

Meeting Minutes: Northeast DHHSD Advisory Committee, 10/21/2021

Date: 10/21/2021, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.
Minutes prepared by: Natalie Regenscheid
Location: Virtually on Zoom

Attendance

- Members
 - Jack Bender
 - Maisie Blaine
 - Maggie Hoppe
 - Joshua Morris
 - Michelle Nelson
 - Marie Pank
 - Karen Sheldon
 - Mary Soltis
 - Natalie Stanley
- Absent: Nancy Diener
- CART and Interpreters
 - Michelle Remer, DHHI Interpreter
 - Brandi, ASLIS Interpreter
 - Lisa, Veritext Captioner
- DHHSD Staff
 - Cheryl Blue, DHH Specialist
 - Anne Janckila, DHH Specialist
 - Jeanne Kolo-Johnson, Lead DHH Specialist
 - Dan Millikin, DHHSD Director
 - Teika Pakalns, Policy & Planning Specialist
 - Natalie Regenscheid, OASI
- Others Present
 - Rochelle Garrow,
Telecommunication Access MN
(TAM) Administrator

Agenda

- Call to Order/Introductions/Handouts/Communication Ground Rules
- Land Acknowledgement Statement
- Acceptance of June 17, 2021 Meeting Minutes
- Regional Update Report, Anne
- Telephone Equipment Distribution (TED) Program, Jeanne
- Regional Needs and Gaps, Cheryl
- New Business
- Minnesota Commission of the Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing (MNCDHH) Updates, Maisie

- Announcements: All members
- Next Meeting Date

Call to Order/Introductions/Handouts/Communication Ground Rules

The Northeast Advisory Committee (AC) meeting was called to order at 1:01 p.m. by Cheryl Blue. Members and guests were welcomed. The June 17, 2021 Northeast AC meeting minutes, Regional Update Report, Telecommunications Access Minnesota (TAM) PowerPoint, Minnesota Employment Center (MEC) ThinkSelf Partnership handout, Understanding Hearing Loss: A Guide for Healthcare Clinicians handout and the agenda for today's meeting were distributed via email. For a copy of these items, contact dhs.dhhsd@state.mn.us.

Land Acknowledgment Statement

"We collectively acknowledge that we are located on the traditional land of Indigenous people that once and still is occupied by the Ojibwe, Dakota and other Native peoples from the time immemorial. These lands hold great historical, spiritual, cultural and personal significance for these Native nations. We recognize, support and advocate for the sovereignty of these nations in this territory and beyond. By offering this land acknowledgment, we affirm tribal sovereignty and will hold ourselves accountable to the American Indian people and nations."

- September 30, 2021 was Orange Shirt Day. Orange Shirt Day was established in 2013 by Phyllis Webstad, a residential school survivor, to honor those Indigenous children who were taken from their homes and placed in boarding schools. They were then shamed and abused for their heritages. Thousands of children died in these schools. The last boarding school did not close until 1996. Orange Shirt Day is intended to pause and reflect on the treatment of Indigenous people. The purpose of the Land Acknowledgement Statement is to encourage everyone to do further learning and reflection.
- Joshua asked where this statement will be located. Jeanne explained it will be within the meeting minutes and shared the statement via chat in Zoom.

Acceptance of June 17, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Marie moved to accept the meeting minutes and Mary seconded the motion.

Regional Update Report

Anne briefly reviewed the Regional Update Report. For a copy, contact dhs.dhhsd@state.mn.us.

Telephone Equipment Distribution (TED) Program

Updates

- The TED Program is distributing iPads and iPhones, within a limited budget. When a consumer applies to the TED Program, a TED specialist reviews their application to verify program eligibility. The specialist will then do an in-depth assessment to determine whether they need an iPhone/iPad. Current TED clients do not need to reapply, but they do need to reverify their eligibility to receive an iPhone/iPad.
- Sarah, the TED Program Administrator, is in the process of submitting a request for proposal (RFP) to expand the TED Program to provide Android devices in addition to iOS devices.
- In the past, 3G network devices were provided to consumers. They will be discontinued at the end of the year. TED specialists are contacting TED clients to replace the 3G devices with 4G devices.
- Virtual presentations are being offered to service providers and consumers to explain more about the services provided by the TED program.

Minnesota Relay (MR) Feedback

- No feedback provided.

Regional Needs and Gaps

- Joshua shared his communication with his employer and case manager has been impacted by COVID-19. Cheryl will reach out to Joshua to address these issues.
- Anne asked all members to share with the community the need to find a foster placement with a family who is fluent in sign language for a child who is deaf. The child has issues. Please contact dhs.dhhsd@state.mn.us and request to speak with Anne if anyone is willing to foster this child.

New Business

- Position updates: DHHS is hoping to wrap up the interview process and hire a Regional Services Supervisor soon. Teika Pakalns is now the Policy and Planning Specialist; her former position as the Program Planner will be posted soon.
- Fiscal Year (FY) 22 and FY23 budget updates: COVID-19 impacted the division's budget, resulting in some reductions but no impact on services. Some positions have not been filled and will remain parked. Some fleet vehicles will be eliminated. The biggest concern for budget cuts is for FY23 because bigger reductions than expected will be required.
- Regional office facilities: There are currently five regional offices and two satellite offices (Rochester and Hibbing). The specialist in the Hibbing office worked from home prior to opening the Hibbing satellite and was not impacted when COVID-19 hit. Once the Hibbing office lease ends, it will not be renewed. This specialist will transition to working from home and will visit the Duluth office as needed.
- Legislative audit and updates: The Office of Legislative Audit (OLA) selected several state division's programs, including DHHS's, to audit. There were recommendations made for improvements and corrections for the TED program and for grant program compliance. In the past year, DHHS made these

changes and is now fully compliant. DHHSD will continue to practice the measures implemented as a result of the audit.

- AC and Town Hall meetings: AC meetings will continue to be virtual until further notice. DHHSD is revisiting long-term plans of community and town hall meetings throughout the state. Town Hall Meetings will focus on one or two main topics in each region. Once the pandemic subsides, it will be easier to determine what things will look like for in-person meetings. Specialists are discussing ways to connect with the community on a variety of topics in the meantime.
- Telehealth services: The Department of Human Services (DHS) is studying the provision of telehealth services in relation to equity and accessibility. DHHSD has used video platforms to provide services for a very long time and are ahead of the rest of DHS, and so Dan, DHHSD Director, is participating in the committee tasked with studying this issue to provide insight and guidance. He can provide a strong perspective regarding accessibility for people who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, and late-deafened. This includes interpreters, CART (Communication Access Realtime Translation), ASR (Automated Speech Recognition), plain language, clear speech, etc. Proposed best practices for telehealth services addressing internet connectivity, equipment recommendations, the use of varying languages, etc. are being considered.
- Mental health program and operations: due to limited time, Jeanne will send an email to members with this update. For this information, contact dhs.dhhsd@state.mn.us.
- Telecommunications Access Minnesota: Rochelle Garrow did a presentation. For a copy of this PowerPoint, contact dhs.dhhsd@state.mn.us.
 - Joshua asked for clarification if T-Mobile is the cellular network that provides the relay services. Rochelle clarified that T-Mobile has two separate services, one is the cellular service and the other is the relay service.

Minnesota Commission of the Deaf, Deafblind, and Hard of Hearing (MNCDHH) Updates, Maisie

- Two RFPs will be published soon. 1) Recruitment of deaf and hard of hearing community members to help with promotional information, outreach and engagement. 2) Citizen Advocate video campaign series to provide tips and resources for people who are deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing to advocate for change.
- Items from the 2021 legislative session will continue into 2022. These items are: establishing an interpreter licensure board, captioning in public places, accessibility grant for local governments, defining CDI (Certified Deaf Interpreter) in the education law, and fixing statutes in early intervention services at Metro Deaf School (MDS).
- New items being considered for the 2022 legislative session are: American Sign Language (ASL) teacher licensure, language acquisition tracking for early intervention, insurance coverage for hearing aids for adults, telecoil education by providers, access to truck driving schools for people with hearing loss, communication access protocols in emergency situations, parent accommodations for IEPs (Individualized Education Plan), mandating impact statements prior to legal sentencing, braille labels on prescription bottles and communication facilitators for phone calls.
- MNCDHH hired two new staff members: Danelle Gournaris is the Collaborative Plan Program Director and Alicia Lane-Outlaw is the Government Relations Director.

- The Collaborative Plan's DeafBlind workgroup has published its report. This includes six action steps.
- MNCDHH has drafted strategic goals and encourages everyone to share their feedback on the [MNCDHH Feedback Form](https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/6507911/MNCDHH-Strategic-Goals-Feedback-Needed) (https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/6507911/MNCDHH-Strategic-Goals-Feedback-Needed).

Announcements: All members

- Mary provided updates from the MEC ThinkSelf Partnership handout that was distributed via email. For a copy, contact dhs.dhhsd@state.mn.us.
- Karen shared the following:
 - TSA (Therapeutic Services Agency) submitted a proposal to present at ADARA (American Deafness and Rehabilitation Association) 2022 to discuss best practices for providing services in rural areas.
 - Two teammates from TSA did a presentation at the St. Louis County Health and Human Services conference last week.
 - TSA is still taking on deaf and hard of hearing children, including CODAs (Child of Deaf Adults).
 - Chad, a new member with TSA started working in the spring of 2020 and serves the Mankato/southern region.
 - Karen and three practitioners with TSA are now certified to do DC 5 Assessments, which means they can do assessments on children from birth to 5 years old to determine if early interventions are needed.
 - Karen has a SHIFT (Seen and Heard Individual and Family Therapy) bus and is able to provide mobile mental health services for TSA and her private practice. The bus was funded through a crowd funding program and the bus offers versatility to provide more services throughout the northeast region. For more information, visit [SHIFT LLC](https://www.shiftllc.org/) (https://www.shiftllc.org/)
 - Karen also submitted her licensure application.
- Marie shared that Minnesota Hands and Voices (MNHV) have finished merging with Lutheran Social Services (LSS). There is no religious affiliation; LSS is the financial host to MNHV.
- Joshua shared that Goodwill is hiring. There is a demand for employees and Joshua encourages members to share this with the community. Anyone interested can apply online at [goodwillduluth.org](https://workforcenow.adp.com/mascsr/default/mdf/recruitment/recruitment.html?cid=06dbfc63-aea3-4c8b-b36f-ca1ff7034f07&cclid=19000101_000001&lang=en_US) (https://workforcenow.adp.com/mascsr/default/mdf/recruitment/recruitment.html?cid=06dbfc63-aea3-4c8b-b36f-ca1ff7034f07&cclid=19000101_000001&lang=en_US).
- Natalie shared that Essentia Health is seeking two casual interpreters.
- Maggie shared that the Deaf Social Club is hosting a get-together tonight at Sammy's Pizza from 5-7 pm and encourages everyone to attend.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be February 18, 2022 from 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

