

# MAINE COUNCIL FOR ELDER ABUSE PREVENTION

## **Attendees:**

Kathleen Willette, Cara Courschesne, Judith Shaw, Brianne McNally, Jaye Martin, Michelle Mason Webber, Joe Thomas, Jay Bradshaw, Adam Clement, Don Sheets, Samantha Massey, Don Harfoush, Trish Thorsen, Betty Balderston, Patrick Hood, Arian Giantris, Lynne Caswell, Tessa Mosher, David Bernier, Jess Maurer, Holly Stover

## **Introductions, welcome new members, approve minutes**

- July 11, 2014 minutes approved, will be posted on the website.

## **Discussion with First Responders**

Jay Bradshaw, Director, Maine Emergency Medical Services; Adam Celment; Don Sheets; Samantha Massey

- The EMS system in Maine receives roughly 280,000 calls a year. These are split 50/50 between 911 calls and facility transfers. The Lewiston area is the busiest area in the state. Maine has had statewide training and reporting protocols in place since the early 1990s- this is unique in New England.
- New program: Community Paramedicine recently started to address the unmet healthcare need using the excess capacity of EMS by engaging EMS during “downtime” in a way that compliments – not competes with- other healthcare services in the community. There are 12 programs running through a 3 year pilot program (this is year 2), with no reimbursement for services. What they are finding is that these calls take much longer to respond to, working to quantify the value. Goal is to reduce hospital re-admittance and ED utilization. Thus far the working relationship with Home Health has been fantastic. Finding that some people are more willing to allow EMS workers to enter the home than they are home health providers.
- Don Sheets: Training and Education Coordinator. All EMS providers in Maine follow a standardized model of education. The level of hours required depends on the position (EMT v. Paramedic). For all EMS providers there is a very limited amount of time spent on elder abuse. Roughly 2 hours are spent discussing the mandatory reporting laws as they relate to child abuse and elder abuse. Providers then engage through a continuing education system where they are instructed to fulfill certain pre-identified content areas following a federal model – geriatrics is not required even though geriatrics are the primary EMS call/client. Though changing or adding to the training in the initial education system might not be feasible, there’s room for improvement in the CE program. Identified issues: DHHS training is not meeting needs and is not easily accessible. However, work is underway between EMS and DHHS to address the accessibility of the DHHS elder abuse training. EMS providers might not know what they are seeing is abuse, and then might not know how to report it. Also, EMS is a very trusted resource in the community and many people worry that it will be perceived as a violation of that trust by making reports.

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- The Council identified a potential for following the same goals set forth with the SeniorSafe program to create a training for EMS with a broader set of resources identified. Needs to be a sustained effort, offered on a regular basis.
- Samantha Massey and Adam Clement: Samantha works as a Paramedic and Community Paramedic. Her role as a Paramedic feels more limited because when she files her report after responding to a call, that report goes to the ME EMS system, not the PCP. With the partnerships in Community Paramedicine, her reports go to the doctor. Regarding elder abuse, she has had a few recent experiences where her report to APS was not successful (APS not engaging) and she felt like she was left without any action to take. Through her participation with the local EATF, she was able to find another resource for the senior. She believes there is a great need for more information about additional resources. Also, people generally don't know what to look for when responding to a call. She's conducting awareness/education via a bulletin board on elder abuse as well as more focused information for new hires. Adam reinforced this need, and said that an EMS worker might deduce that there's abuse or neglect, but that there's not clarity that they should be looking specifically for these things. Would be helpful to have some sort of "cheat sheet" for what to look for- could create an app for EMS.
  - The Council identified this as a potential area where MCEAP could offer support in the development of this tool using the RADAR training as a starting point.
- EMS requires every service to have a quality improvement plan. While they hope that the review process would pick up on the quality of response as it relates to elder abuse, it might be difficult. Even the documentation process doesn't support "painting a picture" of what you are seeing on a call.
  - The Council identified this as a potential area where MCEAP could offer support via training on red flags and how to capture in documentation. Detailed records are very important.
- Generally, EMS workers feel that reporting to APS is fruitless. They make a report and nothing happens and there's no follow-up. This is especially an issue for EMS workers who feel like it's a huge deal to make a report in the first place.
- The Council will coordinate with Don Sheets to discuss training opportunities. Will send the SeniorSafe and RADAR materials.

## Fire Marshall Joe Thomas

- The mission of the Fire Marshal's office is three-fold: 1) Fire prevention through building safety; 2) law enforcement via the fire investigator (an agent of the AG); and 3) Education- currently no one in the office is focused on education.
- The young and old are the two populations at the greatest risk of fire. It is very difficult to change this. There's a large population of the elder in Maine but the state does not have the facilities to support this population and the fire marshal does not regulate 1-2 family dwellings. Instead they are seeing a large population of the elderly moving in with adult children and being left alone during the 9-5 work day. They are seeing lots of neglect and this year has seen 12 fire

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fatalities – 8 of these people were over 65. Big issues with this population: cooking and smoking on oxygen. The Fire Marshal's office created a brochure educating on the safest methods to use if one is going to smoke on oxygen- being distributed via meals on wheels and through the oxygen distributors.

- Elder abuse can include fire as a major form of abuse (burning down the house). There aren't as many resources available for elderly, unlike in the juvenile fire setting population. The Fire Marshal's office has a great concern with the elderly living in 1-2 family dwellings. Generally, if a citizen has a concern, their reports would go to the local fire chief. However, there are only 6 full time fire departments in the state, the rest are volunteer. Very likely that the fire chief will not have the capacity to manage referrals nor the capacity to institute new trainings on elder abuse.
  - The Council identified this as an area where MCEAP could offer support by assisting to get the Fire Marshal's message out and educate the public about issues that should be reported to the fire chief.

## **Update from the Education & Awareness Committee**

- Membership analysis has begun- will bring ideas to the full Council soon.
- Website policy- first draft has been reviewed, goal to bring something to the November meeting for the Council's consideration.
- Speaker's bureau and stock presentation – moving along well, possibly not ready for November but soon after.
- Fall networking event- registration opened yesterday. The Roundtable will consist of participants sharing local best practices.
- 2015 Summit – begun discussing potential topics.
- New idea – Develop a press kit on the topic of elder abuse & how to report respectfully. The Council approved adding this to the Committee's work plan.

## **Update from the Law Enforcement Officer working group**

- Presented the updated Resources list inclusive of statewide numbers. The Council approved this publication.
- Training is moving along, practice run on Monday.

## **New business and discussion of community best practices**

- **MCOA- Public/Private Safety Working group:** Financial exploitation notification project to focus on a way to get an “amber alert” style system in place so if there's a new scam, there's an easy way to get that message out. The AARP has agreed to head this up and will work on getting an invite out to MCEAP. Creating an elder service officer program at the criminal justice academy with a focus on investigators and detectives interviewing older people, especially if the person struggles with capacity.
- **MCEAP November 7<sup>th</sup> meeting:** New leadership cycle. If you are interested in learning more about the positions of Co-Chair, Secretary, or Chair, email Judy or Lynne. Judy expressed her

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willingness to continue on as co-chair for her third term. Lynne called for more involvement from the private/non-profit membership to better represent MCEAP's public/private composition. Currently both chairs are from state government. Judy expressed thanks to LSE and MECASA for sharing resources to support MCEAP's work.

- **Commissioner Head and Judy Shaw:** Recently co-authored a column on elder abuse. If any organizations or agencies have a newsletter and would like them to contribute, please let Judy know.
- **Senior\$afe update:** NASAA co-branded Senior\$afe to be given to all NASAA members across the country. Will be modified slightly to address the new audience of broker dealers. The Office of Securities is keeping statistics on the Senior\$afe referrals and will reconvene the working group soon.
- **New MCEAP working group:** The new working group on multijurisdictional scams, charged with figuring out how to disrupt the business model of scam artists is working on getting certain people to come to the table. The first meeting will be set soon. Senator Collins is very interested in the work of this working group.
- **LSE Handbook:** Legal Services for the Elderly's new Elder Rights Handbook is now available. To request a copy, please contact Kathleen Willette at [kwillette@mainelse.org](mailto:kwillette@mainelse.org) or 207-620-3210.
- **Bumper magnets:** A second order has been placed.