**STATEWIDE MEMBER MEETING
11.18.20 via WebEx**

**Topic:** “**DSS Directors Roadmap”**

**Guest Speakers:** Angela Ellis and Felissa Ferrell

**PRESENT.** Laura Cockman, Kevin Robertson, Nancy Warren, Ann Elmore, Shevel Mavins, Pam Palmer, Stephanie Bias, Laura Schlabach, Autumn Cox (Members) Angela Ellis, Felissa Ferrell, Carolyn Pennington, Mary Bethel, Leo Bohland, Preston Craddock, Annetta Brown, Greg Tanner, Donna Martin, Rosalyn Pettyford, Roxann Sizemore, Brianna McDonald, Jennifer Stuart, Cami Ungaro, Althea Jones, Kim Johnson, Karey Perez, Sandra Deutsch, Connie Morse, Rhonda Narron, Bonita Graham, Kathryn Lanier, Sarah Smith

Our meeting was called to order by Laura Cockman, Chair.

This meeting was hosted via WebEx, scheduled by Kevin Robertson. We are thankful for his help setting up this virtual meeting and posting the meeting agenda for us.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES.** Laura S. presented the minutes from the last general member meeting on 9.16.20. Ann suggested several edits regarding the HelpVul project updates. *Nancy motioned to approve the minutes (with edits) and Shevel seconded the motion. All agreed and the minutes were approved after Laura S. made Ann’s suggested corrections.*

**TREASURER’S REPORT.** Pam presented the Treasurer’s Report from 11.16. 20; *Nancy made a motion to pass and Laura S. seconded the motion. All agreed to pass the Treasurer’s Report.*

**TODAY’S PROGRAM.** Angela Ellis, Director of Greene County Social Services in Snow Hill, NC and Felissa Ferrell, Director of Rockingham Tri Chairs for Adult Services Committee partnered with the State of NC to address the needs of adult services. Together, they worked closely with the state partners to meet the needs of aging and disabled populations. Their suggestions are prioritized in the “DSS Director’s Roadmap.”

Angela Ellis presented to following suggestions:

*Direct County Practice*

* Standardize statewide data
* Revise policies to accurately reflect the older adult population who are served today
* Encourage counties to be fully engaged in shaping this structure
* NC should partner with NCDHHS/DAAS and NCACDSS to develop, adopt, implement and support a statewide, evidence based, competency driven practice model to guide practice
* Develop mandatory, comprehensive training for aging and adult services social workers which shall be provided on a quarterly basis in varying locations across the state to ensure accessibility by all counties
* NC should conduct a comprehensive study of specific duties and time requirements for APS and Guardianship Service, and develop mandatory caseload standards for these services and combined services caseloads
* NC should work aggressively with federal government and counties towards a more shared funding approach for Adult Services
* NC should develop and offer consistent technical and programmatic support to counties, including subject matt experts assigned to each county
* NC shall establish a statewide integrated, secure and robust data collection and case management system (NCFAST for Adult Services) that houses data and key reports to increase consistency, safety and accountability across counties
* NC shall develop an array of trauma-informed supports and services tailored to caregivers, with availability of these supports and services in all counties
* Adults who are reported to be in need of APS, case management services or are receiving Guardianship Services shall receive proper trauma-informed evaluations and treatment to identify any immediate health need within 30 days and be assigned a “permanent medical home” to ensure continuity of care
* Increase funding for basic needs of elderly and disabled populations, isolated populations and their caregivers (home delivered meals, transportation services for non-medical needs, durable medical equipment, housing programs, block grant funding for in home and support services)

*County Infrastructure Support*

* Provide consistent and adequate investments in the infrastructure to support sound social work practice, building a strong workforce, address staff shortages and engage in continuous quality improvement
* Consider the limited funding for each county and that many agencies are exceeding reasonable caseload sizes and supervisory ratios/multiple types of cases
* Office of State Human Resources should conduct a classification study for the positions of APS workers, Guardianship workers and Adult Home Specialists to ensure they are classified correctly and fairly compared to other social work positions
* NC should actively engage with counties and Schools of Social Work to develop strategies to increase the pool of candidates

Felissa Ferrell addressed the following suggestions:

*Interface with the Court System*

* To avoid inflecting continued trauma on those involved with APS or Guardianship Services, better interface and coordination with the court system is needed to ensure the rights and personal property of these populations are protected
* Judges and Clerks of Court should be trained so that court recommendations and decisions meet the needs of these adult
* Availability of adequate resources to complete timely multidisciplinary evaluations to document the adult’s limitations and needs to aid Judges and Clerk of Courts in making appropriate decisions
* Provide additional training with Law Enforcement, Emergency Services and hospital staff
* Improve collaboration across systems in the state and between counties
* Encourage clear communications with clear expectations and policy interpretation from the state to the counties to ensure consistent practice

*Communication Strategies with Stakeholders*

* Education must be provided to the local community about the need for individuals to remain in their home community that focuses on: home/community based services, educational opportunities and informing the public and partners on the limitations and scope of what DSS is legally and realistically able to do
* Develop a collaborative model of services delivery within the Mental Health System (must be from statewide AND local perspective
* Coordinate with state level agencies to obtain current county specific and relevant data that can be shared with community partners and general population

*Service Array and Systemic Factors*

* Focus on how Medicaid Transformation can benefit aging and disabled adult populations. Learn to spend smarter: incorporate preventative services (dental & vision care), simplify reimbursement process to encourage all physicians and medical service providers to accept Medicaid patients, offer greater investments in telehealth and mobile health technology to address physical/geographic barriers, greater coordination of care planning, with the focus on transition of care
* State must ensure appropriate planning for placement resources to prevent nursing home bed shortages and to maintain appropriate levels of care
* All organizations and stakeholders in the State’s “System of Care” must increase support and assistance for individuals who want to move or have moved to a community to meet their recovery goals. Including implementation of a supportive housing program
* Increase efforts to education legislators and public officials about the needs of elderly and disabled adults and ensure that all individuals have access to basic care regardless of age, income or geographic legislation

**COMMITTEE UPDATES.** Nancy Warren shared the link to the Roadmap is posted in the chatbox <https://www.ncacdss.org/wp-content/uploads/Adult-Services-Road-Map-final-2019.pdf>. Also, her team is continuing to advocate with the Legislature to increase funding for APS and Guardianship workers. Nancy added that the CARES Act from Covid was the first federal funding of its kind. Nancy continued to share that the Adult Prosecution Manual for Conference of District Attorneys is due to be published at the end of the year, which will be an important part of the protection of older adults. She and Kimberly Spahos presented yesterday regarding the upcoming publication.

Laura S. and Autumn shared that they would be happy to post upcoming educational opportunities from other organizations, please just alert them via email at lschlabcah@ncdoj.gov or acox@tjcog.org and we will share on the NCPAAA website. The NCPAAA meetings are now being recorded, so that in the event a member is unable to attend or needs to step away, the link will be available for viewing on our website after the meeting.

Shevel shared that NCPAAA’s 2021 conference theme is, “Partnering to Preserve and Protect” and the next conference planning meeting is on Friday, 11/20/20. Please email Shevel at shevel.mavinsccdss@gmail.com or Ann at aelmore@sosnc.gov if you have any topics you would like to be addressed at next year’s conference. Shevel added that the dates to save for the conference are 5/19/2021 (Virtual) and 9/14/2021 (blended in person and virtual).

Stephanie shared that the Triangle Caregiver Summit <https://www.caregiversummit.org/>is coming up soon and there will be presentations from Kevin, John and Stephanie. She touted the Partnership regarding State and Community Partnership and relationship building. She added that all the sessions are available on their website to watch or review. Stephanie also shared that there are an increased number of scams related to Medicare’s open enrollment, so please be aware. Medicare open enrollment is open now through December 6th.

Kevin encouraged us to share with others about the Partnership and to join us for upcoming meetings.

Laura C. reminded us that the next general member meeting is scheduled for January 20, 2021 from 9:30-12:00 and we look forward to seeing everyone then.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted by

Laura Schlabach, Secretary