

Maryland Advisory Council on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Quarterly Meeting December 11, 2012 9:30 am – 12:30 pm

Hosted by: Deaf Shalom Zone



Present: Carl Bailey, Ann Black, Amy Bopp, Dakota Burgess, William (Bill) Russell, Cheri Dowling, Stacey Farone (Vice Chair), Shane Feldman (Chair), Kathleen Heck, Cleveland Horton, Lisa Jordan, Sara Muempfer, Janelle Robinson, Jack Rouse, Lisa Kornberg, Sam Lenox
Special Guest Presentation by: Cynthia Ingraham
Interpreting and CART Services provided by: Steve Clark, Erin Harrison, Carrie Quigley, Robin Shannon, and Gerard Williams

Welcome and Introductions

Shane Feldman (Chair) offered specific acknowledgement of our new council members Cleveland Horton of the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (MCCR) and also community member William Russell. Also thanks to Janelle Robinson for sitting in to represent the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) while a new council member is recruited. A very special Welcome and Thanks to our guest speaker, Cynthia Ingraham from the Helen Keller National Center (HKNC).

HKNC Presentation (by C. Ingraham)

About our program: There are many common misconceptions of the services provided by the Helen Keller Center. “Short Term Rehabilitation” is key in understanding what we do. Some people look at the center as a residence center or a college of sorts. However the average stay is only 18 months. We are closer in comparison with training programs like those offered at Baltimore’s Workforce Technology Center (WTC). HKNC specifically offers short term training on a national level. This program is strictly for the deafblind. If an individual is ‘only blind’ or ‘only deaf’, they do not qualify for HKNC services. This is mandated through our ‘line item’ in the Federal budget. On Long Island there is a campus with various departments. The Communication Learning Center is one of the most crucial parts of the program for the consumers. Another part of the program is Independent Living. Activities using adaptive products are crucial to keeping the consumer stimulated with regards to relaxation and recreation. Because HKNC is national each state affiliation varies. The iCanConnect Program – a lot of work went into this program with a focus on technology and equipment. The increased use of iPhones and of relay shows the lack of access (for deafblind consumers) to appropriate equipment and devices. Deafblind residents don’t have the means to access these specific technologies. Assessment in this program is crucial because it aids in matching the individual with technology they can actually use. Then, training is offered and is crucial. Query: how many deafblind residents in the State of Maryland? The largest counted group came from the demographic of those over 55 as referenced by the Department of Aging. In 1982 it was 500K. We also need to open our minds to the ever-changing definition of “deafblind”. Using Lisa Kornberg as an example: If Lisa were to choose to go through life not using her prescription eyeglasses, she qualifies as a deafblind resident. Query: What advice can be offered to the Advisory Council regarding deafblind issues and/or services? First – identify that there is a need, and you’ve done that. Next – you can apply the adage: *‘if you build it, they will come’*. In other words, don’t wait. Move forward in developing a plan or establishing services and you will get a clearer picture of consumer needs as they come forward. Further information from this presentation can be found in the attachments provided by Ms. Ingraham.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by A. Bopp to approve the minutes from the September 11, 2012 meeting without change. The motion was seconded by A. Black. The council then voted and the meeting minutes were approved without change.

Subcommittee Reports

Behavioral Health Acting Chair, Carl Bailey, Reporting: The subcommittee has monitored DHMH over the past year working on totally revising the way the state provides behavioral health services throughout Maryland. They now have a mandate to make these changes – specifically with regard to the integration of alcohol / drug / behavioral health services. The workgroups established through this process (throughout the state) have been monitoring how these services are offered and coming together at periodic meetings. The final report was made on Sept. 8, 2012 and the next step was the report to Governor O’Malley and the General Assembly On Dec. 1. During the 2013 Session new legislation will be examined for making the service provision changes based on that report. Then DHMH will have to react to the new law(s) if passed. The subcommittee is continuing to monitor this entire process. We were actively involved in attending meetings so far and will continue to do so.

Communications Access Chair, Lisa Jordan, Reporting: Our subcommittee met twice recently via teleconference calling. We have a lot of “action items” coming. Ann Black has been working with Metro Access (specifically with Darrell Drake) – at one time they were denying the provision of special training for drivers. They will now provide the training. This is a new approach and very exciting as Ann will teach (perhaps as a volunteer). We are very grateful to and thank Ann for her work on this. Further, Amy Bopp made us aware of several police department informational videos without captioning. She has contacted the county and the city. The city is now aware and Dr. Nollie Wood is working on this in coordination with Lisa Kornberg. Amy received a letter from Baltimore County and they are now working to provide captions in the very near future. Dakota Burgess, with the Department of Gaining, has done extensive research with regard to accessible housing for deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind seniors in MD. There is a model center located in Cleveland – we are asking them for information as to how MD could proceed. Thanks to Dakota for that work. Lisa Jordan has been checking on the situation regarding Video Phone (VP) access for deaf inmates in the prison system. There are no VPs available in the prison system at this time. This is actually a national issue. There are only a few examples in the country that provide VP access at this point. Security is the issue brought up most frequently as the primary concern in having an inmate use a VP. Two states provide them and using them as a resource as to how to set that up locally. Finally, Shane Feldman brought attention to the access issues within the Montgomery County Public Schools. The teacher training materials and the education materials are not captioned. Also, we will be working with the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR) setting up VP access in the One Stop centers.

Education Subcommittee Chair, Cheri Dowling, Reporting: We had our first conference call meeting December 3rd. We’ve established four goals. First is expanding our subcommittee membership. Erin Buck has accepted and will be joining us. Others we’ve contacted are: Hank Passi, Susan Russell, and Beth Ann Monn. We are waiting for responses. Partners on the Eastern Shore and at MDAD are other potential contacts for membership. Our second goal was to plan some social events for the students and families making sure that if the first event occurs in January or February, it will be held indoors. The subsequent event will likely be during the month of April and we will work to pin down specific dates. The Frederick Keys wants to have a deaf awareness event, so we are also working with them. The third goal is a weekend leadership program for deaf and hard of hearing high school students. Also, Cleveland Horton, having joined our subcommittee, will participate and talk with the students about MCCR and services provided. Proposals may be put together for

MSDE for funding for that training program. Our fourth goal is actually in line with the communications access subcommittee. Montgomery County Schools will meet with Lisa Wright, AIM coordinator regarding access equality. She will work with us on the recommendations part of it. She is working with blind and visual issues, but she can guide us for hearing loss issues. Cleveland's office could help us as well.

Agency Reports

Department of Aging, Dakota B. reporting: Nothing to report. We are getting all of the statistics together for state reporting.

Department of Human Resources, Carl Bailey reporting: Nothing to report.

Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Janelle Robinson reporting: nothing to report.

Department of Education, Dr. Kathleen Heck reporting: There were focus groups held this past June at which parents, stakeholders, and professionals came together to find out the perceptions of educational services for deaf children. We have 5 top recommendations:

Training for itinerant teachers; Closed captioning in all classrooms; Training for interpreters and support staff; Making special schools (such as MSD) more accessible to parents.

There is a lot of information sharing going on at special schools, but the ideal model is to grant parents equal access to the information just as with mainstream schools.

Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation, Sara Muempfer reporting: DLLR, in partnership with ODHH and with the help of the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) and the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), offered two workshops in October. These workshops were in line with National Disabilities Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). The first workshop was in Columbia and the content was for job seekers with hearing loss but not relying on ASL as their primary mode of communication. This workshop had the added benefit of offering a tour of the One Stop Center and our guest speaker from HLAA for tips for today's job search process. One week later, we offered a similar workshop in Frederick for those who use ASL. Both workshops were very well attended. Frederick was slightly more attended. Hank Passi from DORS spoke at that event. Another major benefit was the exposure our One Stop staff received during these trainings. We were able to pull these together in only a month's time. Next year we intend to video these workshops for learning tools with full communications access. A question came up as to where the VPs were at the One Stop Centers. Does the Council have any suggestions or step by step instructions to set up a VP in a public setting?

Maryland Commission on Civil Rights, Cleveland Horton reporting: Nothing to Report.

Metro Washington Association of the Deaf-Blind (MWADB), Ann Black reporting: Julie Schafer from ODHH gave a presentation at our holiday party earlier this month as did. There were over 100 people there and we are recruiting more individuals. It is great to have this sense of community for the deafblind population.

Hearing and Speech Agency, Amy Bopp reporting: nothing from HASA. But I'd like to request that ODHH take up the brown bag lunches for professionals and service providers again and make this the year the year to focus on services for the deafblind community.

Department of Housing and Community Development, Jack Rouse reporting: Nothing to report.

ODHH Directors Report, Lisa H. Kornberg

Want to start this report by acknowledging this as the most active our Advisory Council has ever been! Thanks to everyone for their hard work! This semester ODHH hosted a great group of interns from UMBC / Towson University / Gallaudet University. A lot of focus has been placed on our involvement with the new statewide contract for interpreters. The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) has released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for this statewide contract which would be applicable for interpreters and CART both onsite and remote. This will not be a mandated contract, it is elective. You can use the contract as an aid if you've never used interpreters or CART services before. They released this RFP in October 2012 and there were a multitude of agencies for application. We are hoping to get this up and running sometime in 2013. Another major

project ODHH has funded is for the creation of 'hospital kits'. These kits are broken down into three groups of patients – deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind. Each kit contains materials for the hospital staff to better facilitate communication with each demographic of patient. The aforementioned interns put a lot of work into these kits.

The ODHH Annual Report is underway and will be in print and available to access directly online later this month. Our fourth annual Legislative Awareness Day is set for Presidents Day, February 18 2013. We encourage you to participate and ask you to help us get the word out! The Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) was established through a federal mandate for Baltimore City and the seven surrounding counties. ODHH is working on ways to help with emergency responders and crisis / emergency communications plans. Right now, MD is working to see who will help to screen and figure out the shelter process as related to emergency preparedness. We were very glad MEMA worked with us to get local channels captioned and/or interpreted during the recent mega-storm Sandy. Julie and Sam captioned all the videos for the governor during that situation. November 17, 2012 the Maryland Deaf Senior Citizens (MSDC) held their deaf festival over 3000 people attended. It was amazing. This was a precursor to the deaf senior conference next year. ODHH sponsored the festival and will be a sponsor next year as well. We are working with DOA and deaf seniors.

Committee Chair Report, Shane Feldman:

I have accepted a new position with RID as Executive Director. This new position is based in Alexandria, VA. I am wrapping up my work with NAD after nine years. What I will be doing logistically is staying in VA by the week and then coming back to Maryland on the weekends at least until next year. I will remain here with the council for the next five months.

For our future meetings over those coming months – can we ask Sam L. to recap our plans? Reminder that our upcoming dates – March 5, 2013 (snow date is March 19) and June 18, 2013. All future meetings are set to run from 9:30 am to 12:30pm. Possible sites are the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) Headquarters for the March meeting and the Maryland School for the Deaf (MSD) Columbia Campus for the June Meeting. Sam L. will email a "save the date" when details are finalized. Amy B. also mentioned the option of using the HASA Meeting facilities for future council meetings. One final influence for meeting location could be future guest presenters (TBD).

Meeting Adjourned.