



# Strategic Action Planning Group on Aging

Meeting Minutes July 13, 2020

**Participants:** Christian Itin (chair), John Emerson (vice chair), Sarah Elliott, Hayley Gleason, Karin Stewart, Jean Nofles, Dave Norman, Jim Collins, Kara Harvey, Jayla Sanchez-Warren, Jane Barnes, Tony Tapia, Ed Leary, Andrea Kuwik, Karen Brown, John Zabawa, Gabriel Kaplan, and Kelly Osthoff

**Not in Attendance:** Steve Child, Sophie Shulman, Aisha Young, and Claire Cruse

**Public Participants:** Dr. Rachel Herlihy, Bonnie Silva, Randy Kuykendall, Peg Rogers, Jeremy Bell, Kelsey Lesco, Sam Anderson, Kelley Horton, Pat Cook, Jenn Klus, George Maxey, Trevor Tandy, Amber Franzel, Eileen Doherty, Gail Meehan, Jill Topper, Chelsea Carnoali, Amy Miller, Andrea Suhaka, Andrew Steward, Arlene Miles, Bob Epstein, Bob Murphy, Deborah Lively, Diana McFail, Dymond Ruybal, Ed Shackelford, Eden Bailey, Elizabeth Garner, Ellie Shepherd, Erica Reinhard, Evie Hudak, Hillary Lenz, Janine Vanderburg, Jan Somers, Jerry Halberstadt, Jodi Waterhouse, Laura Kinder, Leigh Hull, Leslie Kalechman, Lindsay Parsons, Lyndall Ellingson, Moira Moon, Paul Gunther, Paula Stearns, Rachel Cohen, Bob Bocker, Sharon Courtney, TJ Burr, Valerie Robson, Laura Ringo, Lisa Streisfeld, Janice Blanchard, Coral Cosway, Kara Johnson-Hufford, Susan Nickels

## Action Items:

- Executive Committee to coordinate with Dr. Herlihy on additional data analysis
- Jarett Hughes to share slides used and link to meeting recording

## Meeting Notes

### *Welcome, Roll Call, and Approval of Minutes and Agenda*

- Meeting called to order at 12:06 pm by Christian Itin
- June minutes and July agenda approved
- The full meeting can be viewed on YouTube using this [link](#) – small group work is not captured because recording breakout groups is not an option.

### *Panel Discussion*

Dr. Rachel Herlihy from the Department of Public Health and Environment, Bonnie Silva from the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing, Peg Rogers from the Department of Human Services, Leah McMahon from Disability Law Colorado, and Sam Anderson from the Department of Regulatory joined the Planning Group the talk through various issues related to COVID-19.

Dr. Herlihy, State Epidemiologist with the Department of Public Health and Environment, put together some data for the Planning Group and joined to share what she was able to pull. Questions submitted to Dr. Herlihy revolved around trying to gain greater clarity the impacts of the pandemic on older Coloradans. Dr. Herlihy was unable to finish separating out community-based cases from congregate care and residential long-term care cases. The Executive Committee will coordinate with Dr. Herlihy to get the remaining data slides. Dr. Herlihy indicated that, even



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when controlling for chronic conditions and comorbidities, age continued to be an independent risk factor. COVID-19 Data Analysis [slides](#).

Bonnie Silva, Director of the Office of Community Living with the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing, was joined by Randy Kuykendall, Director of Health Facilities and EMS from the Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE). Together, they chair the Residential Care Strike Team which is tasked with mitigating the spread of COVID-19 in residential long-term care settings. Randy mentioned that CDPHE had around 100 individuals around the state performing infection control sweeps. Bonnie and Randy indicated that community spread is directly related to cases in residential long-term care settings and that their approach to reopening/handling long-term care settings has been very conservative in order to be as cautious and safe as possible. They both acknowledged the impact and concerns related to social isolation of those in these residential care settings. Residential Care Strike Team [slides](#).

Peg Rogers, Manager of Adult Protective Services (APS) with the Department of Human Services joined to talk a bit about the role of APS and their work during the pandemic. Peg pointed out that 71% of cases are community-based and 29% of cases are facility-based. Peg also noted that APS was not designated “essential” by the Governor’s Office until early July, although local-based APS staff were still working and conducting investigations. Peg indicated that counties are responsible for securing protective equipment on their own. Adult Protective Services [slides](#).

Leah McMahon, State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, joined to share an update on her work efforts. The State-Long Term Care Ombudsman Office is housed within Disability Law Colorado under contract with the Department of Human Services. Currently, Leah is working with other states and federal partners to update their policies and procedures for reentry into long-term care settings. Leah, as the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, has the authority to determine when ombudsman are allowed to reenter long-term care settings. As of March 12, no ombudsman have been entering residences but they have been working virtually. Obtaining protective equipment for ombudsman had been decentralized and is being handled at the local-level.

Sam Anderson, Outreach and Education Coordinator with the Civil Rights Division at the Department of Regulatory Agencies joined to talk a bit about guidance around workplace discrimination protections for older Coloradans amid the pandemic. The Governor’s Office has encouraged employers to support telework as a reasonable accommodation when appropriate. Sam also noted that in order for the division investigate age discrimination, a complaint must be filed by the individual. Civil Rights Division [slides](#).

### *Report Out from Small Group Discussion*

Public Health and Available Data: Data on Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment website is difficult to identify, there is a lot of information available and it is hard for the public to sort through; public health should focus on social isolation



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Adult Protective Services: Why wasn't APS deemed essential until July?; how do we elevate this so that it does not happen in the past; local level flexibility and control is really important – such as reassurance calls to be proactive about needs and issues that maybe avoid the need for APS intervention; it is important that Older Americans Act dollars remain flexible

Long-Term Care Ombudsman: Ombudsman must be considered essential service; need to be on the Residential Care Strike Force with state departments and industry representatives are involved in the decision making; ombudsman can support communication strategies for families, friends, and long-term care residents; client confidentiality has been lost with the use of electronic communication; PPE for ombudsman is the big deal – why does PPE protocol for ombudsman have to be different than protocol for direct care workers?; need established guidance and procedures for ombudsman – potential recommendation here; long-term care settings, APS, and ombudsman should be considered Tier 1 for PPE allocations

Older Adults in the Workforce: Karen Brown will work on a summary of rights and rules around protections and reasonable accommodations; incorporate “life experiences” as part of job applications which could make age an asset; there are additional data request questions we may want to inquire with Sam about and reach out to the Urban Institute (UI) for Colorado-specific data – Karen may be able to help with this data request to UI.

### *Update on State Structure and Governance Work*

A small working group has been convened to carry on the work of identifying the possible avenues for the creation of an office focusing on the wide-ranging impacts of aging and implementing the recommendations of the Planning Group, along with those of the Commission on Aging and other boards/commissions. This committee will draft a recommendation related to this work effort for inclusion in the 2020 Action Plan Update.

### *Update on Conversations on Aging and Budget*

Jarett Hughes provided a brief update on his contract extension and the Planning Budget. Jarett was without contract for the first 6 days of July but it was resolved and the FY20-21 appropriation is available to draw on.

On August 4 from 10 am-Noon, the Planning Group will host a virtual “Conversations on Aging” listening session focusing on Northeast Colorado. Planning Group members are encouraged to participate if possible and assist with the facilitation of small breakout groups.

### *Public Comment*



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Karen Brown mentioned that Changing the Narrative is working on a survey of older workers and they are looking for additional responses from men and diverse populations in Colorado.

Gabriel Kaplan noted that he presented on Colorado's aging efforts at the National Association of County and City Health Officials and he praised the work efforts of the Planning Group, Jarett Hughes, and Janice Blanchard. He noted that what we have been able to accomplish with such limited resources is something proud of and acknowledged.

Gail Meehan indicated that she is concerned about the lack of communication with families of individuals living in long-term care residences. She suggested that the Residential Care Strike Team participate in the Governor's Press Conferences or establish a clearer line of communication to Coloradans.

It was suggested that the panelists from this meeting be invited back to provide quarterly updates.

**Meeting Adjourned at 3:00 pm**