

Maine Council on Elder Abuse Prevention
Meeting Minutes
January 6, 2012

In attendance: Jessica Maurer, Judith Shaw, David White, Sgt. Patrick Hood, Alisa Ross, David Garthe, Sheriff Joel Merry, Elizabeth Ward Saxl, Megan Stiles, Quincy Hentzel, Ann Beane, Don Harden, Deborah Danforth, Kathy Keneborus, Officer Robert Libby, Karen Elliott, David Bernier, Linda Weare (by phone)

Following introductions, Jess gave an update on efforts to expand membership. She also discussed the fact the Council is currently using the Elder Justice Partners website for now. Jess discussed the creation of the Yahoo Group and explained that the purpose is to be able to pose questions and brainstorm ideas for issues that members have not been able to resolve at the local level.

Partner updates

- David Garthe noted that the Gorham-Westbrook Triad will be taping four 15-20 minute spots focusing on different subject areas of interest to elder citizens. Diane Atwood will be involved. They will be aired on public access and also streamed from the Triad's website.
- Judy updated the group on the progress for planning the EIFFE trainings for medical professionals to help them identify patients who may be at risk for financial exploitation. She noted the Office of Securities is collaborating with UNE to have a kickoff event in April followed by presentations in the fall at conferences for the Medical Association and Osteopathic Association. Jess noted that the Council could help in informing consumers that doctors have screening tools available.
- Quincy shared the discussions she and Kathy Keneborus had with Skip Humphrey following the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) roundtable in Portland. Both she and Kathy shared best practices and challenges with Skip and expect the Office of Older Americans and the CFPB will be great resources. Jess also gave an overview of the roundtable and subsequent town hall meeting.

Request for Assistance in State Planning

Jess provided an update on progress in developing the State Plan which, under the Older Americans Act, must be filed by July 1, 2012. Results of the 12 minute survey conducted in December were received by Jess on January 5th. While more review and analysis of the data is needed, Jess shared that 3% of those surveyed said they were experiencing some type of abuse or neglect. In addition, she noted that when asked how concerned the participant is about their personal safety at home, 22% said somewhat, a little or very. 8% said somewhat or very and of that 8%, 6% said they were experiencing neglect and 8% said they were experiencing some form of abuse.

Jess also noted there will be five focus groups as part of the planning process plus 6 specialized focus groups covering the islands, tribes, and minority populations.

Part of the planning process is to develop a plan for the next 4 years. Jess asked members of the Council to let her know if they could help develop part of the plan.

Plan for the Council's Work

The group discussed various areas of concern and issues that could be the possible focus for the Council during the coming year. The goal of the discussion was to identify top level issues the Council would like to address. Once identified, the Council will form working groups to tackle each item and report back to the larger group.

After thoughtful and passionate discussion, the Council decided to focus on four broad areas:

1. Data collection

This would include determining what data needs to be developed as well as shared and would encompass physical abuse and neglect as well as financial exploitation.

The goal would be to first determine what types of data needs to be collected; what data is currently collected; what holes exist; and how can the gaps be filled.

2. Review of existing laws/Screening/Best Practices

Existing laws would be reviewed with an eye toward maintaining a current and robust inventory so that gatekeepers can be educated about what legal tools are available. It could also assist in analyzing whether there are existing laws which can be used in creative ways to provide a higher level of protection or increased prosecution.

In addition to review of existing laws, attention would be placed on developing screening tools and best practices particularly for those who may be hiring home care workers. This would provide information as to the types of questions to ask before hiring someone and what to watch for once the person is employed.

3. Awareness

There is a clear need to boost the education and awareness at the community level in order to wrap services around elderly citizens. The goal would be to identify resources, programs, or services that could help citizens

remain independent but with increased education on how to be knowledgeable consumers.

4. Reporting and Referral

Both victims and those who are mandatory or permissive reporters and gatekeepers need to be able to better understand where to report and make referrals and have an improved interface. Understanding what happens after a report or referral is made also needs to be addressed.

Jess and Judy will send around a document with each of the topics identified with a little more substance. Each topic area will represent the focus of a working group. They will ask members to volunteer to be part of one of the working groups. Members who do not want to volunteer for one of these four working groups will be asked to identify an area they would like to work on.

The next meeting will be held on March 2, 2012 from 9:00 to 11:00 in the Central Conference Room at the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation, 76 Northern Avenue, Gardiner.

The meeting ended with the group thanking Karen Elliott, who is retiring, for her years of service as head of Adult Protective Services.