

Meeting Minutes: Southwest DHHS Advisory Committee, 05/20/2022

Date: 05/20/2022, 10 a.m. - Noon
Minutes prepared by: TJay Middlebrook
Location: Virtual on Zoom

Attendance

- Members
 - Lisa Dembouski
 - Chad Richardson
 - Scott Roemhildt
 - Howard Rosten
 - Jacqui Shasky
 - Gretchen Spear
- Captioner and Interpreters
 - Michelle Remer, DHHS Interpreter
 - Gina Alvarado, ASL Interpreter
 - Megan, Veritext Captioner
- DHHS Staff
 - Calla Kevan, DHH Specialist
 - Dan Millikin, DHHS Director
 - TJay Middlebrook, Regional Services Supervisor
 - Sarah Maheswaran, TED Program Administrator
- Others Present
 - Christy Leach, Consumer Directions, Inc. (CDI)
 - Rochelle Garrow, Telecommunications Access Minnesota (TAM)

Agenda

- Call to Order/Introductions/Handouts/Communication Ground Rules
- Land Acknowledgment Statement
- Acceptance of February 11, 2022, Meeting Minutes
- Regional Update Report
- Telephone Equipment Distribution (TED) Program
- Regional Needs and Gaps
- New Business

- Guest Speakers
- Minnesota Commission of the Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing (MNCDHH) Updates
- Announcements: All members
- Next Meeting Date

Call to Order/Introductions/Handouts/Communication Ground Rules

Calla Kevan called the Southwest advisory committee (AC) meeting to order at 10 a.m. The February 11, 2022, meeting minutes, Regional Update Report, Hear for the health of it, links to Signs of hearing loss and Tinnitus webpages, Using Zoom for DHHSD webinars, DBCDS General Program Description, TTAP Program Guidelines, and the agenda for the meeting were sent out by email before the meeting. For a copy of these items, contact dhs.dhhsd@state.mn.us.

Land Acknowledgment Statement

Calla read the Land Acknowledgment Statement.

Acceptance of February 11, 2022, Meeting Minutes

Howard moved to accept the meeting minutes as written. Lisa seconded the motion, and the minutes were accepted as written.

Regional Update Report

Calla asked if anyone had any questions about the regional update report that was distributed via email. No one had any questions or comments.

Telephone Equipment Distribution (TED) Program

Updates

- Sarah shared that TED specialists now provide home visits if needed and do presentations and booths in person. Staff now follow a hybrid schedule with days at home and in the office.
- area. Four TED Specialists will provide services statewide. Each region will add counties, and the regional boundaries will change for the TED Program Specialists.
- TED program and staff will provide a virtual meet and greet on June 9 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. All TED staff will participate and hope to show the new map of the regional areas for TED.

- TED Program is producing a video focusing on physical and speech disabilities. Once the video is completed, TED program staff will share it with the organizations that serve those communities.
- New promotional flyers were developed to reach people who have physical/speech disabilities, Latine and Black communities. The Latine flyer is available in both English and Spanish.
- The TED Program also has posters in different languages: Arabic, Bosnian, Kurdish, Nepali, and Somali.

Minnesota Relay (MR) Feedback

- Members provided no feedback.

Regional Needs and Gaps

- Members shared no needs or gaps during the meeting.

New Business

- Dan discussed the legislative session that is wrapping up on May 23. There are several bills impacting human services. The division is watching an omnibus bill that expands the definition of telehealth to include video services in addition to audio services. Currently telehealth is defined as an audio connection and Medicare and Medical Assistance will only reimburse for telehealth services provided by audio. Amending the language would provide universal accessibility and inclusion for everybody. If it does not occur this legislative session, the hope is to have it by the next session.
- Dan mentioned that they are working on ensuring that hero pay for individuals who worked on the frontline during the pandemic includes Support Service Providers (SSPs).
- The budget continues to be level. Dan discussed operational costs. DHHSD does not need to reduce grant funding and providers can continue to provide services. The Department of Human Services (DHS) prioritizes and values grants and sees grants as a great way to provide services to our communities.
- The division has tried to sublease the Mankato office without success, so the Mankato office will close. The lease will expire on June 30, 2023. Calla will continue to provide services for the whole Southern region from Rochester.
- Regional offices are open by appointment only. Staff work hybrid schedules. This means they work both virtually and in person.
- TJay shared that website navigation is being looked at for accessibility purposes. The Department of Human Services (DHS) is focusing on an accessibility overhaul for all DHS websites to figure out the issues for website navigation. Mental health resources on the DHHSD

website have been updated and TJay shared the different pages and where to locate them. Staff have also added new content to the website.

- TJay shared updates about DHHSD grants and contracts and explained different examples including:
 - Video Remote Interpreting Training – specialized training for working with people who are deafblind, low-vision and speaking deafblind.
 - Mentoring to Excellence – provides deaf and ASL interpreter mentors to pre-certified and newly certified interpreters working in Greater Minnesota.
 - Specialized medical and mental health interpreting training for interpreters working in Greater Minnesota.
 - Protactile and other communication systems training is provided to 1) individuals who are deafblind 2) interveners 3) support service providers 4) interpreters. Training is also available to other service providers who serve people who are deafblind.
 - People who are deafblind and need assistive technology or services and supports have access to two different intervener and support service provider (SSP) programs. These programs provide ongoing intervener or SSP support and/or technology that helps the person maintain or improve their independence.

Guest Speaker

Christy Leach from Consumer Directions, Inc. (CDI) shared information about the services provided by CDI. Two documents were shared prior to the meeting.

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

- Calla shared information from the Southeast representative. MNCDHH has updates on their website regarding legislative action, the collaborative experience conference and other upcoming events. The board meetings are open to the public if anybody would like to attend. Check the [MNCDHH website](http://mn.gov/deaf-commission/) (mn.gov/deaf-commission/) for details.
- The SW AC still needs a Southwest representative to the MNCDHH board. Contact Calla with questions.

Announcements: All members

Jacqui shared that she is the assistant director for Camp Sertoma. Kids who have completed second grade through eighth grade by the end of the school year are invited to attend. The camp takes place from July 10-15. She will share the flyer with the group.

Next Meeting

Calla will send an email to members to set the next meeting date in September.

The meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

