



Senior and Disability Services

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Area Agency on Aging

DATE: Feb. 1, 2017
TO: OCWCOG SSAC/DSAC
FROM: Dave Toler, SDS Director
RE: Director Update

Aging & People with Disabilities Cost Cutting

Under direction from the legislature to slow down costs, (particularly for in-home services) APD is proposing a change in eligibility criteria for Medicaid Long Term Care services.

The rule changes will provide more clarity for Case Managers who have the job of determining eligibility. Currently, rules are somewhat vague and left to a degree of interpretation which can lead to inconsistency in determining eligibility.

Primarily, the changes being made are tied to the frequency that an individual needs assistance in the core Activities of Daily Living (ADLs). Currently, the rules determining eligibility are not specifically quantified in terms of how often an individual requires hands on assistance. The new rules will set a minimum of 4 times per month for bathing, eating, elimination, personal hygiene, toileting, mobility, and transfer that an individual needs assistance to qualify as an assist for that particular ADL.

APD estimates that implementing these changes will eliminate 5-10% of our current caseload from receiving any services. This will include hundreds of individuals who are currently in community based facilities such as Adult Foster Homes and Assisted Living Facilities. Many of these individuals have sold their homes with the expectation that they would be living the rest of their life in these facilities. For these individuals, the loss of services will also mean the loss of their home and they will have to find a home that they can afford to purchase or lease.

Meals On Wheels

MOW has been in a budget deficit for a number of years and a key goal of SDS is to make the program financially sustainable by July 1, 2018. If you recall, I wrote a Resource Development Plan for our MOW last year. The plan featured five major goals and here is a summary of the progress made since the plan took effect in July 2016:

1. Expand Individual Donations

A direct mailer in the fall/winter has netted over \$50,000 for MOW. A spring campaign is being planned with hopes of matching the fall campaign. In addition, SDS contracted with Westby & Associates to assist us in developing our resource capacity. A list of 20 key individuals have been contacted for potential larger individual donations. So far, the effort looks very promising.

2. Expand Business sponsorships

Several businesses have been identified and are being approached through Westby's efforts.

3. Increase local government support

Efforts are under way to increase governmental support of MOW. OCWCOG will be reaching out to representatives of local governments as they start putting their budgets together this spring.

4. Increase Private Foundation support

Two grants have been submitted in the last two months. SDS is currently working with Westby on a larger capacity-building multi-year grant that will enable MOW to structure its program in a way that can accomplish all five development goals and maintain these business and individual relationships.

5. Enhance Volunteer Base

We have not been able to pursue much on this goal as of yet.

For our first 6 months, I think we have made some very good progress toward most of our goals.

State and Federal Budgets

On the federal side, I think we are all aware of the changes that have taken place since the November election. Fortunately, the Older Americans Act (OAA) was re-authorized before the big change. We are reasonably confident that OAA funding will continue next federal fiscal year, the question is whether it will stay at current levels or be reduced.

On the state side, two budgets have been released by Oregon. The Governor's Recommended Budget came out in December and held our programs relatively harmless except a huge reduction in Oregon Project Independence (OPI). The OPI disabilities pilot was completely eliminated in this budget.

The Ways & Means Co-Chairs have also released a budget. Unlike the Governor's budget, this budget assumes no additional revenue from new legislation. So, this budget is the worst case scenario. OPI cuts remained largely intact in this budget. In addition, there may be some paring of funding for caseload growth in Medicaid.

We are ramping up efforts to get our advocates to Salem more often this session. Stay tuned for coordinated trips to Salem to allow you to speak to our legislators.