the event in conjunction with one of these events or, perhaps, wait until 2020 to hold the Summit.
- Financial Security for Older Coloradans: A partnership between the Governor's Office and the Attorney General's Office, the goal of this group is to coordinate statewide to prevent elder abuse/fraud promote and promote financial security and elder justice. This group is early on in the planning stages of an Elder Justice event on August 23 in conjunction with the National Adult Protective Services Association annual conference in Denver.

Karen Brown asked about how the settlement money secured by former Attorney General Cynthia Coffman was going to be utilized. Janice Blanchard indicated she would follow-up with Lena Fishman from the Attorney General's Office to explore the accessibility and use of those funds.



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Bob Brocker, President of the Colorado Senior Lobby, let meeting participants know that they will be hosting an August 12 event focusing on TABOR, Gallagher Amendment, and the Senior Property Tax Exemption.

Caregiving Panel

Maureen McDonald, SAPGA Vice Chair, facilitated a discussion featuring three guests: Ali Ahmadi, CEO of TCARE; Meghan Kluth, Project Manager of the Colorado Respite Coalition; and Heather Brozek, Director Community Services at Seniors' Resource Center.

Ali Ahmadi from TCARE started off the discussion with an overview of their program. TCARE is a family caregiver assessment and referral tool that focuses on the family caregiver versus the care recipient. One of the foundational ideas is that the caregiving role develops out of, and in opposition, to existing roles within a social relationship: mother, father, husband, wife, etc. Inherent in this development of the caregiving role is a strain on the preexisting role, referred to as identity discrepancy. By using initial and follow-up assessments, TCARE identifies areas of burden as it pertains to the family caregiver, changes in the care setting, and makes referrals to that individual that serve to reduce burden and improve outcomes for both the caregiver and care recipient. By better supporting the family caregiver and keeping the care recipient in the home, research has suggested that TCARE prevents placement in a skilled nursing setting, reduced use of HCBS waiver services, and reduced state and federal spending. TCARE is an evidence-based and approved tool by the Administration of Community Living and is available as a CMS-1115 waiver program in Washington state.

Meghan Kluth followed Ali and provided an update on the efforts from the Colorado Respite Coalition. Easter Seals manages the Colorado Respite Coalition and the program is largely funded by state and federal grants with oversight by the Colorado Department of Human Services' State Unit on Aging. The group has found that many caregivers do not actually identify as a caregiver. In response, they have launched a caregiver awareness campaign with TV, radio, and digital advertisements. The awareness campaign has been successful thus far and they have seen an increased demand for respite services and individuals reaching out to the group with inquiries. Another issue Meghan brought up is the negative association people have with the word "respite". She indicated a desire to rebrand caregiver support and "respite".

Heather Brozek closed out introductory statements with a brief background of Seniors' Resource Center (SRC). SRC started under the Jefferson County Department of Social Services and has been providing services since 1978. They serve nearly 24,500 older Coloradans annually.

After all the three guests provided an overview of their organizations and work efforts, discussion was opened up to the group. Much of the inquiries revolved around TCARE as an evidence-based tool. Through discussion it became clear that the individual does not pay for the TCARE program. Insurance providers, businesses, or state departments contract with TCARE to make the service available to their policy holders, employees, and/or beneficiaries. There were also various inquiries about the research and evidence supporting their program. The main research referenced is from Washington state and was carried out by an independent research group. Currently, Hawaii, Wyoming, and Alaska are exploring adopting the TCARE program through either their state Medicaid program or Area Agency on Aging (AAA). Jayla Sanchez Warren, DRCOG AAA Director, made it clear that her colleagues who work with TCARE have been pleased and support the service.



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Discussion about the Colorado Respite Coalition focused on impacts of caregiving across demographic groups and how best the state may be able to support caregivers. Meghan made it clear that the language we use around caregiving and respite is a significant hurdle. She also noted that family friendly policies in the private and public sectors is a must if we are going to support caregivers across the life course. The importance of involving the healthcare and insurance industries was also mentioned. Colorado Respite Coalition is exploring a pilot with TCARE. It is still early on in the process but SAPGA is interested to follow the progress.

Small Group Work – Potential Policy Areas

Phone Group: Look into New York's respite Medicaid waiver program; important to work with ADRC's, AAA's, and HCPF to expand the evaluation, and potentially, the adoption of evidence-based best practices

Group One: DRCOG has claims data that could be utilized – but who?; TCARE is evidence-based and approved by the Administration of Community Living – that is no easy feat; must continue coordinating together – in state and across the country

Group Two: Important to move from managing crises to preventing crises; we must include the private sector/employers so they can be a vehicle for engaging with caregivers; needs go beyond what TCARE can offer – though it seems to be one piece of the puzzle

Group Three: TCARE gets to people once they need help, how do we get to them before that point?; important to consider the language we use when talking about caregiving

Group Four: Must also focus on the professional caregivers and the health impacts of caregiving; using evidence-based assessments would be useful; explore a preventative health model for caregivers; there is a significant difference between care management and care provision; explore age/family-friendly employers; we need a comprehensive family-friendly approach

Group Five: We have to change how we support caregivers across the entire system; we often have a “hero” mentality for some caregivers – how do we make this more normal and less exceptional; there is a significant gap between what caregivers know and what they need to know

Report Back Discussion

Christian Itin noted that we must pay attention to both paid and family caregivers because both have their unique dynamics. How can we plan for caregiving? Mindy Gates suggested the continued need and expansion of the Colorado Respite Coalition's PR campaign.

Maureen McDonald mentioned the importance of advance care planning and wondered how large is the gap between those who have completed advance directives and those who have not?

Chris Lee noted that the Home Care Association eventually took neutral position on SB19-238 after some changes were made to the bill.

Meeting Adjourned at 3:00 pm